

Russell Vale Golf and Social Club

Golf Competitions and How They Are Played.



These notes are intended to assist in the general concept of how various competitions are played. They must be read in conjunction with the Rules of Golf and Conditions of Play set down by the Russell Vale Golf & Social Club under which a competition is to be played.

Unless otherwise informed by notice at the pro shop or on the first tee, these are the rules that apply for all games at Russell Vale.

Stroke (Medal)

The score at each hole is entered on the score card, totalled and the player's full handicap deducted. The player who completes the stipulated round in the fewest net strokes is the winner. Usually a gross winner is also determined.

Stableford

This system of scoring by points was introduced by Dr Frank Stableford of the Wallasey Golf Club (Liverpool, England) in 1932 and is the most common event played at club level.

Stableford involves scoring points based on results at each hole. Using the index for each hole, players are able to make a mental allocation of their full handicap for each of the 18 holes. For example, a player on a handicap of 18 will add one shot to the par value of each hole to determine their own par for the hole. Thus a hole rated as a par 4 becomes a par 5 for the player.

The points scoring method is then calculated by allocating two points for a par, one point for one over, three points for one under, four points for two under, and so on. For example, a player receiving a stroke on a par 4 hole scores 4 giving them a net 3; for this the player receives 3 points. A player at a par 3 hole scores a 4 but does not receive a stroke; for this the player would receive 1 point.

Players who exceed their own par by two strokes score no points for the hole and, since they cannot improve on that result, they should pick up their ball and record a – for the in the stroke and result columns. At the end of the round all points scored are added up and the player having the highest number of points is the winner.

When marking the score card, the number of strokes taken must always be shown for holes where points are scored. Thus, the card records both strokes and points.

Par

Players need to allocate full handicap strokes to each hole, as explained for Individual Stableford competition. Once players mentally determine their own par for each hole, the Individual Par competition challenges them to beat their own par. If players do exceed their par, they score a '+' (plus) for the hole. If players equal their own par, they are said to have halved the hole which is scored with an 'O'. If par is not achieved, a '-' (minus) sign is recorded. At the end of the round the plus and minus signs are added and the net result written in as so many 'up', 'down' or 'halved'.

A player is allowed their full stroke handicap and the strokes are taken at holes as indicated on the card. Where the handicap is more than 18, two strokes will be allowed on the number of holes that the handicap exceeds 18. These strokes will be taken in the same order as followed for the first 18 holes unless the index goes beyond 18.

Once again, when marking the score card, the number of strokes taken must always be shown for holes where an 'O' or '+' is scored. Thus, the card records both strokes and plus, half or minus.

Four-Ball Stableford

This event is played in exactly the same manner as a Four-Ball Par, except that the better ball of the partnership will be credited with points rather than a plus, half or minus.

Four-Ball Aggregate Stableford

As the name implies, the Stableford system is used in this event and the competition is played with a partner, as in a Four-Ball Stableford. Individual full handicaps are applied to each player and the number of points scored by each player is recorded at the end of every hole, as well as a total or aggregate for the team. The team having the highest number of points is the winner. Again, when marking the score card, the number of strokes taken must always be shown for holes where points are scored. Thus, the card records both strokes and points.

Foursome

Two players play as partners and use one ball. The partners strike off alternately from the tee and thereafter strike the ball alternately during the play of each hole. Scoring is done as for a stroke round and the total is subject to a deduction of half the partners' aggregate handicaps.

Note: If either player incurs a penalty stroke it does not alter the rotation of play. In a multiple-round event, the committee in charge of the competition may stipulate whether or not the order is to be either preserved or changed. In a single-round event, the committee in charge of the event may stipulate who is to play from the 1st tee (which may not necessarily be the starting tee if a multiple-tee start is employed).

Match Play

This traditional form of the game sees two individuals or two sides competing against each other with the number of holes won or lost deciding the match. The match is completed when one side is ahead after the stipulated number of holes or is more holes up than the number of holes remaining to be played.

The number of strokes awarded in this competition is the difference between the players' handicaps for AGU members and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the difference for WGA members. Where there is more than 18 strokes difference between players' handicaps, the higher handicapped players will receive 2 or 3 strokes per hole where applicable. A sudden-death continuation of the match will take place if a match is all square after the required holes. In this case handicap strokes are used as in the original round.

In four-ball match play, the lowest marker reverts to scratch and gives strokes to the higher markers, eg A is on a 4 handicap, B on 8, C on 12 and D on 27. A receives no strokes, B gets 4 strokes, C gets 8 strokes and D gets 23 strokes, irrespective of who is A's partner.

Four-Ball Par

Two players play as partners each taking strokes at holes as in a par competition. If one of the partners wins a hole and the other halves it only the win is counted. If one halves a hole with par and the other loses it only the half is counted and so on. Plus, half and minus signs are added at the end of the round and recorded as in an ordinary par competition.

In a four-ball handicap event care must be taken to mark the strokes and score taken for each player in separate columns headed by the initials of the player with the score adopted in the result column. If the scores are mixed and it is impossible for the Committee to check the card the players will be disqualified.

Mixed Four-Ball Par or Stableford

These games are played as described previously with the man playing from his tees, using AGU stroke index and the woman playing from her tees using WGU stroke index. Care must be taken when checking the card to refer to the women's card when dealing with holes halved or won by her.

Both scores are recorded on the card in separate columns under the player's initials and the winning result recorded in the result column.

Mixed Foursomes

Mixed foursomes are played in the same manner as foursomes except that the women use their own tees and observe their own local rules when it is their turn to play. It is recommended there be a stipulation as to which gender plays from the 1st tee – this will serve to ensure there is uniform usage of teeing grounds (ie it will avoid for example one pair starting a given hole from 40 metres forward of where another pair commences the same hole).

Canadian Foursomes

This event is played as per a Foursomes event except that both players play tee shots at every hole and afterwards continue with whichever ball they nominate, with the partner playing the second stroke. Handicap allowance is $\frac{3}{8}$ of aggregate stroke handicap for stroke competitions.

American Foursomes

Both players play tee shots at each hole, they then play a second stroke with their partner's ball. One ball is then selected and play proceeds as in foursomes with the owner of the ball selected playing the third stroke. Handicap allowance is $\frac{3}{8}$ of aggregate stroke handicap for stroke competitions. This event is sometimes called "Pinehurst Foursomes".

Flag Competition

The score taken on each hole is entered on a card as in a stroke round. When a player has completed the number of strokes equal to the par of the course (as shown on the score card) plus their stroke handicap, they will have finished the round. The first player to start in the competition will carry the flag (mounted on a stick) and plant it on the spot where their ball lay at the finish of the round. If the ball is in the rough the flag may be planted at the side of the fairway, but not nearer the hole. If a subsequent player has not finished their round when they reach the flag, they carry it with them, and replant it when they reach the end of their strokes. The winner is the player who carries the flag the longest distance from the first tee and it normally happens that the final position is somewhere beyond the 18th green, usually on the 1st or 2nd hole. When the competition is played in two or more divisions, two or more flags, clearly marked will be necessary.

Bisque Par

This event is a variation of the Individual Par competition, where players allocate their full handicap to each hole however they like. It is not necessary to allocate your handicap before the event, as this is normally done on a hole-by-hole basis. In Bisque Par competitions at Russell Vale players will determine their handicap stroke allocation for a hole *after* playing that hole (and mark that allocation on the score card at that time before playing the next hole). The allocation of handicap strokes will obviously cease once the player's full handicap has been used. The game is then played as an Individual Par competition, and scored in the same fashion.

Ambrose Competition

This event can be played as a two, three or four-person event, although the four-person event is the most popular. Each player plays a tee shot at each hole. The Captain then selects the best drive which is then played by its owner. The other members retrieve their balls and in turn place within one club-length of the selected position and play their second shots (the placed ball must be in a similar situation to the selected ball, i.e. if the selected ball is in the rough then all other balls must be placed within one club length in the rough.) This procedure of selecting the best position continues until a ball is holed. When on the green, balls are placed on the selected spot.

For a two person event each player must record on the card 6 tee shots used to compile the team score. For a 3 person event each player must record on the card 4 tee shots used to compile the team score. For 4 person events each player must record 3 tee shots used to compile the team score.

This event can be played as a gross event, with each group having a spread of handicaps, or as a handicap event where a fraction of the aggregate handicaps is used. The most common method of determining handicap is: Two-person event – ¼ of aggregate stroke handicap; Three-person event – 1/6 of aggregate handicap; Four-person event – 1/8 of stroke handicap.

Irish Team Stableford.

Playing as a team of four, all players play out each hole. On the first 6 holes only the best score of the four players is recorded. On the next 5 holes (holes 5-7) only the best two scores are recorded along with the aggregate of the two scores. On the next four holes (12-15) only the best 3 scores and the aggregate of the 3 are recorded. On the last 3 holes (16-18) all four scores and their aggregate are recorded.

For 3 players the on holes 15 to 18 the best of the 2 scores is recorded twice. For 2 players the best score on holes 12 to 15 is recoded twice and for holes 15 to 18 each score is recorded twice.

Medley 3 Step Four Ball Best Ball Team V. Par or Stableford. (1-2-3-Countdown)

In this event WGA and AGU players play from their respective tees. Whoever of the four records the best score on the first hole records the score on the card. Whoever of the four scores the best two scores on the second hole records their scores on the card along with the aggregate of the two scores. Whoever of the four records the best three scores on the third hole, records their scores on the card along with the aggregate of the 3 scores. The sequence is then repeated on the next three holes, one score for the fourth hole, 2 scores for the fifth hole and 3 scores for the sixth hole and so on.

Eclectic Competition

Competitors play in the nominated rounds during Saturday competitions. The eclectic score is the lowest score obtained at each hole. The competition extends over the whole season and the gross score for the holes at the end of the season is subject to a deduction of $\frac{1}{2}$ the player's lowest handicap achieved during the competition period.

Handicaps.

In 5 ball team events the aggregate handicaps are divided by 10, 4 ball events the aggregate handicaps are divided by 8, 3 ball events the aggregate handicaps are divided by 6 and 2 ball events the aggregate handicaps are divided by 4.

General

All forms of play are subject to the Rules of Golf. Special rules for Par and Stableford competitions are set out in Rule 21. Rule 23 covers the special rules for four-ball Competitions.

Foursomes may be played under either stroke play rules or match play conditions and Rule 22 is relevant to foursome events.