

DELEGATES MEETING MARCH 2022

A brief word about iGolfers. Please ensure that iGolf members only return scores through the MyEG App: they must not sign in on your local software. This is in their Rules of Membership, and helps to ensure that all the scores returned are from tees which are open for acceptable scores. If the club has closed the tees correctly, golfers of any kind will not be able to 'create a scorecard' on the App before play. Many clubs are still not doing this correctly: the **ACTIVE MARKERS FOR EACH DAY - (advanced)** must have 'show all' ticked, but each colour of tee which is closed changed to 'none' in the options section to the right of each tee set.

There are now over 12,000 iGolf members, and we have already seen 418 conversions to club membership. I think that will become more prevalent. I am on the handicap committee for iGolf, and we reviewed the HI of all the iGolfers in the same way as you do for your club members. Many of them have returned more scores already than an 'average' club member. I noticed that two had spent over £1,000 each since they joined in July, playing at the same club for every round: that, to me, is a no-brainer; and they were not unusual. So, whilst some clubs might not wish to actively encourage these golfers, it would be unwise in the long term to make them feel unwelcome. Although only 4% of iGolfers are ladies, we need to make sure they can ease into membership if they wish: and perhaps use the iGolf platform to advertise any events or membership schemes you have for which they might be eligible? For clubs who definitely wish to exclude them, care must be taken to ensure your Terms of Competition are written so that is clear.

Which brings me neatly to a subject about which Sue Kaye and I receive numerous questions: where, if the Terms of Competition had been written correctly, would have prevented a problem which has arisen: resulting in our being asked to advise or fix.

Full guidance on what needs to be included in your Terms of Competition is to be found in the R&A Official Guide to the Rules of Golf (P396 onward), or on the R&A website. In brief, you need to consider:

Eligibility: gender requirements, age limits, status (amateur or professional), handicap limits, membership status (category within the club, or external memberships).

The most asked about one of those is handicap limits. It is recommended that this is based on a HI, as every player will know this on entry (or can find it easily). You should consider setting the HI limit to reflect the CH of the tees being used. So instead of just saying the limit is 20.0; you might want to check where the CH handicap changes and make that the limit – so, for example, 20.5 might be the HI which gives CH 22, and 20.6 might give CH 23. Do not set your limits too low; and consider offering higher handicaps something of their own to play for. You may, although EG does not encourage it, now state 'HI limit of 20.5, but higher handicap index players may enter using the HI limit for the competition'. The HI applicable for handicapping purposes will be the correct HI for the player using those tees.

Entry requirements and Dates:

Method of entry must be clearly stated; how and when the entry fee must be paid; what is the closing date; what happens if the competition is over or under subscribed. It is important to note that all players must sign in on the day, before play, preferably by using an electronic entry method. Any player not signing in using the prescribed method will not have a score for either the competition or for handicap.

Format, including Handicap allowance:

This will include match play or stroke play; method of scoring (note that all handicap allowances listed in the Rules of handicapping are mandatory, not optional); date matches must be completed by (and what will happen if they are not); which tees are to be used; which order holes must be played (how many and in which order); what prizes will be awarded and any divisions; is there a minimum number of entries required; how many prizes can a player win? Of those, what divisions are required is the most common query. We have not had any set limits for divisions for a least 10 years: it is entirely up to the club. You might wish to consider splitting equally depending on the handicaps within the ladies section, or using the old silver/bronze (originally up to 18 for silver, then changed to 20). You may also have as many divisions as you wish.

Time of starting/Groups:

Indicate how players must book a time, or if the Committee will do this with a draw. Booking may be by a manual start sheet, or an electronic booking system. It is important to note that booking a time does not constitute 'signing in'; players must do this as a separate action on the day, and before play. Players must also play at the time booked, unless authorised to do so by the Committee: a time booked by a player has the same status as a time allocated by a committee. It is unacceptable to play later due to the weather, and the player will be DQ for doing so. Players who tee off late, or early, but within 5 minutes of their tee time will receive a 2 stroke penalty. Outside that 5 minutes will result in disqualification. If the players cannot start at the correct time because the starting time is delayed for some reason (slow play?), there is no penalty.

Team competitions:

How many players in a team, and what handicap allowance will be used; what will happen if a player drops out of a team (the principle should be like a 4BBB, where the missing player's handicap is used to allocate strokes, but the remaining player plays alone).

When the Scorecard is returned:

Rule 3.3b holds players responsible for checking the accuracy of the hole-by-hole scores, ensuring the card is signed and attested, and that the CH is entered on the card. They are also responsible for promptly returning the card after play. The Committee must tell players what to do with the scorecard, and if the entry should be completed on the computer (note: players cannot be DQ for not entering a score into a computer, but they may receive a club sanction for persistently refusing to do so). Players may be requested to supply additional information on the card for ease of administration: however, they cannot be DQ for not so doing but may have a sanction applied for persistent refusal to comply.

How Ties will be decided:

Will there be a play off, or will there be a countback and how will this be applied? The Committee must also decide when the result of the competition is considered to be final.

The above Terms of Competition must be available for players to see prior to play. Changes to the Terms of Competition cannot be altered once the competition has commenced (for example, deciding it will be over 16 holes instead of 18).

As always, your queries are welcome to either Ruth or Sue, using the e mail addresses in the YLCGA handbook. Queries must always follow the EG directive of

Player – Club – County – EG.

However, we would never refuse to answer a query from an individual lady member.