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INTRODUCTION TO THE EGA HANDICAP SYSTEM 2016-2019 – PORTUGAL EDITION

The new edition of the EGA Handicap System 2016-2019 for Portugal, follows a line of continuity in relation to what has been being implemented for the last decades, in what concerns the objectives of system integrity and handicaps' reliability.

The recent evolution of the EGA Handicap System is the result of a collaborative process at European level, taking into account the different golf realities and the necessary adaptation of the system to the challenges derived from the evolution of golf itself and its players, in recent years.

In what context do players use handicap? Different life styles and ways of engagement with golf indicate the existence of several golf players' profiles, who give different uses to their handicap. Some practical examples of profiles are i.e. avid golfers, which frequently participate in competitions and have a considerable number of scores submitted each year for handicapping; another profile may correspond to players that prefer playing, with handicap, among friends. Different profiles can also be detected if taking in consideration age group, availability of time and the dependence, or not, of other family members.

The EGA Handicap System seeks to meet these different profiles, by providing ample opportunities for players to play with handicap and for handicapping, but also maintaining unchanged the main fundamentals of the system, with set the foundations to sports equity.

1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The alterations introduced by the 2016 edition, focus in the following guiding principles:

Flexibility

- Flexibility for National Associations to select the options, within the system, that better reflect their national golf characteristics;
- Flexibility within the System to be used by different player profiles and different sports agents.

F

Inclusive

- A more inclusive handicap system, to include a larger group of players and handicapping rounds.

I

Simplicity

- Apply simplicity when possible, in areas where higher levels of complexity are not required.

S

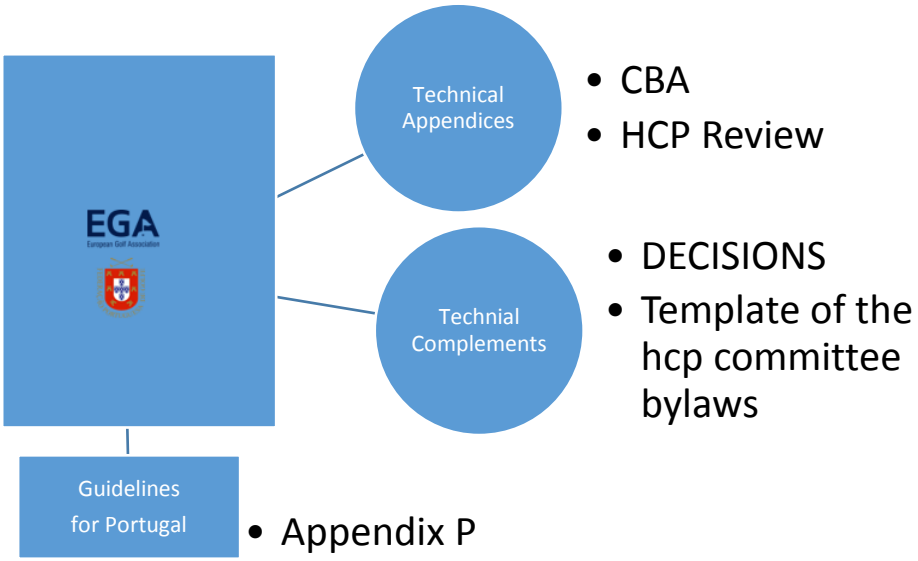
2. FORMAT AND STRUCTURE

Regarding the editing process, the organisation by sections was kept, but the text editing promoted a clarification and simplification of the language, better consistency and elimination of redundant aspects.

At structure level, there are less appendices in the main manual, that is then complemented with technical and specific appendices, available online.

The outcome is a smaller manual, for the majority of readers (about less 30%), while the technical and more detailed documents are still available for those who wish to examine them.

Furthermore, having the decisions document as an external appendix, allows for possible updates on technical decisions, while the system edition is still in place, for example if it is necessary to add additional decisions.



Appendix P, that complies the decisions taken, by the FPG, for Portugal, is available, both in the manual and as an additional appendix.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE ALTERATIONS

The following summarized changes are implemented, in Portugal, with the EGA Handicap System 2016-2019:

a) Designation "EGA Handicap"
b) Handicap calculations
c) EGA Handicap range and handicap category 6
d) Eligibility for entry in competitions
e) Inclusion of more qualifying rounds for handicapping: EDS and 9 hole rounds
f) Handicap status
g) Handicap allocation
h) EDS pre-registration for handicap purposes
i) CBA
j) Handicap Review
k) Decisions

Note: Editorial amendments, word-by-word, were not listed. Handicap Committees may request (handicaps@fpg.pt) a comparative version of the text, in an automatic format, if they wish to check, in detail, the introduced alterations.

Similar to what has been done in the last Portuguese editions of the EGA Handicap System, Portugal has applied a transition year regarding the implementation of the new version, allowing time for preparation and phased implementation of the changes. Therefore, part of the alterations included in this edition were already introduced during 2016, through specific technical circulars, as pointed out in each section.

a) Designation "EGA Handicap"

The word "exact" was removed, simplifying the designation to "EGA Handicap", meaning the EGA index that indicates the relative golfing ability of a player, on a course of standard difficulty. (Definitions)

b) Handicap Calculations

For simplification and standardization purposes, the same adjustment (0.1) applies to handicap categories 1 to 5, regarding Stableford scores bellow buffer zone. (Clause 3.12.6)

Handicap Category	EGA Handicap	Buffer Zone		Stableford-points below the buffer zone: add only	Subtract for each Stableford-point above the buffer zone:
		18-hole Scores	9-hole Scores		
1	plus – 4.4	35 – 36	-	0.1	0.1
2	4.5 – 11.4	34 – 36	35 – 36	0.1	0.2
3	11.5 – 18.4	33 – 36	35 – 36	0.1	0.3
4	18.5 – 26.4	32 – 36	34 – 36	0.1	0.4
5	26.5 – 36.0	31 – 36	33 – 36	0.1	0.5
6	37 – 54	-	-	-	1*

Note: In force, in Portugal, as from the 1st of January 2016.

c) EGA Handicap range and handicap category 6

The following items are here included:

- Maximum EGA Handicap: maximum EGA Handicap changed to 54. (Clause 3.11.2)
- Handicap Categories: added handicap category 6, replacing club handicap. (Clause 3.12.6).

Handicap Category	EGA Handicap
1	Plus – 4.4
2	4.5 – 11.4
3	11.5 – 18.4
4	18.5 – 26.4
5	26.5 – 36.0
6	37 – 54

- First handicap allocation: reduced number of scores for handicap allocation and revised procedures, in order to accommodate the handicap category 6. (Section 3.11 and Appendix P 2.5).
- EGA playing handicap formula: added playing handicap formula for handicap category 6, for 18 and 9 hole rounds. (Section 3.9 – corresponds to the playing handicap formula for club handicap on the previous edition)

$$Playing\ HCP_{CAT\ 6} = EGA\ HCP + Playing\ HCP\ Differential$$

Example:

YELLOW TEES MEN		
PAR 72 CR 72.0 SLOPE 125		
EGA Handicap From	EGA Handicap To	EGA Playing Handicap
...	...	...
35,8	36,0	40
Handicap category 6 differential		+4

Example
Player = 50 EGA Handicap

Playing HCP Differential
36.0 -> Playing Handicap = 40
- 36
4

Playing Handicap = 50
+ 4
54

This means that, for calculation of playing handicap, the slope effect is limited, by the EGA formula, to the number of strokes given by the Slope to a handicap of 36.0, playing those tees. This limit is represented by the following graphic:



Handicap Tables for handicaps between 37-54 can be supplied to golf courses upon request (handicaps@fpg.pt). Although the playing handicap for these handicaps is already calculated through Datagolf software, the printed Tables are more accessible for players.

AMARELAS HOMENS - MEN FRONT 9 CR 66,4 Slope 117 PAR 34				AMARELAS HOMENS - MEN BACK 9 CR 67,0 Slope 122 PAR 35			
HANDICAP EGA			HANDICAP DE JOGO	HANDICAP EGA			HANDICAP DE JOGO
37	- 38	-------	19	37	- 38	-------	19
39	- 40	-------	20	39	- 40	-------	20
41	- 42	-------	21	41	- 42	-------	21
43	- 44	-------	22	43	- 44	-------	22
45	- 46	-------	23	45	- 46	-------	23
47	- 48	-------	24	47	- 48	-------	24
49	- 50	-------	25	49	- 50	-------	25
51	- 52	-------	26	51	- 52	-------	26
53	- 54	-------	27	53	- 54	-------	27

VERMELHAS SENHORAS - LADIES FRONT 9 CR 68,3 Slope 118 PAR 34				VERMELHAS SENHORAS - LADIES BACK 9 CR 69,0 Slope 121 PAR 35			
HANDICAP EGA			HANDICAP DE JOGO	HANDICAP EGA			HANDICAP DE JOGO
37	- 38	-------	20	37	- 38	-------	20
39	- 40	-------	21	39	- 40	-------	21
41	- 42	-------	22	41	- 42	-------	22
43	- 44	-------	23	43	- 44	-------	23
45	- 46	-------	24	45	- 46	-------	24
47	- 48	-------	25	47	- 48	-------	25
49	- 50	-------	26	49	- 50	-------	26
51	- 52	-------	27	51	- 52	-------	27
53	- 54	-------	28	53	- 54	-------	28

Observations and clarifications about handicap category 6:

The integration of handicap category 6 into the EGA Handicap designation aims making the handicap system more inclusive, allowing it to include more players within the system and, do it as soon as they start playing golf, encouraging a closer relation and engagement with the game. Furthermore, contributes to a positive relation, by showing the player's ability evolution in a more visible way.

The handicap category 6 presents simplified procedures for handicap assignment and maintenance, namely:

- One score for first handicap
- No automatic increase of handicap (reductions are automatic)
- No limit for EDS
- No lapsing (no "lapse" and "pendent" status)
- Are not taken into consideration for CBA calculation, neither receive adjustments
- Handicap is always expressed as a whole number, without decimals

These procedures derive from what was, in the previous edition, designated as club handicap, which is now integrated within the EGA System.



Within the EGA Handicap System calculations, a player with a **handicap category 5** handicap **(up to 36.0) does not increase automatically for category** 6, after a qualifying round. This means that increases from category 5 to category 6 can only happen through evaluation and decision of the player's Handicap Committee (Clause 3.16 or Handicap Review).

d) Restrictions to the eligibility of Competitions, based in handicap

The HCRC of the FPG stipulates that, for EGA Handicap categories 1 to 5, as general eligibility restriction regarding competition net prizes and net rankings, players need to have a valid EGA Handicap. That means the handicap is calculated with four or more qualifying scores during the current or previous, calendar year.

Players with EGA Handicap (category 1 to 5) with lapsed or pending status may participate in competitions, but are not eligible for net prizes and net rankings.

In the specific case of handicap category 6, the organising entities have total discretion regarding any access conditions or eligibility restrictions to apply, for entry, or net classification.

Affiliated clubs, institutional members and golf courses can impose additional eligibility conditions for competition entry and net prizes, based on handicaps, complying with their internal rules and Competition's conditions.

These restrictions may apply in a general way, namely to all Competitions, or to specific Competitions and situations.

This provides entities with the necessary tools to implement, in a flexible way, their internal management policies, whether they are more open, or restrictive, or more focused in specific profiles of players.

It is recommended that, having in consideration the alteration in the EGA Handicap System regarding the inclusion of handicap category 6, Clubs and competition organisers decide, in good time, what are the entry conditions that they wish to apply to handicaps above 36.0, reflecting those conditions in their internal rules and competition conditions.

Some practical examples of eligibility conditions based on handicaps, in Competitions:

- Restrict access, entry or prizes to a maximum handicap (ex. 36), or all or some competitions;
- Reduce competition handicap to a maximum value;
- Different prizes for different prizes categories;
- Different competitions for specific categories;
- Request validation through the handicap record of a minimum number of qualifying rounds per year (i.e. more than four in categories 1 to 5, or a certain number for category 6).

e) Inclusion of more qualifying rounds for handicapping: EDS and 9 hole rounds



Players can submit more qualifying rounds for handicap purposes.

- EDS

4 scores per month are permitted for handicap categories 2 to 5, regarding EDS rounds played outside the scope of competitions, under handicap conditions and complying with the specified requirements (pre-registration). Handicap category 6 has no limit of EDS.

This aims to:

- include players that play less golf in formal Competitions formats;

- allows players to act preventively to avoid their handicap becoming lapsed.

-9 Holes

International golf organisations have been promoting the option of 9 hole rounds, as a way of providing players with less time availability, opportunities to play golf. This complementary opportunity to retain players in the game of golf is also incorporated in the EGA Handicap System by allowing players, in handicap categories 2 to 6 the possibility, to submit 9 hole qualifying scores.

f) Handicap Status – Pending and Inactive

The designations of the handicap status were updated, within the perspective that the EGA Handicap continues to exist as a reference value and the designations (Pending and Inactive) are used with the purpose of competitive eligibility restrictions, regarding net prizes.

The designation of handicap status "Lapsed" is replaced by "Pending" and "Lost" is replaced by "Inactive", which better reflects the handicap status. The designation "Pendent" means waiting for additional qualifying scores in order to achieve the minimum of four scores; "Inactive" indicates that the period since the player last submitted qualifying scores and had a valid handicap is longer, meaning that it is necessary for the player's Handicap Committee to analyse and revaluate the handicap, taking in account the player's recent scores and record.

On both situations, there is not an implicit restriction for the players to enter competitions, with exception to any additional restrictions set by the competition's organiser, and the above restrictions only relate to the possibility of the player being considered for net classifications and prizes. These restrictions do not apply to gross classifications and prizes.

g) Handicap Allocation

The Handicap Committee has the possibility to allocate a handicap with a minimum of one score, allowing the player to have a reference value, and aiming at attracting and retaining players in golf. This initial allocation is coordinated with the "handicap status", complying with the corresponding rules for handicap categories.

The complementarity process of handicap allocation to beginners with an examination and validation of the minimum knowledge about Rules of Golf and Etiquette is kept.

h) EDS pre-registration

Pre-registration is available for all affiliated players.

i) CBA

2016 CBA calculations were already implemented as from 01.01.2016.

j) Handicap Review

The designation Annual Handicap Review is replaced by the Handicap Review, since it is a mandatory procedure at least once a year, but the analytic tools can also be used during the year, namely to assist Handicap Committees in decisions under clause 3.16.

The Handicap Review method now includes the standardization of scores through the calculation of the "SGD" – Standard Gross Differential, which indicates to what handicap the player played to in the round and allows to compare the player's scores with the player's EGA Handicap on the date of the review.

k) Decisions

The decisions arising from the edition to Portugal of the 2016-2019 Handicap System, will be published after its implementation, on a complementary Appendix.