

2018 TURF WARS RULES, REGULATIONS AND HANDICAPPING

Junkies, Pro and Turf Owners,

This year's Turf Wars is just around the corner! Twice a year, once prior to March Mayhem and then again before Turf Wars, I spend a great deal of time trying to fine-tune these tournaments to make them as objective as possible, not giving a clear advantage to any one individual or turf involved. The preparation for this year's Turf Wars far exceeded that of prep that was put in for tournaments in prior. Unfortunate as it was, last year there was some undesired animosity and discussion that surrounded the tournament which clouded the real goal for the event which is to strengthen the bond between turfmates in each class, for every turf and throughout the Syphus community as a whole; using competition as a team building exercise.

I believe that this year's format will answer many of the concerns and nix any of the loopholes that were exposed in the tournaments of the past. My hope is that this will level the playing field for this and future Turf Wars to come, creating a positive vibe through and through.

Best of luck to all turfs and participants. Enjoy this opportunity to be part of an amazing community we've built, together!

-Mike Hackett

WHAT: Our 5th annual intra-location competition known as Turf Wars.

WHO: All Michigan locations and its members that are on the "Big Boards". Initiates and Newbies are welcome to work out during Turf Wars, however their scores will not be posted until after the tournament.

WHEN: Competition spans from Monday, October 22nd through Sunday, October 28th with an "off day" scheduled mid-week on that Thursday.

THE STAKES: Winners of Turf Wars will get their turf's name etched on the Turf Wars Plate Trophy that will remain at their turf until next year's Turf Wars. The winning turf will also get to create a "Punishment Workout" for the other turfs to endure, known as the Wager Workout, which includes a carefully curated playlist. This year's Wager Workout will take place on Tuesday, October 29th. Wager Workouts and playlists must be submitted to motherboard@syphustraining.com PRIOR to the first day of Turf Wars.

HOW: As they usually do, members of each location will receive a score for the day, but his/her score is counted in the turf average for that day which is then used against a "handicap" and then compared to the other locations to determine which location's performance was the best for that given day.

This year's handicap is changing from year's prior. The rest of this document is dedicated to explaining the handicap, how each factor of it was derived and the concerns that should be alleviated with this new layout.

In past years the handicap, known as a War Boulder, was derived by looking at a Turf's past performances, often taking either the Seasonal Boulder (Turf's average score for the calendar year), the 30 Day Boulder (Turf's average score for the last 30 days), a 60 Day Boulder and or a combination of these three. Through a "pool play" format, Turfs then competed against these turf-specific War Boulders and each Turf's composite daily score over their Wars Boulder, gave us their +/-, signifying their performance which was compared to that of the other locations. Turfs were then awarded points for their ranking each day of pool play until the top 4 turfs were decided and were seeded in a head-to-head single elimination bracket-style tournament to determine the finals and overall winner of Turf Wars.

While this format wasn't terribly ineffective, it did have a few flaws that lead to a number of complaints and concerns voiced by the community. It was mitigating the following list of concerns that drove the restructuring of this year's format, all of which, I think you will find to be solved by this year's handicap. Each concern is addressed individually in the later portion of this document:

- **Form Standard from Turf to Turf**
- **Sandbagging & Competition-score Discrepancies**
- **Running Twice in One Day**
- **Not Keeping a Score**
- **Attendance or Lack-there-of**
- **Forecasting & Playing the Numbers Game**
- **Punishing the "Higher Performing" Turf**
- **Turf Conditions & Season**
- **Roster Stacking & Playing the Waiting Game**

2018 Format: With the above in mind this year's format will no longer feature a points system nor a pool play but instead this year's winner will hinge on an ongoing score that spans the entirety of the tournament to which all locations will have a chance to win, likely until the very last day of the tournament.

Handicap: A two-fold handicap that counts BOTH your Turf's performance and attendance.

War Boulder: EVERY Turf will compete against a common War Boulder of 640. The average score for the day from each Turf will be compared to 640 points. The result is the turf's +/- for the day and is the first component of that day's score known as the Performance Score.

Attendance Factor: Directly following the calculation of a Turf's performance score for the day, points will be awarded or subtracted to the performance number based on that day's attendance for their turf based on the following average attendance by turf

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Turf BT - 52
Turf HT - 36
Turf SCS - 35
Turf SH - 19

The above numbers are an average attendance marker for each turf (explained in more detail below), to which each turf's actual attendance will be compared to resulting in a number (+/-) that will be known as the Attendance Score.

Final Day's Score: Your Turf's final score for the day is your turf's performance score (+/- 640) combined with its attendance score (+/- Avg. attendance). An example of this might be Turf SCS scores a 700 on Day 1, giving them a +60 for performance, however, only 25 people attended **AND KEPT A SCORE**, therefore they are docked 10 points giving them a +50 for the day.

Turf Wars Final Score: An ongoing score is kept day-to-day over the duration of the tournament to determine the overall winner. Using the above example, Turf SCS may be +50 after Day 1, but on Day 2 their final score was a -120, bringing their Turf Wars score to -70 overall. In theory, this will force turfs to compete every day and every class of the tournament, likely not knowing who wins until "the math" is in on the final day.

BEYOND DETAILED TURF WARS FAQs

For those Syphus Scholars wishing to learn more about how this year's format came about and how it should temper various concerns from years past, read on.

Where did a 640 War Boulder come from? Why is every Turf held to this standard? Like the years prior, I had initially set out to find a War Boulder for each turf that seemed appropriate to set as their own unique barometer to compete against. With the general concerns mentioned (ie. turf conditions, competitive score discrepancies, attendance, etc.) this year I intentionally planned to look at a larger sample size of workouts, each with varying durations and then key in on specific dates that seemed to be most representative of each turf's true potential and likely score range. Also new to this year, was the "Turf Battle" that we did one month out from Turf Wars as a way to get a pulse on each turf as we headed into October.

With the original intent of finding unique handicaps for each turf, the following averages and their durations that were considered:

- **Turf's 30-Day Boulder**
- **Turf's Seasonal Boulder**
- **Turf's Pre and Post-Battle Boulders (30-Day & 3 Day respectively)**
- **Turf's Aggregate Score from Pool Play in Turf Wars 2017 (7 Days)**

When taking these averages into consideration, the highest scoring turf was 660 and the lowest was 601, *only* a margin of 59 points. Then, in order to take a deeper look, a "Competition Boulder" was created that looked exclusively at Turf Wars 2017 and the Battle of 2018. These numbers were fine tune more removing any crooked numbers that appeared to be outliers such as a turf over/under performing, having an unusually low attendance or noticing when turfs could mathematically figure the outcome of a turf's elimination from the tournament, resulting in a "coasting" score. When crunched, the final numbers looked like this:

Brownstown – 654
Shelby Township – 646
St. Clair Shores – 645
Harrison Township – 639

With only a margin of 15 points between all turfs, it was apparent that each turf was capable of effectively going head-to-head in any tournament; however, in order to mitigate foreseeable loopholes other parameters were needed. I considered dropping each turf's lowest score, highest score, days with the lowest attendance, days with the best and or worst ratio of points per participant, and even a point system that awarded various points for the turf with the top scorer, the best averages from each turf's the top 5 performers and bottom 5 performers...none of it seemed to jive without it really complicating things and the scoring.

Finally, when looking at the attendances for each of the dates that made up the "Competition Boulders" I found the average attendance by turf and then compared each day's +/- above or under these averages and applied them directly to their turf's performance +/- to discover that this combination yielded numbers for a tournament that would vary, roughly, by 80 points and would be decided in the last day of competition.

Not every Turf has the same Form, how do you factor this? As with every Syphus competition, tournament workouts are designed with tasks that are more "objective" and are less likely to be slighted. There are fewer plus run or plus Tarzan tasks and feature more

crawls, pushes and drags. Generally speaking, the numbers from past tournaments do a fair job at discerning which turfs and have proper form.

How does this year account for varying seasonal turf conditions? With everyone being held to the number of 640 there should no longer be an advantage to a turf that have to brave the elements of summer, while logging lower scores, only to have an easier target to hit come Turf Wars. By the elements in which they faced alone, they're likely already more conditioned than the other turf with a more controlled environment!

How is this format able to prevent sandbagging or large discrepancies in competition scores vs. a typical day's workout?

While I don't believe that anyone strategically "tanks" in workouts leading up to a competition, to some, it can appear that individuals are not giving it their all (score-wise) on the regular. In fact, I am one of those individuals who may be viewed as an underachiever day-to-day as my scores are inconsistent in that I carry a 600ish Boulder but am capable of scoring in the 800s. It is unfair for someone like me to be posting 600s most of the year dragging the turf's Boulder down and creating a larger spread in times of competition. Keeping each turf to the same standard of 640 side-steps the idea that a turf's average is lower because people do not perform at their potential.

Is running twice in a day allowed? Last year, while I don't recall if it actually happened, the thought of going twice in one day had been discussed by several turfs. This would expose a few loopholes in that "two higher scores" could be counted in a turf's average, or a person's higher score could be kept and the lower wouldn't be shown, also a second run would give a person experience through a practice run and the idea that a higher scoring individual running at even a mediocre pace may be able to nullify the scores of lower scoring participants by effectively offsetting these scores with an equal +/- **Going twice in a day is prohibited. Going twice in a day, even if it means doing tomorrow's workout because you cannot attend on that day, is prohibited.**

Should all participants keep a score? In the spirit of competition and comradery, we STRONGLY encourage people to take a score, however we understand that not every individual is going to want to participate; some just want a workout without any added pressure.

In either event, the debate on where to take a score or not is still out there and needs to be addressed. I am not entirely sure what the hang up was for people not keeping a score in years past. Score entry has always been on the honor system from turf-to-turf, so unless the Pros shared a roster of who attended, which would also be on the honor system, the other turfs would reasonably have no way of knowing who was left off the scoring. I assume the concern was that a higher scoring individual from an opposing turf didn't record a score(s) and it was assumed that this would have been a lower score that should've brought the opposing turf's score down.

So the objective needed appears to be to prevent higher scorers that underperform from not logging their scores or that newer member's scores are not being logged at all.

Pros, if your members are newer, and have never participated in Turf Wars, you should be able to enter in their scores without them really understanding the weight of their scores. The option to take or score or not doesn't seem to be applicable to the newbie unless their schedule requires them to leave the workout early or they are dealing with an injury. If they've never not kept a score, why would they start now?

The issue with higher scorers not wishing to keep a score because of underperforming has long been a pet-peeve of mine which is why we've spelled out in The Sypher **that if you wish to not take a score, let us know before.** But, as irksome as it may be, I still side with the allowing the member the option to log a score or not. Here's my reasoning, after hearing the debate from many angles and individuals over the years, I've become aware of a paradox: The folks who insist that everyone keep a score are often the same people who are upset over large discrepancies in competitive scores versus the average day. Isn't it impossible to have both? If you think people are "sandbagging" because they're not going all out and recording consistently high scores day in an day out, then you should

happily be open to the idea of them having non-scored days as that falsely inflates their boulders making it harder to score positively during competitions. If you're annoyed by someone who is grossly in the green, you can't also fault them for taking scores that are lower throughout the season.

Alongside this debate comes the real reason for keeping track of both the scores and the attendance for this year's competition. When considering our traditional Turf Wars handicapping, when an individual refrains from keeping a score, it is likely a higher scoring registering under the handicap or their usual average, thus the need for each turf to be held to the same standard of 640 is paramount.

It is also important to understand the impact not keeping a score will hurt your turf more this year than you keeping a lower score, even if it is negative.

It's fair to assume that those who would "duck out" of keeping a score would likely be able to score 640 or higher. So, **as long as you score above 640, even if you usually register an 800, you're still helping your turf by contributing positive numbers.**

What is the significance of keeping track of each turf's attendance? There were two main concerns that were voiced as it related to attendance. One was that the turf with highest scores also had the highest attendance, and by the nature of the workouts in Turf Wars, it made it harder for all of the participants from that turf to compete at the handicapped level. The other concern was that turfs with lower attendance each score was weighted more, for better or for worse.

Keeping track of each turf's +/- in comparison to their average attendance achieves a number of things: it add more incentive to keep a score in instance like the above, it allows "lower scoring" members to contribute positively to the turf's score and it rewards increased participation. The way I see it is that when an individual participates and logs a score under this year's format, they're effectively submitting two separate scores, one that is 641 and the other is their actual performance. Again, this should only solidify the need to keep a score.

Note that the average attendances also took into consideration the closing of Turf Royal Oak, weekend attendances, seasonality and other factors that seemed to influence attendance tides.

What is Roster Stacking and Playing the Waiting Game? This tactic is a little obscure, and I'm not sure that it was ever done intentionally, but it was something that I noticed in 2017. Turfs would load up one class with an all-star cast capable of scoring +200, which by itself isn't against the rules, but either by happenstance or intention, these classes wouldn't be scheduled (or scores entered) until the latter part of the day or shift. This allows for an unfair advantage to that class as they may be able to know exactly where they need to score collectively to win out. By stacking one class, they're also able to shield scores from the other locations. For instance, turfs Shelby, Harrison and Brownstown may not be aware that -30 posted by SCS on the website is about to be overtaken by a class with five 1000+ scorers, this seems to be an unfair advantage that may prompt turf owners to share their own day's class sign-ups the night before for at least of a rough idea in what to expect. Nothing can entirely prevent this from happening, an requiring turfs to enter their scores at a set time removes an element of fun in checking the scores regularly during the week of Turf Wars. Yet another reason that accounting for attendance and the 640 standard should combat this, slightly.

What is Forecasting & Playing the Numbers Game? Similar to the above concern, since this year removes pool play from the mix and requires each turf a fighting chance until the last day, no one turf can "coast" into a semi final or try to intentionally line themselves up with a head-to-head match up with a desired opposing turf. Using the 640 standard, it should be very difficult to estimate how well a turf will do on any given day because each turf should, hypothetically, be in the ball park.