

Ascot Park Golf Club Handicap Matchplay Championship Guide

Handicap Matchplay

- Two players compete against each other hole by hole with the number of holes won or lost deciding the match. The match is over when one player is ahead after 18 holes or is more holes up than the number of holes left to play.
- Check your handicap. Your handicap remains the same for all Championship rounds.
- Because it is Handicap Matchplay the higher handicap player will be awarded the number of strokes that is the difference between the two handicaps. E.g. A player on a 14 handicap will have to give 6 strokes to a player on a 20 handicap. Effectively the lower handicapper plays off scratch.
- South players must refer to the Matchplay Index on the right hand side of the South scorecard to work out the holes where the lower handicap player must give strokes. In the example given above, the 14 handicapper would give a stroke on each of the holes numbered 6 or less on the Matchplay Index. If the 14 handicapper was playing a 33 handicapper the handicap difference would be 19, so the higher handicapper would receive 1 stroke on every hole and 2 on the number 1 indexed hole in the Matchplay Index.
- North players have to use the Stroke Index because the North Score Card has no Match Index.
- The Matchplay Index is not the same as the Stroke Index we normally use. It is designed to spread the strokes that must be given evenly around the card, not to reflect the difficulty of the holes.
- For our Competition, please keep a record of the holes won, lost or halved. It helps if you need to check back. A system of pluses, noughts and minuses is usually used to show whether a hole was won, lost or halved. Remember that on some holes the higher handicapper is allowed an extra stroke so he/she can halve the hole by taking one stroke more. Where the number of strokes taken on a hole is known it is good to record it in case you want to check scores.
- As you move from one hole to the next you should agree on the current score. If a player has won two more holes than his opponent he is 2UP. If both players have won the same number of holes, they are SQUARE. If you have won one hole less, you are 1DOWN. If you are in a position where you must win all the remaining holes that is called DORMIE. If you fail to win the next hole you have LOST. E.g. If you are DORMIE3 after the 15th hole and halve the 16th, you are 3DOWN with 2 holes to go so you lose 3AND2. Similar calculations apply on the shorter 15 hole North Course.
- If the match is all SQUARE after 18 holes you play and replay the 18th hole until one of you wins the hole. That would be 1UP on the 19th or 20th etc. North players replay the 15th hole.
- The winners progress through the rounds until the Championship Playoff which is conducted under the same rules. The losers are knocked out of the competition.
- The Rule Book (that we all should be carrying) spells out all the different rules that apply to Matchplay. Feel free to read them. Most apply to different penalties when rules are broken.
- Keep in mind the following important points:
 - The low handicapper hits first on the first tee. Thereafter whoever wins a hole hits off first. If a hole is halved the teeing-off order remains unchanged.
 - Whoever is further from the pin hits first. If you hit out of turn you can be told to replay it.
 - You can concede a putt or a hole or the match at any time.
 - There is no point in continuing to play a hole after your opponent has won it.
 - There is no mercy rule in the bunkers in this Championship. Play it as it lies.
 - Ask for help if you are unsure of these rules.

Borrow and read the Official Rules of Golf handbook if you can, not just for Matchplay but for all your golf.