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Handicap Communiqué from SAGA – 7th March 2009

The SAGA continuously reviews its handicapping and course rating system. At the National Executive meeting held at Benoni Country Club, detailed discussions took place led by the Handicap and Course Rating Sub Committee. In this discussion stakeholders' recent comments about the system were taken into account. Some salient points and decisions arising out of the meeting are the following:

1. The handicap system will be retained in its current form with some minor enhancements recorded below.
2. The SAGA will embark on a concerted communication campaign to address the existing public perception of the system with a view to enhancing the golf playing public's understanding of the system.
3. Control of the maximum number of strokes taken per hole:
As from the 1st April 2009, the method of determining the number of strokes per hole for handicapping purposes will revert back to the method used prior to 2003, i.e. 2 overs and 3 overs may only be taken where the player strokes.
 - i. Where a player receives no stroke on a hole - maximum of 1 over par
 - ii. Where a player receives one stroke on a hole - maximum of 2 over par
 - iii. Where a player receives two strokes on a hole - maximum of 3 over par
4. In addition, the handicap used to determine where a player strokes will be the relevant handicap in play, whether handicap or handicap allowance, e.g. a 24-handicapper playing Singles is allowed 3-overs on holes stroked 1 through 6, the same 24-handicapper playing Better-ball has an allowance of 18 and is therefore limited to 2-overs on any hole.
5. The rules of golf require a player to record his full handicap on a competition scorecard. Therefore, it is a breach of the rules of golf to record only a player's handicap allowance on the scorecard. The SAGA requires all players in Better-ball competitions to record both their handicap **and** handicap allowance, e.g. 14/11 or 18/14. It is recommended that clubs redesign their scorecards so that the area to enter both the handicap and allowance is available and easily identifiable.

A revised handicap manual will be issued in due course. Other identified changes will be communicated closer to the time when the required computer support will be in place.

Enver Hassen
President
