Okie Scramble Handicap Logic

The following is a description of the player categories and how starting handicaps are calculated for Okie Scramble. 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 the Senior flights. Senior flights go quick, so it is first come first served. We generally have 4 open flights (A-D) and 2 senior flights (A-B). Open flight utilizes 3 different tees (Yellow, White, and Red). Senior flight utilizes 2 different tees (White, Red). Maximum individual handicaps are capped at 54.0. The GHIN system caps handicap indexes at this number, so we do the same for individuals who do not have a GHIN index. Granted, some individuals probably should be higher than 54.0, but it is not fair to give those that do not have an official index more strokes than those with an official index. 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. Handicaps are adjusted 50% up or down each day in Okie Scramble events. By the end of a 2 or 3 day event we have a fairly good depiction of each team's abilities. Even better, if teams come back more than once, it just 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 "Average" in their flight. We calculate the average for each flight after each round by removing disqualified teams, withdrawn teams, etc. and then remove the highest and lowest score in each flight, then calculate the average. From there we determine how each team compared to that flight average, and adjust 50% of that difference for the next round, or in the case of the final round of the year, where they would start the next year. These handicaps are the most accurate for Okie events.

(NT) are teams that have never played together or teams that have not played together in the past 3+ years. We inquire about their handicap, add the 2 handicaps together for their team handicap. Then consider 2 adjustments. First, since at least one of the players has no official GHIN, their team handicap is hit with a 20% penalty. The reason for this is based on extensive study into how GHIN only uses your lowest 8 out of 20 scores to calculate your index, and will not allow upward movement very quickly. The result is a handicap index that is at least 20% less than what someone thinks their handicap is based on simply calculating the average score to par. Second, is an adjustment 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 their 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. From there, only 25% of that new adjusted team total is used for their Opening Handicap. We have found that using 25% after the other adjustments compares real nicely against the Returning Team (RT) handicaps, which are in fact 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. Player's handicaps are checked again closer to tournament time, but are only changed 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 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 only need to make one adjustment which is for the tee each player is playing from. Just like the New Teams, if their age lets them move up, they get a 2-stroke reduction for each set of tees moved. Lastly, only 25% of that new adjusted team total is used as their Opening handicap.

Here is an example of how this logic would work for a New Team (NT): Bob reports a 10 handicap; James reports a 25 handicap. Combined they have a team handicap of 35. Based on their age, the 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 20% reduction from their total for not having a verifiable GHIN index, this takes them to 28. Second, they lose 2 strokes off their total because James is playing the White tees. This takes their team total to 26.   Last, we use 25% of their new team total, or 6.5 as their Opening Handicap.

Here is an example of a New Team with a verifiable GHIN (NTG) for both players: 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. A reduction of 4 strokes will be made for Steve moving up (2 strokes per tee). This makes their team handicap 31.9. Lastly, we use 25% of their adjusted team total, or 7.975 as their Opening handicap.

Final example is for a New Team (NT). 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. They get the 20% team reduction for BOTH not have a verifiable GHIN index. Their team total goes to 59.44. 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. This makes their team handicap 57.44. Lastly, we use 25% of their new team total, or 14.36 as their Opening handicap.

The main thing to remember is; nothing appears perfect for each and every team, but based on years of data, and running tournaments that are as fair as one can hope for, 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, but that never happens. Lastly, this is a lot to digest, however since Okie Scrambles have been going on for years, most of this is automated, and happens with very little intervention.