2026 Dumbarton Golf Club
Gents Match & Handicap Newsletter

Overview

As we look forward to the 2026 season, the Match & Handicap Team have reviewed the past seasons to see if there is anything significant that could benefit from improvement.

This newsletter contains: key fixture changes, competition rule changes, local rule changes, stroke index changes, and the updated course rating and handicap list.

Key Changes

1. Members can only enter club matchplay competitions if you have **3 competition scores** submitted in the **last 12 months** prior to commencing **your first round of the competition**.
   This is to ensure that a member's handicap remains sufficiently current. It is essentially consistent with the old "starred handicap" system.
2. 1st Class is up to and including **12.5**
   2nd Class is from **12.6 to 18.8**
   3rd Class is from **18.9**
   This is from analysis of last year's medals to ensure that each class contains approximately the same number of players.
3. Members will **no longer be automatically entered into matchplay draws**. If a member qualifies for a matchplay through a strokeplay competition they will **have to confirm that they wish to take part** on a sheet in the clubhouse.
   This reduces the number of members receiving unnecessary "byes" in competitions.
4. **6 monthly medals** will return to being **strokeplay competitions**.
   This is to allow flexibility on the fixture list with regards to qualifiers.
5. Monthly medals will remain **"multi-tee" competitions for those in 3rd Class only**. This means that members can choose to play from red, yellow or white tees in these competitions, provided that they play from the same tee on every hole. The medal software will adjust their playing handicap accordingly dependent on which tee is used.
6. There will be a **handicapped matchplay competition for First Class**, similar to the Rodgers Trophy for 2nd and 3rd Class.
7. There will be a **36-hole Club Championship** competition.
8. The **Seniors Club Championship** will be **open to all gents' members over the age of 55**. The qualifiers will be at the same time as the Club Championship.

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9. There will be a handful of **medal competitions on Sundays**, when a team competition has taken place on the Saturday.
   This should minimise the likelihood of fixtures extending into autumn months.
10. Fourball Matchplay will return to being **3/4 (75%) of the difference off the low man**. The Shanghai will have a **maximum difference of 18 strokes**.
    All other matchplay competitions will remain as previous.
    This recognises the fact that WHS reflects average scoring, rather than potential scoring (CONGU). As such the increased handicap allowance is considered disproportionate. This approach is consistent with the recommendation from the GB&I Technical Handicap Advisory Group to create equity in competitions.
11. The golf club will **no longer accept OpenPlay** members for open competitions or as guests in member/guest competitions.
    This decision has been taken as we feel it's important to continue to value golfers who hold membership of golf clubs.

If any member has questions or concerns about the changes, please contact matchsecretary@dumbartongolfclub.co.uk.

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2026 Competition Rules and Formats (changes in red)

Club Championship

16 entrants will compete in a singles match play knockout competition. There will be no handicap allowance. The 16 entrants will be the holder plus 15 entrants with the lowest combined scratch scores from 2 out of 3 competitions. These competitions will be selected per the fixture calendar arranged by the Match & Handicap Committee.

Club Championship Strokeplay

36-hole singles strokeplay competition. There is no playing handicap allowance. The maximum handicap for entrants will be agreed by the Match & Handicap Committee.

Seniors Club Championship

8 entrants over the age of 55 on the date of the first qualifier will compete in a singles match play knockout competition. There will be no handicap allowance. The 8 entrants will be the holder plus 7 entrants with the lowest combined scratch scores from 2 out of 3 competitions. These competitions will be selected per the fixture calendar arranged by the Match & Handicap Committee.

Shanghai Cup

Singles match play format. The playing handicap allowance is 100%. The maximum difference is 18.

J. Miller Rosebowl

2-ball (foursomes) match play format. The playing handicap allowance is 50% of the combined course handicap. The maximum difference between competitors is 36.

Ballantine Quaich

4-ball match play format. The playing handicap allowance is 75% of the difference of course handicaps between the lowest competitor and all others. The maximum difference between competitors is 36.

1st Class Matchplay (Name TBC)

Singles match play format. The playing handicap allowance is 100%. The maximum difference is 18. 16 entrants will be taken from 1st class on the day of the qualifying competition. The 16 entrants with the lowest nett scores in 1st class will qualify from a competition selected per the fixture calendar arranged by the Match & Handicap Committee.

R. Rodgers Trophy

Singles match play format. The playing handicap allowance is 100%. The maximum difference is 36. 16 entrants will be taken from 2nd and 3rd class on the day of the qualifying competition. The 8 entrants with the lowest nett scores in each class will qualify from a competition selected per the fixture calendar arranged by the Match & Handicap Committee

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President's Cup

Singles match play format. The playing handicap allowance is 100%. The maximum difference is 36. 32 entrants qualifying will be those with the lowest nett scores from a competition selected per the fixture calendar arranged by the Match & Handicap Committee

A. Thomson Trophy

Singles match play format. The playing handicap allowance is 100%. The maximum difference is 36. 16 entrants qualifying will be those with the lowest nett scores from a competition selected per the fixture calendar arranged by the Match & Handicap Committee.

Competition Classes

Divided into 3 classes as determined and communicated by the Match & Handicap Committee prior to the first medal of the season.

Order of Merit

The order of merit will be awarded to the golfer that accumulates the most points from eligible individual strokeplay and stableford competitions, with the exception of Wednesday Medals and open competitions. The format for awarding points will be as agreed by the Match & Handicap Committee prior to the season starting.

Monthly Medals

Individual Stableford and Strokeplay format with the format alternating for each successive medal. Members in Third Class can play from any colour of tee, with their course handicap being calculated accordingly. Members in First and Second Class must play from White Tees. The playing handicap allowance is 95%. The same tee must be used for all 18 holes. These will be played on Saturdays or Sundays as per the fixture calendar arranged by the Match & Handicap Committee.

Medal Final

The medal final will be contested during the December Medal. To be eligible to win the medal final you must have won one of the monthly medals from the preceding calendar year.

Wednesday Medals

Wednesday Medals will take place fortnightly from April until August as per the fixture calendar arranged by the Match & Handicap Committee. Individual strokeplay format with all members competing in a single class.

Charles Begg Cup – Wednesday Medal Final

The 24 members with the 2 lowest combined nett scores from Wednesday medals during the current calendar year will be eligible for the Wednesday Final. The winner will be the competitor that achieves the lowest nett score on the day.

125 Trophy

3-person Texas Scramble competition played from the White tees. Ball should be placed in the fairway, and dropped in the rough and in bunkers. Team members must contribute a minimum of 4 drives and a maximum of 7. Handicap allowance is 30%/20%/10% of course handicap from lowest to highest handicap. It may be played off winter mats.

Veteran's Trophy

Awarded to the member submitting the lowest nett score that is over the age of 55 on the date of the competition. The handicap allowance is 95% of course handicap.

Alger Electric Cup

2 Strokeplay competitions will be held during the year. The winner will be the competitor that achieves the lowest combined nett score total from these competitions. The competition(s) will be played from White tees. The handicap allowance is 95% of course handicap.

Denny Salver

2 Strokeplay competitions will be held during the year. The winner will be the competitor that achieves the lowest combined nett score total from these competitions. The competition(s) will be played from White tees. The handicap allowance is 95% of course handicap.

D. Gray Cup

Individual Strokeplay competition played from White tees. The handicap allowance is 95% of course handicap. The winner will be the competitor that achieves the lowest nett score.

J. McKenzie Putter

Individual Strokeplay competition played from White tees. The handicap allowance is 95% of course handicap. The winner will be the competitor that achieves the lowest nett score.

Tennent's Cup

Individual Bogey competition played from White tees. The handicap allowance is 95% of course handicap. The winner will be the competitor that achieves the greatest margin of victory, or smallest margin of defeat, against the course.

Centenary Cup

2 individual Bogey competitions played from White tees. The handicap allowance is 95% of course handicap. The winner will be the competitor that achieves the greatest combined margin of victory, or smallest combined margin of defeat, against the course over the 2 rounds.

Paul Watt Memorial Trophy

Individual Stableford format. Members can play from any colour of tee, with their course handicap being calculated accordingly. The playing handicap allowance is 95%. The same tee must be used for all 18 holes. The winner will be the competitor with the highest points total

on the day. If this tournament is combined with a monthly medal, the trophy can only be won by a competitor playing from White tees.

J Luttrell Canadian Greensome

Both players tee off, then they switch balls. Player A plays Player B's drive, and vice-versa. Each player hits the second shot. They then select the preferred second shot, and from that point they play only one ball in an alternate shot format until the ball is holed.

This competition will be played off White tees. Dumbarton members can play with another member or a guest with a recognised handicap, holding membership of a golf club. The playing handicap allowance is 50% of the combined course handicaps. The winners will be the pairing with the lowest nett score on the day.

R. Clifford Trophy

The R. Clifford Trophy will be awarded to the member that submits the best 6 combined scores from the monthly medals during that season.

Captain's Prize

Individual Stableford format. Members can play from any colour of tee, with their course handicap being calculated accordingly. The playing handicap allowance is 95%. The same tee must be used for all 18 holes. The winner will be the competitor with the highest points total on the day.

Millennium Trophy

Tri-am Competition played from the White tees. Format is combined betterball stableford. For the first 6 holes the best 1 score counts, for the next 6 holes the best 2 scores count, for the last 6 holes all scores count. Handicap allowance is 85% of course handicap.

Resolving ties in strokeplay or stableford competitions

If two players have the same score depending on the format (gross, nett or points) then the competition shall be resolved in the following order:

1. Better inward half (back 9)
2. Better last six
3. Better last three
4. Better final hole
5. If a tie still persists, the competition is jointly awarded.

If the event consists of multiple rounds, then the resolution shall be on the basis of better last 18, followed by steps 1-5 above.

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Local Rules

1. The course is bounded by the hedges/fences beyond the 18th green, the fence at the back of the clubhouse, the fence at the back of the 14th green, the white stakes at the front of the greenkeepers shed, around the communications installation at the back of the 7th green, the fence running from the right of the 8th to the back of the 10th green, the North Pole Burn to the right of the 11th and 12th holes, the Leven embankment, and the white posts running alongside the 15th and 16th holes. A ball is out of bounds when it is beyond any of these fences, hedges, or white stakes. A ball is out of bounds when in the North Pole Burn. For the Leven embankment, a ball is out of bounds when it is on or beyond the level part at the top of the embankment.
2. All roads and paths other than the tarred road (behind the 18th green) leading to the greenkeepers shed are immovable obstructions. If a player's ball is within this area, free relief may be taken under Rule 16.1b.
3. The sign at the right-hand rear of the 18th green is an immovable object. If a player's ball, player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing, will impact on this sign then the player may take free relief under Rule 16.1b.
4. The area marked out using red stakes with a white stripe to the right of the 5th and 6th holes is a No Play Zone that is treated as a penalty area. Both the ditch and wooded area are part of the penalty area. If a player's ball is known or virtually certain to be in that penalty area, then relief must be taken. On the 5th and 6th hole the player may take relief under Rule 17.1e (stroke and distance, back-on-the-line, lateral) or the player can drop the original ball or another ball in the marked drop zones that is no nearer to the hole than the point at which it entered the penalty area. These zones are considered Relief Areas under Rule 14.3. All these options incur a penalty of 1 stroke.
5. Young trees, those being shorter than 48 inches (maximum length of a driver), are abnormal course conditions. If a player's ball lies anywhere on the course other than in a penalty area and it lies on or touches such a tree or such a tree interferes with the player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing, this is a No Play Zone and the player must take relief under Rule 16.1f.
6. The flower bed and practice putting green are No Play Zones that are treated as an abnormal course condition. If a player's ball, player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing, will impact on these areas then the player must take free relief under Rule 16.1f. Any area of grass between edge of the putting green and the flower bed is not part of the No Play Zone and the ball should be played as it lies.
7. Tractor marks, aeration holes, and drainage workings within the general area are ground under repair. If a player's ball is within this area free relief may be taken under

Rule 16.1b. This does not extend to undulations in the fairway as a result of collapsed drains within the general area.

8. Ground under repair includes any bare water-damaged areas within the general area cut to fairway height or less. If a player's ball is within this area free relief may be taken under Rule 16.1b.
9. Aeration holes on the putting green are considered ground under repair. If a player's ball lies within an aeriation hole free relief may be taken under Rule 16.1d. But interference does not exist if the aeration hole only interferes with the player's stance or area of intended swing or the player's line of play.
10. At such times that the committee have declared that fairway mats are in play, if a player's ball lies in a part of the general area cut to fairway height or less and a putter is not being used for the stroke, the player must take free relief by lifting the original ball and placing the original ball or another ball on an artificial mat and play it from there.
11. Distance measuring devices are allowed by Rule 4.3. These devices must be restricted to those that solely measure distance. Devices that measure elevation changes, gradient, or wind speed are permitted but the functionality must be disabled. Use of a device with these additional features would constitute a breach of Rule 4.3.

Notes:
Rule 16 covers when and how the player may take free relief by playing a ball from a different place. Rule 17 is a specific Rule for penalty areas. For one penalty stroke, players may use specific relief options to play a ball from outside the penalty area.

MATCHPLAY HANDICAP ALLOWANCES

Singles:- 100% of course handicap
Foursomes:- 50% of combined team course handicap
Four-ball:- 75% of course handicap

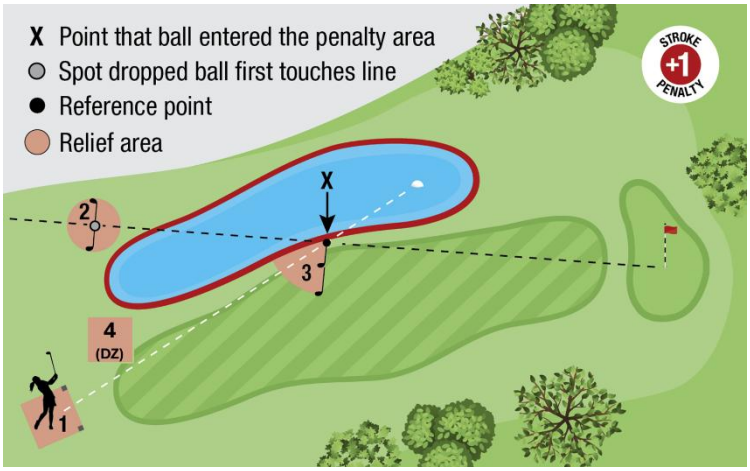

Figure 1 - Relief options on 5 and 6

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Stroke Index Changes

The below changes are result of analysis of circa **4,000 competition rounds played** and a re-assessment of the course rating by Scottish Golf during 2025 from white tees. Changes are highlighted **green**.

Hole	White Yards	Yellow Yards	Par	S.I.	Red Yards	Par	S.I.
1	329	319	4	6	314	4	6
2	366	360	4	8	352	4	8
3	339	334	4	16	338	4	12
4	166	156	3	12	162	3	10
5	363	327	4	14	276	4	14
6	252	247	4	18	249	4	18
7	367	346	4	2	317	4	4
8	188	168	3	10	150	3	16
9	407	401	4	4	389	4	2
	2777	2658	34		2547	34	
10	490	435	5/4	7	389	4	3
11	163	153	3	17	143	3	17
12	404	394	4	1	383	4	1
13	331	326	4	11	318	4	11
14	314	297	4	15	235	3	7
15	308	304	4	9	283	4	15
16	484	478	5	5	389	4	13
17	384	370	4	3	368	4	9
18	334	329	4	13	223	3	5
	3212	3086	37/36		2731	33	
	2777	2658	34		2547	34	
	5989	5744	71/70		5278	37	

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2026 Updated Course Handicap Board

Men's - White

Course Rating™: 69.9
Slope Rating®: 125 - Par: 71

Handicap Index®	Course Handicap™	Handicap Index®	Course Handicap™
+5.0 to +4.9	+7	24.1 to 24.9	26
+4.8 to +4.0	+6	25.0 to 25.8	27
+3.9 to +3.1	+5	25.9 to 26.7	28
+3.0 to +2.2	+4	26.8 to 27.6	29
+2.1 to +1.3	+3	27.7 to 28.5	30
+1.2 to +0.4	+2	28.6 to 29.4	31
+0.3 to 0.5	+1	29.5 to 30.3	32
0.6 to 1.4	0	30.4 to 31.2	33
1.5 to 2.3	1	31.3 to 32.1	34
2.4 to 3.2	2	32.2 to 33.0	35
3.3 to 4.1	3	33.1 to 33.9	36
4.2 to 5.0	4	34.0 to 34.8	37
5.1 to 5.9	5	34.9 to 35.7	38
6.0 to 6.8	6	35.8 to 36.7	39
6.9 to 7.7	7	36.8 to 37.6	40
7.8 to 8.6	8	37.7 to 38.5	41
8.7 to 9.5	9	38.6 to 39.4	42
9.6 to 10.4	10	39.5 to 40.3	43
10.5 to 11.3	11	40.4 to 41.2	44
11.4 to 12.2	12	41.3 to 42.1	45
12.3 to 13.1	13	42.2 to 43.0	46
13.2 to 14.1	14	43.1 to 43.9	47
14.2 to 15.0	15	44.0 to 44.8	48
15.1 to 15.9	16	44.9 to 45.7	49
16.0 to 16.8	17	45.8 to 46.6	50
16.9 to 17.7	18	46.7 to 47.5	51
17.8 to 18.6	19	47.6 to 48.4	52
18.7 to 19.5	20	48.5 to 49.3	53
19.6 to 20.4	21	49.4 to 50.2	54
20.5 to 21.3	22	50.3 to 51.1	55
21.4 to 22.2	23	51.2 to 52.0	56
22.3 to 23.1	24	52.1 to 52.9	57
23.2 to 24.0	25	53.0 to 53.8	58
		53.9 to 54.0	59

Men's - Yellow

Course Rating™: 68.5
Slope Rating®: 121 - Par: 69

Handicap Index®	Course Handicap™	Handicap Index®	Course Handicap™
+5.0 to +4.7	+6	24.3 to 25.2	26
+4.6 to +3.8	+5	25.3 to 26.1	27
+3.7 to +2.9	+4	26.2 to 27.0	28
+2.8 to +1.9	+3	27.1 to 28.0	29
+1.8 to +1.0	+2	28.1 to 28.9	30
+0.9 to +0.1	+1	29.0 to 29.8	31
0.0 to 0.9	0	29.9 to 30.8	32
1.0 to 1.8	1	30.9 to 31.7	33
1.9 to 2.8	2	31.8 to 32.6	34
2.9 to 3.7	3	32.7 to 33.6	35
3.8 to 4.6	4	33.7 to 34.5	36
4.7 to 5.6	5	34.6 to 35.4	37
5.7 to 6.5	6	35.5 to 36.4	38
6.6 to 7.4	7	36.5 to 37.3	39
7.5 to 8.4	8	37.4 to 38.2	40
8.5 to 9.3	9	38.3 to 39.2	41
9.4 to 10.2	10	39.3 to 40.1	42
10.3 to 11.2	11	40.2 to 41.0	43
11.3 to 12.1	12	41.1 to 42.0	44
12.2 to 13.0	13	42.1 to 42.9	45
13.1 to 14.0	14	43.0 to 43.8	46
14.1 to 14.9	15	43.9 to 44.8	47
15.0 to 15.8	16	44.9 to 45.7	48
15.9 to 16.8	17	45.8 to 46.6	49
16.9 to 17.7	18	46.7 to 47.6	50
17.8 to 18.6	19	47.7 to 48.5	51
18.7 to 19.6	20	48.6 to 49.4	52
19.7 to 20.5	21	49.5 to 50.4	53
20.6 to 21.4	22	50.5 to 51.3	54
21.5 to 22.4	23	51.4 to 52.2	55
22.5 to 23.3	24	52.3 to 53.2	56
23.4 to 24.2	25	53.3 to 54.0	57

Men's - Red

Course Rating™: 66.3
Slope Rating®: 116 - Par: 66

Handicap Index®	Course Handicap™	Handicap Index®	Course Handicap™
+5.0 to +4.7	+5	24.6 to 25.5	26
+4.6 to +3.8	+4	25.6 to 26.4	27
+3.7 to +2.8	+3	26.5 to 27.4	28
+2.7 to +1.8	+2	27.5 to 28.4	29
+1.7 to +0.8	+1	28.5 to 29.4	30
+0.7 to 0.1	0	29.5 to 30.3	31
0.2 to 1.1	1	30.4 to 31.3	32
1.2 to 2.1	2	31.4 to 32.3	33
2.2 to 3.1	3	32.4 to 33.3	34
3.2 to 4.0	4	33.4 to 34.2	35
4.1 to 5.0	5	34.3 to 35.2	36
5.1 to 6.0	6	35.3 to 36.2	37
6.1 to 7.0	7	36.3 to 37.2	38
7.1 to 7.9	8	37.3 to 38.1	39
8.0 to 8.9	9	38.2 to 39.1	40
9.0 to 9.9	10	39.2 to 40.1	41
10.0 to 10.9	11	40.2 to 41.1	42
11.0 to 11.8	12	41.2 to 42.0	43
11.9 to 12.8	13	42.1 to 43.0	44
12.9 to 13.8	14	43.1 to 44.0	45
13.9 to 14.8	15	44.1 to 45.0	46
14.9 to 15.7	16	45.1 to 45.9	47
15.8 to 16.7	17	46.0 to 46.9	48
16.8 to 17.7	18	47.0 to 47.9	49
17.8 to 18.7	19	48.0 to 48.9	50
18.8 to 19.6	20	49.0 to 49.8	51
19.7 to 20.6	21	49.9 to 50.8	52
20.7 to 21.6	22	50.9 to 51.8	53
21.7 to 22.5	23	51.9 to 52.7	54
22.6 to 23.5	24	52.8 to 53.7	55
23.6 to 24.5	25	53.8 to 54.0	56