

WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM (WHS)

TECHNICAL ARTICLE 7, BETTER BALL

Only those rounds played in individual formats, Canada Cup and Better Ball will be valid for handicapping purposes in the WHS. The treatment and calculation of individual rounds was dealt with in previous articles (see Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6). Canada Cup scores are treated as individual rounds. In this article we will explain how to calculate scores made in Better Ball format.

1. CONDITIONS

Rounds played in Better Ball format will be valid for all players regardless of their handicap provided that they play 18 holes and 85% of their handicap is applied. Any other percentage applied to the handicap invalidates the round. This is important as the player must know exactly at which holes, he/she has a handicap stroke due to the characteristics of the process of calculating Better Ball.

The basic calculation of the WHS is an average and therefore an individual result is needed for each player, which makes it necessary to individualise the scorecard of the players who make up the pair. The following requisites must be met to be able to individualise a player's scorecard:

- a) The pair's score must be equal to or higher than 42 Stableford points.
- b) There must be at least 9 scores recorded on the player's scorecard that count towards the net score of the pair.

In a Better Ball round the players do not need to finish the hole as once of the pair cannot improve on the result of his/her companion, they should lift their ball and therefore will not have a score for the hole. This is done in Better Ball competitions to improve the pace of play as the groups are made up of four players.

In order to maintain this feature, the WHS will not count those holes in which the net score of a player for a hole is worse than his/her companion's. If the net score is the same, it will count for both players. If both have a no score or there is no score recorded (Better Ball Stableford) the hole will count for both players.

Example 1

Which player or players meet the criteria for the Better Ball round to be valid for handicapping purposes?

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOT.
PAR	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	72
S.I.	4	10	18	6	2	12	14	8	16	3	9	5	13	17	11	1	15	7	
	*	*		*	*			*		*	*	*			*	*		*	
P.1	9	4		5	5	4		3	3	6		5		3	5	5		5	
	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	
P.2	6	4	3				4				5		4				3		

BETTER BALL RESULT	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	45
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The pair's result is 45 points which meets the first criterion. The first player has 13 holes with a score recorded and the second player has 7 but there are two holes (1 and 2) at which both players have put down their score.

With respect to the second criterion, only those holes that count for the pair's net score will count.

At the first hole, player 9 has a 9 which is 0 Stableford points while player 2 has a 6 which scores 2 Stableford points: therefore player 1's score for the first hole does not count for the second criterion. On the second hole, both players have a 4 and both obtain 3 Stableford points so the hole counts for both players.

This means that 12 holes count for player 1 and 7 for player 2. For player 1, the Better Ball result will be valid for handicapping purposes (both criteria are met) but not for player 2 (the second criterion is not met).

Example 2

Which player or players meet the criteria for the Better Ball round to be valid for handicapping purposes?

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOT.
PAR	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	72
S.I.	4	10	18	6	2	12	14	8	16	3	9	5	13	17	11	1	15	7	
																*			
P.1	5			5	4	3			3			4	3	3				5	
	*			*	*			*		*	*	*				*		*	
P.2		4	3				4	5		5	4				6		3		

BETTER BALL RESULT	2	2	2	1	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	0	0	2	1	35
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The pair's score is less than 42 points which means they do not meet the first criterion. Player 1 has 9 scores recorded and player 2 has 8. However, there are two holes (15 and 16) which count for both players. On the 16th hole neither player completed the hole (neither of them has a score) so the hole counts for both of them. The 15th is similar. Although player 2 has a score for the hole the net result for both players is the same (zero points) and therefore both scores (recorded or not) count for the pair's score. Therefore player 1 has 11 scores (9 recorded plus the 15th and 16th) and player 2 has 9 (8 recorded plus the 16th).

Although both players meet the second requisite, their scores are not valid for handicapping purposes because the first criterion was not met.

2. COMPLETING THE SCORECARD

Once the player's scorecard meets the two requisites, the scorecard is completed following two rules:

- the player receives one and a half Stableford points for each hole without a score, except
- at the holes in which the companion's score is less than one and a half points, in which case the companion's Stableford result is added.

As this is Better Ball, we know that we cannot complete a hole with 1.5 Stableford points if the companion has scored less points. The player will have the same result or worse than his/her companion.

Example 3

How would we complete the scorecard for player 1 from example 1 for handicapping purposes?

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOT.
PAR	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	72
S.I.	4	10	18	6	2	12	14	8	16	3	9	5	13	17	11	1	15	7	
	*	*		*	*			*		*	*	*			*	*		*	
PP.1	9	4		5	5	4		3	3	6		5		3	5	5		5	
	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	
J.2	6	4	3				4				5		4				3		

BETTER BALL RESULT	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	45
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TARJETA COMPLETADA																			
P. 1	1,5	3	1,5	2	3	2	1,5	4	2	2	1,5	2	1,5	2	2	3	1,5	2	38
P. 2																			

We take the Stableford score from the 12 holes that count for the player (see Example 1) and complete the rest (in red). As his companion's score at those holes was always 2 or more points, we complete it with 1.5 points.

Example 4

How would we complete the following scorecard?

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOT.
PAR	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	72
S.I.	4	10	18	6	2	12	14	8	16	3	9	5	13	17	11	1	15	7	
	*			*	*					*		*				*		*	
P.1		3			5				4	6		5		3	5	5		5	
	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
P.2	6		3	4	5	4	4	4		6	5		4	4	6		3	5	

BETTER BALL RESULT	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	1	3	3	2	44
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Player 1 has 9 holes that count and player 2 has 14 (all those recorded). There are 5 holes in which they have the same net score, so they count for both. The pair's score is equal to or higher than 42 points, so the round is valid for both players for handicapping purposes.

COMPLETED SCORECARD																			
P. 1	1,5	3	1,5	1,5	3	1,5	1,5	1,5	1	2	1,5	2	1,5	2	1	3	1,5	2	32,5
P. 2	2	1,5	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	1,5	3	2	1	1,5	3	2	40,5

For player 1 the holes are completed with 1.5 points for a total of 32.5 Stableford points.

For player 2 the holes are completed with 1.5 points with the exception of the 9th where his companion scored 1 Stableford point. This hole is completed with this result instead of the 1.5 (as this is better ball, we know that the players result for this hole is 1 Stableford point at the most, otherwise he would have recorded his score as the better score).

3. CALCULATING THE SCORE DIFFERENTIAL

Once the scorecard has been completed, the Stableford points are added, cutting off the decimals (not rounding) and this result in Stableford points is used to calculate the Adjusted Gross Score (AGS), using the following formula:

:

$$\text{Adjusted Gross Score} = PAR + PH_{\text{better ball}} + 36 - \text{StbRes}$$

where:

PAR: is the par of the set of tees played

PH_{better ball}: is the Playing Handicap the player played the round with (Better Ball, 85%)

StbRes: the Stableford result calculated for the player after adding up the Stableford points stableford

Example 5

What would the AGS of player 1 (hcp. 12.2, CR 71.5, SR 129) in example 3 be?

When completing the scorecard player 1 has 38 Stableford points, he received 11 strokes (PH_{better ball}) and played a par 72. The formula gives:

$$AGS = PAR + PH_{\text{better ball}} + 36 - \text{StbRes} = 72 + 11 + 36 - 38 = 81 \quad (\text{Score Differential} = 8.3)$$

Example 6

What would the AGS be for the players in example 4?

For player 1 (handicap 7.4, CR 71.5, SR_s 129) who receives 7 strokes (PH_{better ball}) and totals 32.5:

The result is cutdown from 32.5 to 32 and the formula is applied.

$$AGS = PAR + PH_{\text{better ball}} + 36 - \text{StbRes} = 72 + 7 + 36 - 32 = 83 \quad (\text{Score Differential} = 10.1)$$

For player 2 (handicap 17.7, CR 73.2, SR_s 131) who receives 18 strokes (PH_{better ball}) and totals 40.5:

The result is cut down from 40.5 to 40 and the formula is applied.

$$AGS = PAR + PH_{\text{better ball}} + 36 - \text{StbRes} = 72 + 18 + 36 - 40 = 86 \quad (\text{Score Differential} = 11.0)$$