

Okie Scramble Handicap Logic

Following is a description of player categories and how handicaps are calculated and managed for the Okie Scramble Vegas. We have 2 flight categories, Open flight (younger participants) or Senior flight (older participants). Both players must be at least 50 years old and the team's combined age must be at least 110 years to qualify for Senior flights. We generally have 4 open flights (A-D) and 2 senior flights (A-B). Open flight utilizes 3 sets of tees (Yellow, White, and Red). Senior flight utilizes 2 tees (White, Red). Maximum individual handicaps are capped at 54.0. GHIN caps handicap indexes at this number, so we do the same for anyone not having a GHIN. Granted, some individuals probably should be higher than 54, but it is not fair to give those that do not have GHIN more than those with GHIN. Daily adjustments are made, up or down to handicaps based on how they played compared to their flight average. These adjustments are made using a percentage designated by the tournament committee. Previously we used 50% of the strokes a team was above or below the flight average. Beginning in 2026, we will use varying percentages based on whether a team is above or below that flight average. The reason is some teams with no Okie Scramble history having a handicap that is not accurate, or teams manipulating their scores on any given day to place themselves in better position to cash in future days. These percentages will be used evenly across all teams. For example, every team that scores better than the flight average on a given day may be adjusted 60% downward, while teams that score higher than the flight average could only be adjusted 30% upward. Okie Scramble is ever evolving, and constantly trying to keep its tournaments as fair as possible. It is difficult, but we are as close as any tournament could hope to be.

For handicapping purposes, we have 3 categories of teams:

- **RT** or Returning Teams
- **NT** or New Teams where one or both players have NO official GHIN handicap index
- **NTG** or New Teams where BOTH players have an official GHIN handicap Index

(RT) handicap is calculated after their last round of golf in a recent (previous) Okie Scramble Vegas event. By the end of an event we have a good idea of each team's scoring ability. Even better, if teams come back more than once, their handicap keeps getting adjusted, so it's extremely accurate. One point of clarification, we are not calculating a true GHIN type handicap, because GHIN is compared to Par, we calculate our handicap as how it compares to the flight Average. We calculate the average for each flight after each round by removing disqualified and withdrawn teams, then remove the highest and lowest score in each flight, and use the remaining scores to calculate the average. These handicaps are accurate for Okie events.

(NT) are teams that have never played together or teams that have not played together in the past few years. We inquire about their handicap, add the 2 handicaps together. Then consider 2 adjustments. First adjustment for NT teams, since at least one of the players has no official GHIN, their team handicap is hit with a percentage penalty. Historically, this percentage ranged from 20%-25%. Beginning in 2026, this percentage will probably be something higher since NT teams cash drastically more than other teams on opening day. This is due to many of their provided handicaps being too high. The reason for this penalty is based on extensive study. The fact that GHIN uses the lowest 8 out of the past 20 scores to calculate an index, and restricts upward movement. The result of having GHIN is a handicap index that is approximately 33% less than what someone thinks their handicap should be based on calculating their average score to par. Remember we do not calculate handicaps based on score to par, but rather score to flight average. Second adjustment for NT teams, is for the tees each player is playing. Players play from different tees, depending on their age. The baseline is the longest tee box in each flight (Yellow tee in all Open flights and White tee in all Senior flights). The number of strokes difference between each tee box is calculated using GHINs algorithm (course and slope rating) which is on the USGA website. In the case of Paiute, it averages 2 strokes for each tee box you move up. First movement are those 60 and above (White Tees), second movement is for those 70 and above (Red Tees). In the Open flight it is possible to move up 2 sets of tees (Yellow to

Red), in which case each player incurs a 4-stroke reduction to the team handicap (2 strokes for each box moved forward). If they only move up 1 set of tees from the baseline, a 2-stroke reduction to their handicap would be used. Last adjustment, a small percentage of that new adjusted team total is used for their Opening Handicap. In past years, 25% was used after the other adjustments, but this percentage could change in the future. We are looking for a number that compares nicely with the Returning Team (RT) handicaps, which are in the most accurate.

(NTG) are teams where both players have an official GHIN handicap index and that index can be verified by the handicap committee. We check their handicap index using the GHIN app and add the 2 together for a team handicap. Because continuous checking of GHIN indexes is so labor intensive, we verify every Player's GHIN index again, one time only, a few weeks ahead of tournament time, but only make changes if it is apparent the newer index is out of line from what was provided. If this is the case, we use either their new GHIN index, their GHIN Low Index (LI) in the case a handicap went up dramatically, or the Handicap Committee will assign a handicap if we feel the information we received is not valid. From there we make an adjustment for the tee each player is playing. If their age lets them move up, they get a 2-stroke reduction for each set of tees moved. Last adjustment for NTG, a small percentage of that new adjusted team total is used for their Opening Handicap. In past years, 25% was used after the other adjustments, but this percentage could change in the future. We are looking for a number that compares nicely with the Returning Team (RT) handicaps, which are the most accurate.

Example #1 (NT Team): Bob reports a 10 handicap; James reports a 25 handicap. Combined they have a team handicap of 35. Based on their age, they fall into an Open flight and Bob plays the Yellow tees and James plays the White tees. Neither has a verifiable GHIN handicap. First, they get the percentage penalty for not having a GHIN index. Second, they lose 2 strokes off their total because James is playing the White tees. Last, we use a percentage adjustment (historically 25%) of their new team total as their Opening Handicap.

Example #2 (NTG Team): Steve has a 10.5 handicap index; John has a 25.4 handicap index. Combined, they have a team handicap of 35.9. Steve plays the Red Tees (age 73); John plays the Yellow Tees (age 41). Since John is not old enough for the team to qualify for the Senior flight, they will compete in the Open flight. Steve does get to move up two tee boxes due to being over 70 and will receive a 4 stroke reduction (2 strokes per tee). This makes their team handicap 31.9. Lastly, we use a percentage adjustment (historically 25%) of their new team total as their Opening Handicap.

Example #3 (NT Team): Bill reports a 20.3 handicap and has an official GHIN; Homer reports a 54.0 handicap but no official GHIN. Combined, they have a team handicap of 74.3. Bill is 66 years old; Homer is 73 years old. Their combined age puts them in the Senior flight. First, they get the penalty for BOTH not having a verifiable GHIN index. Homer moves up to the Red tee box due to being over 70. A reduction of 2 strokes will be made for Homer moving up. Lastly, we use a percentage adjustment (historically 25%) of their new team total as their Opening Handicap.

The main thing to remember is; nothing is perfect for everyone, but based on years of data, and running tournaments that are as fair as one can hope, these calculations are equitable. In a perfect world, every team would be a Returning team with years of data from past Okie Scrambles to rely on, and no adjustments would need to take place, but that never happens. This is a lot to digest, but hopefully gives everyone a better picture of what goes on. Luckily, Okie Scrambles have been going on for years, most of this is automated, and happens with very little intervention.