

Handicapping Policy 2023

AIM: Everyone has a chance to win and there is a range of winners over the season

Criteria to meet:

1. Athletes should be able to understand how their handicap has been determined,
2. The method should apply equally to all athletes,
3. The handicap should be adjusted to the distance of the race and
4. The handicap should reflect the athlete's level of ability.

General handicapping procedure:

- All handicaps will be converted to a 10km equivalent rate across all divisions and adjusted according to the race distances each week
- Initial handicapping paces of a season are established from the fastest of:
 - The athlete's fastest pace from the last 10 races of the previous season,
 - The athlete's pace from their first race of the season.
- As per the **Season Opener Bonus Policy** Athletes will be awarded 20 bonus consistency points if they record a faster pace in their first race than their best pace from the previous season.
- For the purpose of handicapping if you competed in two or less races in a particular race division last season you will be classified as a new runner for that division.
- There are no "lifts" in handicap due to deteriorating performance i.e., injury or sickness. However consistent performances below the athlete's handicapping pace may be considered at the discretion of the handicapping panel.
- Where an athlete performs more than 15 seconds per km slower than the previous season's handicapping pace over 5 runs, their handicapping pace will be adjusted to their fastest pace for the current season.
- Where a handicap has been incorrectly applied which has given a winning athlete a material advantage a discussion with the athlete will be initiated by the handicap committee and the correct handicap may be retrospectively applied and race results adjusted.

When an athlete changes divisions

- Where an athlete moves to a lower division, their new handicapping pace will be set as their handicapping pace from the higher division minus 20 seconds per km.
- Where an athlete moves to a higher division, they will retain their existing handicapping pace.

Once any athlete has won a race,

- If an athlete wins a race, then their fastest recorded pace of the season becomes their new handicapping pace, provided it is faster than their current handicapping pace.
- their handicapping pace will be adjusted by subtracting:
 - 20 seconds per km for Div. 1 and Div. 2,

- 25 seconds per km for Div. 3 and
- An additional 10 seconds per km for every win after the first of the season.
- The adjustment for winning a race will be applied to all divisions for that athlete, e.g., a win in Div. 1 will incur a 20-sec per km adjustment for Div. 1 and Div. 2 and 25-sec for Div. 3.

New athlete handicapping procedure:

- For a new athlete joining at the start of the season, their initial handicapping pace will be taken as their pace for the scratch race, minus 20 seconds per km.
- For a new athlete joining after the opening scratch race of the season, their initial handicapping pace will be set from a previous race or nominated time, minus 20 seconds per km.
 - If no previous race time or a club handicapper is available, a new athlete will run off the back marker.
- The handicapping pace for a new athlete will be adjusted if necessary for their first 3 events.
- Once a new athlete has completed 3 races their handicap will be based on the fastest of these runs and normal club rules will apply thereafter.