

May 3, 2011

To: MISGA Club Reps

From: Dick Crone
Chairman, MISGA Rules & Handicap Committee

Subject: MISGA E-Mail regarding **Women's Handicaps in MISGA Mixers**

The correct method for calculating women's course handicaps in MISGA mixers has recently surfaced. The correct method is more complicated than one would think.

Section 3-5 of the USGA Handicap System Manual contains the **correct method for calculating the course handicaps of women who are playing with and against men, from the same tees as the men, or from different tees.**

Section 3-5 of the Handicap Manual states, "...the player playing from the set of tees with the higher Course Rating receives additional strokes equal to the difference between each Course Rating, with .5 or greater rounded upward. The additional strokes are added to the Course Handicap™ of the player playing from the higher-rated set of tees."
(Emphasis added.)(That section has examples.)

The USGA has said, in a **position** statement on this issue, that..."[a] **Committee [on the competition] does not have the power to [waive] this procedure,** as **that would be a violation of [USGA] Rule 33-1,** which [says], **"The Committee has no power to waive a Rule of Golf."** (Rule 6-2b requires a correct handicap on the scorecard.)

Section IX-C of the MISGA By-Laws states that "MISGA and its Associates shall comply with the USGA Rules of Golf [and] the USGA Handicap System...."

Implementation of the procedure for calculating the course handicaps of women playing in competition with men is **as follows:**

(1) Women Playing at Different Tees from the Men:

(a) **Subtract the course rating for men from the men's tees from the course rating for women from the women's tees; (round the difference up to the next whole number if the decimal is point five or more);**

(b) **To calculate the total number of strokes each woman golfer receives in competition with men from different tees, add the rounded difference in course ratings (from the women's to men's tees) to her course handicap for the women's tees.**

Example -- Calculating a Woman's Course Handicap from Different Tees:

Assume that at a mixer, a woman has a **course handicap** of **21** from the tees the women are playing; also assume that the **women's course rating** from those tees is **72.1**, and the **men's course rating** from their tees is **68.6***; the **difference** is **3.5** (rounded to 4).

The difference in course ratings (4), when added to her course handicap (21) gives this woman 25 strokes -- her total number of strokes for this competition with men and women playing from different tee boxes.

(*Usually, as in this example, the women's **course rating** from their forward tees is higher than the **course rating** for men from their tees.)

(2) Women Playing from the Same Tees as the Men:

(a) Take the course *handicap* for women from the tees which the men and women will use.**

(**If the State Golf Association has not given a women's course *rating* from the "men's" tees, turn to page 34 of the USGA's Handicap System Manual (2008-2011), "Women's Ratings Adjustments From Unrated Tees," look down the left column for the yardage difference between the men's and women's tees, and read the adjacent column for the change (increase) in course *rating* for women from the men's tees.)

(b) To calculate the total number of strokes each woman golfer receives in competition with men from the same tees, add the rounded difference in course *ratings* (from the women's to men's tees) to her course *handicap* for the men's tees.

Example -- Calculating a Woman's Course Handicap from the Same Tees:

Assume that at a mixer, a woman has a course *handicap* of 23 from the tees the men are playing; also assume that the women's course *rating* from those tees is 74.0, and the men's course *rating* from those same tees is 68.6*; the difference is 5.4 (rounded to 5).

The difference in course *ratings* (5), when added to her course *handicap* (23), gives this woman 28 strokes -- her total number of strokes for this competition, with men and women playing from the same tee boxes.

(*As in this example, the women's course *rating* from the men's tees is higher than the course *rating* for men from those tees.)

Note: The GolfNet software has the necessary program to do the math for these calculations, so your club professional staff should be able to do the needed math rather easily, once they understand the appropriate choices in the program.

Note: It is permissible for a Committee on the competition (the host club), in establishing the conditions of the competition, to require all women to play from one set of tees -- which could either be the men's tees or the women's tees.

(If the women are given the choice to play from either set of tees, the club pro staff with the responsibility to set up the scorecards would need to know-- at least a day in advance of the event -- which women have chosen to play which tees. Even if the pro knew in advance which women would be playing from which tees, the pro would have a lot more math to do to implement multiple tee choices by the women.)