

# **Golf Canada Handicap Manual**

**INCLUDING THE HANDICAP SYSTEM  
& DECISIONS, HANDICAP COMMITTEE MANUAL,  
& COURSE RATING SYSTEM**

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## HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual is the complete book of information and instruction about the *Handicap System*. First, you will find the purpose and requirements of the *Handicap System* followed by definitions of important terms. The responsibilities of the player are covered in the next two sections, followed by those that the player shares with the *Handicap Committee* at the *golf club*. Next, you will find responsibilities of the *Handicap Committee*. The *Handicap System* formulas, checks and balances of the system, *Course Rating*, golf course set-up, par computation, and allocation of handicap strokes are covered in the last eight sections. Information about short course handicap and junior par are in the appendices. Handicap Decisions follow each section of the manual.

To familiarize yourself with this manual, first study the table of contents at the front to get an idea of how the *Handicap System* is organized. Then look at the captions under each section to see topics covered and the order in which they are presented. Most of the time you will be able to find relevant information simply by reference to the table of contents. If not, there is an Index in the back of this manual, which should lead you to the correct answers.

The definitions, in alphabetical order, in Section Two of this manual are important to know in order to apply *Handicap System* procedures properly. Defined terms which may be significant to the understanding of a particular procedure are italicized as they appear in a section. If a term is italicized, it may be helpful in the correct application of a procedure, to refer to Section Two for the definition of that term.

Use this manual whenever a question arises about the *Handicap System*. Knowing the proper procedure will help provide a framework for fair and enjoyable games.

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# PART I – PURPOSE, AUTHORIZATION, LICENSING, & DEFINITIONS

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## Section 1 PURPOSE, AUTHORIZATION, and LICENSING

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### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

#### 1-1. Purpose

The purpose of the *Handicap System* is to make the game of golf more enjoyable by enabling players of differing abilities to compete on an equitable basis. The System provides a fair *Course Handicap* for each player, regardless of ability, and adjusts a player's *Handicap Factor* up or down as the player's game changes. At the same time, the System disregards high scores that bear little relation to the player's potential ability and promotes continuity by making a *Handicap Factor* continuous from one playing season or year to the next. A *Handicap Factor* is useful for all forms of play, and is issued only to individuals who are members of a Golf Canada Member *golf club*.

**Two basic premises underlie the *Handicap System*, namely that each player will try to make the best score at every hole in every round, regardless of where the round is played, and that the player will post every acceptable round for *peer review*. The player and the player's *Handicap Committee* have a joint responsibility for adhering to these premises.**

A *Handicap Factor*, issued by a Golf Canada Member *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association* (through its member clubs), indicates a player's skill and is a number taken to one decimal place, e.g., 10.4. A *Handicap Factor* is issued only to individuals who are members of a Golf Canada Member *golf club*.

A *Handicap Factor* compares a player's scoring ability to the scoring ability of a *scratch golfer* on a course of standard difficulty. A player posts scores along with the appropriate *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* to make up the *scoring record*. A *Handicap Factor* is computed from no more than 20 scores plus any *eligible tournament scores*. It reflects the player's potential because it is based upon the best handicap differentials posted for a given number of rounds, ideally the best 10 of the last 20 rounds.

A *Handicap Factor* is portable from course to course, as well as from one set of tees to another set of tees on the same course. A player converts a *Handicap Factor* to a *Course Handicap* based on the *Slope Rating* of the tees played.

Each player locates the *Handicap Factor* on the appropriate *Course Handicap Table* and finds the corresponding *Course Handicap*. A *Course Handicap Table* can be found in the clubhouse or near the first tee of a Golf Canada Member *golf club*. There will be a *Course Handicap Table* for each set of tees used by men and by women. The number of strokes a player receives (*Course Handicap*) is based upon the relative difficulty (*Slope Rating*) of the course.

A *Course Rating* is Golf Canada's mark that indicates the evaluation of the playing difficulty of a course for a *scratch golfer* under normal conditions based on yardage and other obstacles that affect scoring ability. A *Slope Rating* is a measurement of the relative difficulty of a course for players who are not scratch golfers. Each course is rated from each set of tees for both the *scratch golfer* and the *bogey golfer*. The *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* together reflect the difficulty of the course for a player who is not a *scratch golfer*. The greater the difference between the scores of the scratch and bogey golfers on a certain course, the higher the *Slope Rating* will be and the more strokes players will receive. Conversely, the less the difference, the lower the *Slope Rating* will be and the fewer strokes players will receive.

Use of this manual, which provides a detailed description of all aspects of the *Handicap System*, will make all competitions more enjoyable.

## 1-2. Authorization and Licensing

An *authorized provincial golf association* or Golf Canada Member *golf club* in good standing must obtain a license from Golf Canada in order to utilize the *Handicap System*, to use Golf Canada marks, and to issue a *Handicap Factor*. Only a Golf Canada Member *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association* that issues and maintains *Handicap Factors* in full accordance with the *Handicap System* as described in the "Golf Canada Handicap Manual" may use the terms "*Handicap Factor*" and "*Slope Rating*", and identify them as such on membership cards or elsewhere.

Policies of Golf Canada Member *golf clubs* and golf associations issuing *Handicap Factors* must be consistent with the principles of the Rules of Golf and the *Handicap System*. An essential element of the *Handicap System* is the requirement that each Golf Canada Member *golf club* that issues *Handicap Factors* must have a *Handicap Committee* to ensure the integrity of the *Handicap Factors* issued by the club. A Golf Canada Member *golf club* must use *Course Ratings* and *Slope Ratings* issued by an *authorized provincial golf association*. Temporary *Course and Slope Ratings* may not be used for issuing *Handicap Factors*, unless the temporary ratings are issued by an *authorized provincial golf association* because something such as construction or a natural disaster has temporarily altered the golf course.



If a Golf Canada Member *golf club* or *golf association* does not follow all of the procedures of the *Handicap System*, it is not permitted to use any part of the System or to refer to any handicap that it issues or certifies as a “*Handicap Factor*” or as a handicap authorized or approved by Golf Canada.

The terms “Golf Canada”, “Handicap Factor”, “Factor”, “Handicap Factor (N)”, “Handicap System”, “SLOPE”, “Slope System”, “Slope Rating”, “Handicap Differential”, “Course Rating”, “Slope Rating”, “Course Handicap”, “Home Course Handicap”, “Bogey Rating”, “ESC”, “Short Course Handicap”, “Short Course Rating”, and “Course Rating System” are trademarks and service marks. With the exception of the term Golf Canada, some of these trademarks and service marks are the property of the United States Golf Association which has generously given Golf Canada permission to use the system. As owner of the term Golf Canada and a Licensee of those well-established trademarks and service marks, Golf Canada has the sole right within its jurisdiction to authorize the use of those marks by others. Organizations that are not Golf Canada Member *golf clubs* or *authorized provincial golf associations*, and individual golfers who are not members of a Golf Canada Member *golf clubs* may not use these marks or any part of the *Handicap System*, including Golf Canada’s mathematical handicap formula, except to the extent that they provide products or services to *authorized provincial golf associations* or Golf Canada Member *golf clubs* for the limited purpose of following the *Handicap System*. Golf Canada will make certain that those who are authorized to use Golf Canada trademarks and service marks do so in a manner that preserves the integrity and reliability of the *Handicap System*.

## Section 1 PURPOSE, AUTHORIZATION, AND LICENSING

### 1-1/1. Player Establishes One Handicap Factor Playing Right-Handed and Another Handicap Factor Playing Left-Handed

**Q:** A player has a *Handicap Factor* of 2.6 playing right-handed and a *Handicap Factor* of 29.3 playing left-handed. Is this permissible?

**A:** No. A *Handicap Factor* is based on the best play for every round. Accordingly, the *Handicap Factor* of 29.3 must be withdrawn.

### 1-1/2. Player Discontinues Playing Left-Handed and Begins Playing Right-Handed

**Q:** A player discontinues playing left-handed and begins to play right-handed. What is the status of the player’s *Handicap Factor* based on scores made playing left-handed?

**A:** The *Handicap Factor* established by the player when playing left-handed is invalid. The player is in effect beginning golf anew and is required to establish a new *Handicap Factor* based on scores made when playing right-handed.

### **1-2/1. Club's Policies Not in Compliance With the Handicap System**

**Q:** Golf Canada requires that a club's policies comply with The Rules of Golf and the *Handicap System* in order to utilize the *Handicap System*. If Golf Canada is notified in writing that a club is not in compliance, what action will Golf Canada take?

**A:** If notified in writing, Golf Canada will request the *authorized provincial golf association* in the area to contact the club directly about policies not in compliance. If neither the *authorized provincial golf association* nor Golf Canada is able to persuade the club to comply, Golf Canada will advise the club in writing that, without compliance, the club may not issue a *Handicap Factor*, may not use any part of the *Handicap System*, and may not use Golf Canada trademarks in any manner. If a club refuses to comply, Golf Canada will inform other Golf Canada *member clubs* in the region that the club's privilege to issue a *Handicap Factor* has been withdrawn. Golf Canada will not accept an entry into Golf Canada Championships from the membership of this club.

### **1-2/2. Golf Club not Licensed by Golf Canada**

**Q:** A *golf club* is not a *member club* of an *authorized provincial golf association* or has not been licensed by Golf Canada to utilize the *Handicap System*. Is such a club eligible to issue a *Handicap Factor*?

**A:** No. All clubs must be licensed by Golf Canada to utilize the *Handicap System* through an *authorized provincial golf association*.

## **Section 2 DEFINITIONS**

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### **Active Season**

An "*active season*" is the period during which scores made in an area will be accepted for handicap purposes determined by the *authorized golf association* having jurisdiction in a given area.

### **Adjusted Gross Score**

An "*adjusted gross score*" is a player's *gross score* adjusted under *Handicap System* procedures for unfinished holes, conceded strokes, holes not played or not played under The Rules of Golf, or *Equitable Stroke Control*. (See Section 4.)

### **Authorized Provincial Golf Association**

An "*authorized provincial golf association*" is a *golf association* that has jurisdiction and has been licensed by Golf Canada to utilize the *Handicap System*

and/or the *Course Rating System* in its province through its *golf clubs*.

### **Bogey Golfer**

A male “*bogey golfer*” is a player who has a *Course Handicap* of approximately 20 on a course of standard difficulty. He can hit tee shots an average of 200 yards and reach a 370-yard hole in two shots at sea level.

A female *bogey golfer* is a player who has a *Course Handicap* of approximately 24 on a course of standard difficulty. She can hit tee shots an average of 150 yards and reach a 280-yard hole in two shots at sea level.

### **Bogey Rating**

A “*Bogey Rating*” is Golf Canada’s mark of the evaluation of the playing difficulty of a course for the *bogey golfer* under normal course and weather conditions. It is based on yardage, effective playing length, and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring ability of the *bogey golfer*. *Bogey Rating* is equivalent to the average of the better half of a *bogey golfer*’s scores under normal playing conditions.

### **Course Handicap**

A “*Course Handicap*” is Golf Canada’s mark that indicates the number of handicap strokes a player receives from a specific set of tees at the course being played to adjust the player’s scoring ability to the level of scratch or 0-handicap golf. For players with a plus *Course Handicap*, it is the number of handicap strokes a player gives to adjust the player’s scoring ability to the level of scratch or 0-handicap golf. A *Course Handicap* is determined by applying the player’s *Handicap Factor* to a *Course Handicap Table* or *Course Handicap Formula*. (See Section 10-4.) A player’s *Course Handicap* is expressed as a whole number. The result of any conditions of the competition *handicap allowance*, or competition from a different *Course Rating* that changes the number of strokes to be received by a player is considered to be the *Course Handicap*.

### **Course Handicap Table**

A “*Course Handicap Table*” is a chart that converts a *Handicap Factor* to a *Course Handicap* based on the *Slope Rating* for a specific set of tees.

### **Course Rating**

A “*Course Rating*” is Golf Canada’s mark that indicates the evaluation of the playing difficulty of a course for a *scratch golfer* under normal course and weather conditions. It is expressed as strokes taken to one decimal place, and is based on yardage and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring ability of a *scratch golfer*. (See Section 13.)

## **Differential, Handicap (See Handicap Differential.)**

### **Eligible Tournament Score**

An “*eligible tournament score*” is a *tournament score* made either within the last 12 months or within the player’s current 20-score history.

### **Equitable Stroke Control (ESC)**

“*Equitable Stroke Control*” (ESC) is the downward adjustment of individual hole scores for handicap purposes in order to make handicaps more representative of a player’s potential ability. ESC sets a maximum number that a player can post on any hole depending on the player’s *Course Handicap*. ESC is used only when a player’s actual or *most likely score* exceeds the player’s maximum number based on the table in Section 4-3.

### **Factor (see Handicap Factor)**

### **Golf Association**

A “*golf association*” is an organization of *golf clubs* governed by amateur players, operated under bylaws, and formed for the purpose of conducting competitions for amateur players, and otherwise promoting the best interests and conserving the true spirit of the game of golf in a province, district or region.

### **Golf Canada Handicap System (see Handicap System)**

### **Golf Club**

A “*golf club*” is an organization of at least ten individual members\* that operates under bylaws with committees (especially a *Handicap Committee*) to supervise golf activities, provide *peer review*, and maintain the integrity of the *Handicap System* (see Club Compliance Checklist, Section 8-2m and Decision 2/7). A *golf club* must be a member in good standing with Golf Canada and an *authorized provincial golf association* and be licensed by Golf Canada to utilize the *Handicap System*. A club can obtain a license from an *authorized provincial golf association* that is already licensed by Golf Canada and that has jurisdiction in the geographic area that includes the principal location of the *golf club*. (See Appendix F.)

Members of a *golf club* must have a reasonable and regular opportunity to play golf with each other. They must be able to return scores personally, and these scores must be readily available for inspection by others, including, but not limited to, fellow members and the club’s *Handicap Committee*.

A *golf club* is one of two (2) Types:

Type 1. Clubs With Property: The members of a Type 1 club are located at a single specific golf course with a valid *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* where a majority of the club’s events are played and where the club’s *scoring records* reside; or

Type 2. Clubs Without Property: The members of a Type 2 club may be affiliated, or known to one another, via a business, fraternal, ethnic, or social organization. The majority of the club members had an affiliation prior to organizing the club; alternatively they may have no prior affiliation and a majority of the recruiting and sign up of the membership is done by solicitation to the public (e.g. newspaper, internet).

*\*Note:* For administrative reasons, some *authorized provincial golf associations* may require a *golf club* to have more than the Golf Canada minimum of ten members in order for the *golf club* to be a member of the *authorized provincial golf association*. Within the context of the *Handicap System* a member is defined as one who is affiliated with a licensed *golf club* for the purpose of obtaining a *Handicap Factor*.

### **Gross Score**

A “*gross score*” is the number of actual strokes plus any penalty strokes taken by a player. (See *adjusted gross score*.)

### **Handicap Allowance**

A “*handicap allowance*” is the percentage of the *Course Handicap* recommended for a handicap competition. Allowances vary for different forms of competition and are designed to produce equitable competitions. (See Section 9-4.)

### **Handicap Committee**

A “*Handicap Committee*” is the committee of a *golf club* that ensures compliance with the *Handicap System*, including *peer review*. A majority of the *Handicap Committee*, including the chairperson, must be members of the club; club employees may serve on the *Handicap Committee*, but an employee may not serve as chair of the committee.

### **Handicap Differential**

A “*Handicap Differential*” is the difference between a player’s *adjusted gross score* and the *Course Rating* of the course on which the score was made, multiplied by 113, then divided by the *Slope Rating* from the tees played and rounded to the nearest tenth. A *Handicap Differential* is a number rounded to one decimal place, e.g. 12.8.

### **Handicap Factor**

A “*Handicap Factor*” is Golf Canada’s service mark used to indicate a measurement of a player’s potential ability on a course of standard playing difficulty. It is expressed as a number taken to one decimal place (e.g. 10.4) and is used for conversion to a *Course Handicap*. (See Section 10.) A *Handicap Factor* must be current, and updated after each round.

### **Handicap-Stroke Hole**

A “*handicap-stroke hole*” is a hole on which a player is entitled to apply a handicap stroke or strokes to a *gross score*. (See Sections 9-3a and 17.)

### **Handicap System**

The “*Handicap System*” is Golf Canada’s mark that denotes Golf Canada’s method of evaluating golf skills so that players of differing abilities can compete on an equitable basis.

### **Handicap Type**

Throughout this manual, different types of handicaps are identified by letter designations. Each “*handicap type*” is identified as follows:

NL = Local nine-hole handicap

L = Local handicap

M = Handicap modified by the *Handicap Committee*

N = Nine-hole *Handicap Factor*

R = Handicap automatically reduced for exceptional tournament performance

SL = Short *Course Handicap*

WD = Handicap withdrawn by the *Handicap Committee*

### **Inactive Season**

An “*inactive season*” is the period determined by an authorized golf association having jurisdiction for an area during which scores made in that area are not accepted for handicap.

### **Local Handicap**

A “*local handicap*” is either a handicap that is above the maximum *Handicap Factor* limit (Section 3-4), or a handicap based on a player’s temporary disability. A *local handicap* is not a *Handicap Factor* and it must be identified by the letter “L” to indicate that it is for local use only. A *local handicap* is expressed as a number taken to one decimal place and is used to convert to a *Course Handicap* (e.g. 41.5L). (See *handicap type*, and Section 3-3.)

### **Most Likely Score**

A “*most likely score*” is the score a player must post for handicap purposes if a hole is started but not completed or if the player is conceded a stroke. The *most likely score* consists of the number of strokes already taken plus, in a player’s best judgment, the number of strokes the player would need to take to complete the hole from that position more than half the time. This number may not exceed the player’s *Equitable Stroke Control* limit. (See Section 4-3.)

### **Net Score**

A “*net score*” is a player’s score after handicap strokes have been subtracted from the player’s *gross score*. A *plus handicap* player adds handicap strokes to the

player's *gross score* to yield a *net score*.

### **Override**

An “*override*” is a *Handicap Committee*'s action to cancel a *tournament score* reduction (Section 10-3). An *override* is not to be used as a preventive measure to block an anticipated Section 10-3 reduction.

### **Par**

“*Par*” is the score that a scratch golfer would be expected to make for a typical hole. *Par* means errorless play under ordinary weather conditions, allowing two strokes on the putting green. *Par* is not a significant factor in either the *Handicap System* or *Course Rating System* except in the determination of the possible ESC reduction of a hole score for players with a Course Handicap of 9 or less. (See Section 16.)

### **Peer Review**

“*Peer review*” is the process of providing a reasonable and regular opportunity for members of a *golf club* to play golf with each other (see Decision 2/8) and of providing access to *scoring records* and a *Handicap Factor* list for inspection by others, including, but not limited to, fellow members and the club's *Handicap Committee*.

There are two essential elements of peer review:

1. Members of a *golf club* must have a reasonable and regular opportunity to play together (See Decision 2/8).
2. Access must be provided to *scoring records*, as well as to a *Handicap Factor* list, for inspection by others, including, but not limited to, fellow club members.

There are two forms of scoring record display:

**General** – A *General Scoring Record* must provide the six most recent revisions of the player's *Handicap Factor*, along with scores, score types, Ratings, *Handicap Differentials* and dates (month and year only). Relating to the most recent handicap revision. This must be made available to those involved in peer review.

**Complete** – A *Complete Scoring Record* must provide the six most recent revisions of the player's *Handicap Factor*, along with scores\*, score types, Ratings, *Handicap Differentials* and dates (month, day and year) relating to the most recent handicap revision. This must be made available to fellow club members, the club *Handicap Committee*, and competition officials of any competition in which the player is going to participate.

### **Penalty Score**

A “*penalty score*” is a score posted by the *Handicap Committee* for a player who does not return a score or otherwise does not observe the spirit of the *Handicap System*. (See Section 8-4b.)

### **Plus Handicap (See Course Handicap.)**

### **Preferred Lies (Winter Rules)**

“*Preferred Lies*” (winter rules) is a local rule that may be adopted by the committee in charge of the competition or the committee in charge of the course, in the event of adverse conditions that are so general throughout a course that improving the lie of the ball in a specified way would promote fair play or help protect the course. (See Section 7 and The Rules of Golf, Appendix I.)

### **Score Type**

A “score type” indicates specific aspects of a score within a player’s *scoring record* and shall be designated in the following manner:

A	=	Away
C	=	Combined Nines
P	=	Penalty
T	=	Tournament

### **Scoring Record**

A “*scoring record*” is a file composed of the most recent 20 scores posted by a player, plus any *eligible tournament scores*, along with appropriate *Course Rating*, *Slope Rating*, course, and date of each score.

### **Scratch Golfer**

A “*scratch golfer*” is a player who can play to a *Course Handicap* of zero on any and all rated golf courses. A male *scratch golfer*, for rating purposes, can hit tee shots an average of 250 yards and can reach a 470-yard hole in two shots at sea level. A female *scratch golfer*, for rating purposes, can hit tee shots an average of 210 yards and can reach a 400-yard hole in two shots at sea level.

### **Slope Rating**

A “*Slope Rating*” is Golf Canada’s mark that indicates the measurement of the relative difficulty of a course for players who are not scratch golfers compared to the *Course Rating* (e.g., compared to the difficulty of a course for scratch golfers). A *Slope Rating* is computed from the difference between the *Bogey Rating* and the *Course Rating*. The lowest *Slope Rating* is 55 and the highest is 155. A golf course of standard playing difficulty has a *Slope Rating* of 113.

### **Stipulated Round**

A “*stipulated round*” consists of playing the holes of the course in their correct



sequence unless otherwise authorized by the committee in charge of the competition. The number of holes in a *stipulated round* is 18 unless a smaller number is authorized by the committee. The committee may, for the purpose of settling a tie, extend the *stipulated round* to as many holes as are required for a match to be won. (See The Rules of Golf, Definitions and Rule 2-3.)

### Stroke Hole (See Handicap-Stroke Hole.)

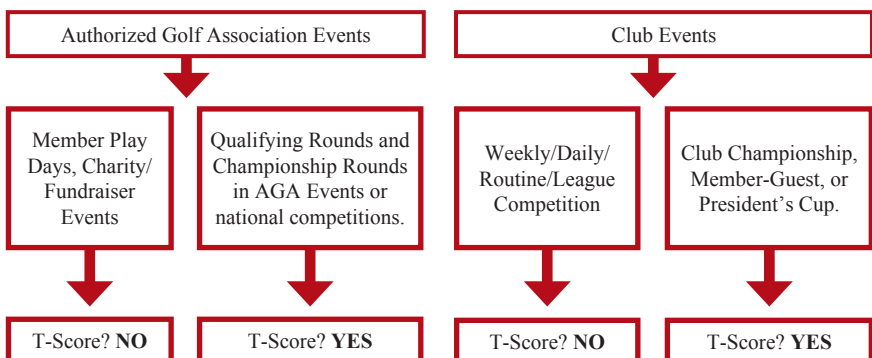
#### Tournament Score

A “*tournament score*” (T-Score) is a score made in a competition organized and conducted by the Committee in charge of the competition. The competition must identify a winner(s) based on a stipulated round(s), and must be played under “The Rules of Golf.”

The Committee in charge of the competition must announce in advance whether the score is to be designated as a *Tournament Score*. Not all club competitions qualify to be posted as *Tournament Scores*. For example, club events that are routine events such as daily, weekly, or monthly play days are not normally designated as *Tournament Scores*.

Examples of scores made at the club level that should be designated as *Tournament Scores* include club championships (stroke play or match play) and member-guest competitions. Examples at the regional and provincial level include qualifying and championship rounds conducted by *authorized golf associations*. Also, qualifying and championship rounds conducted for national competitions should be designated as *Tournament Scores*.

**Note:** The consequence of designating too many competition rounds as *Tournament Scores* is that the chart value in the Handicap Reduction Table will be diluted (See Section 10-3 and Decisions 10-3/1 through 10-3/6). The Committee should scrutinize each competition in advance to determine whether it should be designated as a *Tournament Score*.



## USGA

United States Golf Association

### Winter Rules (See Preferred Lies.)

#### Section 2 DEFINITIONS

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##### **2/1. Clarification of Term “Golf Club”**

**Q:** Membership in a golf organization is open to any player living within a large geographic area. In general, the members play at different golf facilities within the area, and do not normally play golf with one another. Is this organization a *golf club* within the meaning of the term in Section 2?

**A:** No. Section 2 states that in order for an organization to be considered a *golf club*, “members must have a reasonable and regular opportunity to play golf with each other.” Also, the members of a *golf club* who are issued a *Handicap Factor* must be from a small defined geographic area. For example: the residence or business address of each member of the *golf club* must generally be within approximately a 100 km radius of the principal location of the *golf club*. (Applies to Type 2 only)

##### **[2/2. Reserved]**

##### **[2/3. Reserved]**

##### **2/4. Club Members at a Driving Range Issued Handicap Factor**

**Q:** May a driving range utilize the *Handicap System*?

**A:** Yes. Hitting golf balls at the same driving range does not provide the opportunity to play golf together as required in the definition of a *golf club*. However, nothing prevents a driving range from being the principal location of a *golf club*. As long as its members have a reasonable and regular opportunity to play golf with each other, *peer review* is being performed, and all items on the Club Compliance Checklist are being met, this club is satisfying its requirements and is eligible to be licensed to issue a *Handicap Factor*. (See Decision 2/7.)

##### **2/5. Golf Club Composed of Company Employees**

**Q:** A group of 52 employees from a company formed a *golf club*. The members work at the same office and play in a weekly league after work. The club has bylaws based on Golf Canada’s sample bylaws with officers and meetings. A *Handicap Committee* has been formed and handicap reports are posted on

a bulletin board for all to see. Scores are personally posted by members and reviewed by the *Handicap Committee*. All other requirements of the *Handicap System* are followed. Is this group eligible to be licensed to utilize the *Handicap System*?

**A:** Yes. *Peer review* standards are being met as members have a reasonable and regular opportunity to play golf with each other, as well as to review scores posted, and the *Handicap Committee* has the reasonable opportunity to satisfy the *peer review* oversight requirements set forth in Section 8.

## **2/6. Organization Recruiting Members through Advertisement**

**Q:** An organization places an advertisement in a public newspaper or on a web site inviting players to join a group that it calls a *golf club*. The player is asked to sign up, at the web site or by mail, and pay via the web site or by mail. Members are invited to play in tournaments held frequently and handicap reports and *scoring records* are displayed on a web site. Members generally post scores via the internet. In return, the player will receive a *Handicap Factor*. Can this organization meet the *Handicap System* definition of a *golf club* and utilize the *Handicap System*?

**A:** Yes. See the definition of a *golf club* (Section 2), specifically Type 2. It is understood that Type 2 clubs organize by advertising for members. But, in addition all portions of the *golf club* definition must be met, the *golf club* must follow all aspects of the Club Compliance Checklist (see Section 8-2m), and the club must comply with all sections of the *Handicap System*, including the clarifications listed in Decision 2/7.

### **2/6.7. Third Party Involvement in Membership Process**

**Q:** A group of *golf clubs* gets together and advertises membership openings. A third party becomes involved and signs up individuals to become members of these clubs. Is this acceptable?

**A:** Each *golf club*'s bylaws may provide how new members are approved. A third party may inform a player about the possibility of becoming a member of a particular *golf club*, but each individual player must complete the membership application process and be approved by the club. A proposed candidate for membership may not become a member of a club until these requirements are met.

## **2/7. Clarification of Compliance/License Issues for Golf Club Categories Described in the Golf Club Definition**

“Principal Location” (applies to Type 2 only)

The principal location of a *golf club* must be the physical address in the city or town which the club first identified in its application for membership and license to utilize the *Handicap System*. So long as the *golf club* is in existence, the principal location must not be changed without the prior written consent of the *authorized provincial golf association* of which the *golf club* is a member. Members of a *golf club* who are issued a *Handicap Factor* must be from a small-defined geographic area, e.g., the residence or business address of each member of the *golf club* generally must be within approximately a 100 km radius of the principal location of the *golf club*.

“Identification” (applies to Type 2 only)

Each individual must provide proof of identification and residence to the *golf club* in order to be a member of the club.

“Playing Requirements and Club Size” (applies to Type 2 only)

Golf Canada will consider the playing requirement met if each member returns at least three scores played with other club members during the season, and at least one of those rounds is played in a club-sponsored event. Anyone not meeting this minimum requirement should be dropped from the handicap roster.

A *golf club*'s size is limited: If membership in a club exceeds the number of available tee times offered in club-sponsored events, the playing requirements are not being met. For example, if a club has 200 members and conducts only eight organized events with a maximum of 15 players each, not all members will have played in a club sponsored event ( $8 \times 15 = 120$ , not 200 or greater).

“Group Cohesion/Activities” (applies to both Types)

In order to be able to utilize the *Handicap System*, the *golf club* must have group cohesion. Group activities may go beyond playing in tournaments. There may be a group orientation policy and other functions, such as group meetings, award banquets and the like.

“Contact Information” (applies to both Types)

Contact information about each member of the *golf club* must be made readily available to all members.

### **2/7.5. Club-Sponsored Event**

**Q:** What constitutes a club sponsored event, as referenced in the playing requirements portion of Decision 2/7?

**A:** What constitutes a club sponsored event is one that is organized and conducted by the *golf club*, the majority of participants are members of the club, and its contestants are playing the same golf course during a single round. The format of the competition must result in an acceptable score for handicap purposes and its conduct must be under the Rules of Golf. Providing club-sponsored events allows for interaction among members including some that may not normally play golf with one another, which increases the likelihood of *peer review* taking place. A club with 150 members that conducts a four-person event is deemed not to be fulfilling the intent of the club-sponsored requirement.

### **2/8. Clarification of Reasonable and Regular Opportunity to Play Golf with Each Other**

**Q:** Parts of the definitions of a *golf club* and *peer review* state, “providing a reasonable and regular opportunity for members of a *golf club* to play golf with each other ...” Would this requirement be satisfied by being on the same golf course, but not together within groups?

**A:** No. In order to gain an understanding of a player’s potential ability and to form a reasonable basis for supporting or disputing a score that has been posted, a player needs to have played in the group with a fellow member. Merely being on the same golf course on the same day is not considered adequate for *peer review* to take place, as stated in the definitions of “*peer review*” and “*golf club*.”

## **PART II HANDICAPPING—PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Section 3 THE PLAYER**

#### **Definitions**

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

A *Handicap Factor* is the result of a mathematical calculation based on scores returned. A *Handicap Factor* is converted to a *Course Handicap* for competition from a particular set of tees.

#### **3-1. Obtaining a Handicap Factor**

In order to obtain a *Handicap Factor*, a player must join a *golf club* and post adjusted *gross scores*. These scores are subject to *peer review*. After at least five scores have been posted, the club will be eligible to issue a *Handicap Factor* to the player in accordance with the *Handicap System*.

### 3-2. Using a Handicap Factor

A *Handicap Factor*, issued by a *golf club*, is a number that represents the potential ability of a player on a course with a *Slope Rating* of 113. A player must convert a *Handicap Factor* to a *Course Handicap*. For example, a *Handicap Factor* of 16.2 would convert to a *Course Handicap* of 20 at a course with a *Slope Rating* of 140, using the sample *Course Handicap Table* in this section. A *Handicap Factor* must be current, updated after every round.

### 3-3. Course Handicap

A *Course Handicap* is the number of handicap strokes a player receives from a particular set of tees at the course being played.

To convert a *Handicap Factor* to a *Course Handicap*, a player takes the *Handicap Factor* to a *Course Handicap Table* to find the corresponding *Course Handicap*. Each set of rated tees will have a different *Course Handicap Table* for men and women based on their *Slope Rating*. It is the player's responsibility to determine the correct *Course Handicap*, and to know the holes at which handicap strokes are to be given or received. (See sample *Course Handicap Table*, Section 3-6, and The Rules of Golf, Rule 6-2).

A player's *Course Handicap* is determined by multiplying a *Handicap Factor* by the *Slope Rating* of the course played and then dividing by 113. (See Section 10-4.) The resulting figure is rounded off to the nearest whole number (.5 or more is rounded upward).

A player who has a *net score* that is equal to the *Course Rating* for the tees played "has played to that player's handicap." In general, this will occur about once every four or five rounds.

A *Course Handicap Table* is designed to determine a *Course Handicap*. It is for use only with the *Handicap System* by an *authorized provincial golf association* and a *golf club* that has a valid *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*.

*Note:* The *Course Handicap Table* should include the *Course Rating* for the corresponding tee (see *Course Handicap Table on page 17*).

## COURSE HANDICAP TABLE

Issued by the XYZ Golf Association  
 CLUB NAME ABC GOLF CLUB TEES BACK  
 SLOPE RATING 140 COURSE RATING 72.7 BOGEY RATING 98.7

Handicap Factor	Course Handicap	Handicap Factor	Course Handicap
+3.5 to +2.9	+4	16.6 to 17.3	21
+2.8 to +2.7	+3	17.4 to 18.1	22
+2.0 to +1.3	+2	18.2 to 18.9	23
+1.2 to +.5	+1	19.0 to 19.7	24
+.4 to .4	0	19.8 to 20.5	25
.5 to 1.2	1	20.6 to 21.3	26
1.3 to 2.0	2	21.4 to 22.1	27
2.1 to 2.8	3	22.2 to 23.0	28
2.9 to 3.6	4	23.1 to 23.8	29
3.7 to 4.4	5	23.9 to 24.6	30
4.5 to 5.2	6	24.7 to 25.4	31
5.3 to 6.0	7	25.5 to 26.2	32
6.1 to 6.8	8	26.3 to 27.0	33
6.9 to 7.6	9	27.1 to 27.8	34
7.7 to 8.4	10	27.9 to 28.6	35
8.5 to 9.2	11	28.7 to 29.4	36
9.3 to 10.0	12	29.5 to 30.2	37
10.1 to 10.8	13	30.3 to 31.0	38
10.9 to 11.7	14	31.1 to 31.8	39
11.8 to 12.5	15	31.9 to 32.6	40
12.6 to 13.3	16	32.7 to 33.4	41
13.4 to 14.1	17	33.5 to 34.3	42
14.2 to 14.9	18	34.4 to 35.1	43
15.0 to 15.7	19	35.2 to 35.9	44
15.8 to 16.5	20	36.0 to 36.4	45

### INSTRUCTIONS

- When using the table, find the range containing the Handicap Factor in the left column. The Course Handicap is the corresponding number in the right column.
- The table above is a sample. Make sure that the table you use is for the tees that you play for a particular round.

### 3-4. Maximum Handicap Factor

The maximum *Handicap Factor* is 36.4 for men and 40.4 for women. (See Section 10-5d.)

*Note:* A maximum *Handicap Factor* will convert to a *Course Handicap* that exceeds these numbers on golf courses with a *Slope Rating* greater than 113.

Example: A player with a *Handicap Factor* of 36.4 will have a *Course Handicap* of 43 on a course with a *Slope Rating* of 133.

A player may have a *local handicap* above these limits, but it must be identified as a *local handicap* by the letter “L” following the number on a handicap card or report (e.g. 41.5L). When such local handicaps are used for inter-club play, Golf Canada recommends that they be reduced to the maximum *Handicap Factor* as specified.

### 3-5. Players Competing from Different Tees or Men and Women from Same Tees

#### ■ a. Different Tees: Men vs. Men; Women vs. Women; Women vs. Men

Different tees usually have different Ratings. Because a *Course Rating* reflects the probable score of a *scratch golfer*, the higher-rated course is more difficult, and the player playing from the set of tees with the higher *Course Rating* receives additional stroke(s) equal to the difference between each *Course Rating*, with .5 or greater rounded upward. The additional stroke(s) are added to the *Course Handicap* of the player playing from the higher-rated set of tees. (See Decision 3-5/1 for an exception.)

Example 1: If men playing from the middle tees where the men’s *Course Rating* is 70.3 compete against men playing from the back tees where the men’s *Course Rating* is 72.6, the men playing from the back tees will add two strokes ( $72.6 - 70.3 = 2.3$  rounded to 2 ) to *Course Handicap*.

Example 2: If women playing from the forward tees from which the women’s *Course Rating* is 73.4 compete against men playing from the middle tees from which the men’s *Course Rating* is 70.9, the women will add three strokes ( $73.4 - 70.9 = 2.5$  rounded to 3 ) to *Course Handicap*.

#### ■ b. Same Tees: Men vs. Women

Men and women playing from the same set of tees will have different Ratings. Since the women’s *Course Rating* usually will be higher, women receive additional stroke(s) equal to the difference between Ratings, with .5 or greater rounded upward.



Example: If women playing from the middle tees from which the women's *Course Rating* is 77.3 compete against men playing from the middle tees from which the men's *Course Rating* is 70.9, the women will add six strokes ( $77.3 - 70.9 = 6.4$  rounded to 6) to *Course Handicap*.

The adjustment must be added to the higher-rated tee players' *Course Handicap* even if it causes a *Course Handicap* to exceed the maximum possible for the *Slope Rating* of the set of tees being played. (See Decision 3-5/1 for an exception.)

### How to Properly Apply Section 3-5:

**Step 1:** Calculate *Course Handicap* from tees played per Section 3-3.

Look up each player's *Course Handicap* on the appropriate gender-based *Course Handicap Table* for the tees played or use the *Course Handicap* formula:

*Handicap Factor* x *Slope Rating* of tees played, and then divided by 113.

Example: A woman with a *Handicap Factor* of 26.5 who is playing from tees with a *Slope Rating* of 120 has a *Course Handicap* of 28. (See Section 3-3 to compute a *Course Handicap*.)

A man with a *Handicap Factor* of 26.5 who is playing from tees with a *Slope Rating* of 115 has a *Course Handicap* of 27. (See Section 3-3 to compute a *Course Handicap*.)

**Step 2:** Apply any *handicap allowance* per Section 9-4 (if applicable).

Example: Suppose the committee in charge of a four-ball stroke play competition determines that men compete at 90 percent and women at 95 percent of *Course Handicap*.

The *Course Handicap* of 27 for the man in step 1 would be reduced to 24 handicap strokes ( $27 \times .90 = 24.3$ , with the difference of .4 or less rounded downward to 24 strokes.)

The *Course Handicap* of 28 for the woman in step 1 would be reduced to 27 handicap strokes ( $28 \times .95 = 26.6$ , with the difference of .5 or greater rounded upward to 27 strokes.)

**Step 3:** Calculate the difference in *Course Rating* from tees played, with any difference of .5 or greater rounded upward.

Example: Suppose the man in step 2 is playing from the middle tees from which the *Course Rating* is 73.7 and the woman is playing from the front tees from which

the *Course Rating* is 69.8.

*Course Rating* 73.7 – *Course Rating* 69.8 = 3.9, with the difference of .5 or greater rounded upward to 4 strokes.

Add the extra handicap strokes from step 3 to the *Course Handicap* of the player playing from the tees with the higher *Course Rating*. Alternatively, it is permissible to subtract the extra handicap strokes from the *Course Handicap* of the player playing from the tees with the lower *Course Rating*. (See Decision 3-5/1.)

Example: A man playing the tees with the higher *Course Rating* (73.7), adds 4 strokes to his handicap and competes off 28 strokes (24 + 4 = 28 strokes), while the woman in steps 2 and 3 competes off 27 strokes.

Alternatively, the woman could be reduced to a *Course Handicap* of 23 strokes (27 – 4 = 23 strokes) and the man to a *Course Handicap* of 24 strokes.

*Note:* Strokes given or received under the procedures in steps 2 and 3 above are to be disregarded when applying ESC for handicap purposes. (See Section 4-3, Examples 2 and 3.) Example: After a Section 3-5 adjustment, a player has added three strokes to a *Course Handicap* of 25. The *Course Handicap* when applying *Equitable Stroke Control* is 25. The correct handicap for competition is 28. (See Section 3-6.)

## EXAMPLE: SECTION 3-5 PROMOTING EQUITABLE COMPETITION

See Appendix D for a sample letter explaining Sections 3-5 and 9-3c.

Gary Gold Tees 10.4 130 12 +71.1 83	vs.  Handicap Factor Slope Rating Course Handicap Course Rating Target Score	Bob Blue Tees 10.4 140 13 +73.2 86
83  -12 =71	Target Score (minus) Course Handicap ( <u>adjusted for Section 3-5</u> ) =Net Score	86  -15 =71

### 3-6. Applying Handicaps Correctly in Competitions

Rule 6-2 of The Rules of Golf requires players to apply handicaps correctly in competition. The correct handicap for competition means the *Course Handicap* adjusted for any strokes given or received as a result of *handicap allowance*, condition of competition, players competing from different tees, or men and women from the same tees. (See Sections 9-4 and 3-5.)

#### ■ a. Match Play

Before starting a match in a handicap competition, each player must determine from one another the player's respective *Course Handicap*. If a player begins a match having declared a *Course Handicap* higher than that to which he is entitled and this affects the number of strokes given or received, the player is disqualified; otherwise, the player must play off the declared *Course Handicap*.

#### ■ b. Stroke Play

In any round of a handicap competition, the player must ensure that the player's *Course Handicap* is recorded on the score card before it is returned to the committee. If no *Course Handicap* is recorded on the score card before it is returned (Rule 6-6b), or if the recorded *Course Handicap* is higher than that to which he is entitled and this affects the number of strokes received, the player is disqualified; otherwise, the score stands.

*Note:* It is the player's responsibility to know the holes at which handicap strokes are to be given or received.

## Section 3 THE PLAYER

### 3-2/1. Player has Handicap Factor (N) and Wishes to Participate in 18-Hole Competition

**Q:** A player with a *Handicap Factor* (N) (see Section 10-5) wishes to compete in an 18-hole competition. The player does not have an 18-hole *Handicap Factor*. How may the player calculate an 18-hole handicap?

**A:** If a player has a *Handicap Factor* (N), the player should double the *Handicap Factor* (N) for 18-hole play. It may be noted that the *Handicap Factor* (N) is not as accurate as an 18-hole *Handicap Factor*; it is based on half as many hole scores and the player will generally receive one or two fewer strokes than with an 18-hole *Handicap Factor*.

### 3-2/2. Handicap to Use if Player Has Both a 18-Hole Handicap Factor and Handicap Factor (N)

**Q:** A player has both an 18-hole *Handicap Factor* and a *Handicap Factor* (N).

If the player's *Handicap Factor* (N) were doubled, it would not be equal to the player's 18-hole *Handicap Factor*. Which *Handicap Factor* may the player use in a competition?

**A:** The 18-hole *Handicap Factor* may be used for 18-hole play and the *Handicap Factor* (N) may be used for 9-hole play.

**3-5/1. Adjusting for the Difference in Course Rating between Two Sets of Tees when Most of the Field is Playing from the Higher-rated Set of Tees**

**Q:** When adjusting for the difference in *Course Rating* between two sets of tees, a player playing from the higher-rated set of tees must add the difference in *Course Rating* to the player's *Course Handicap*. In a competition with a field of 100 players, in which 88 are playing the back tees and 12 are playing the forward tees, instead of adding the difference in *Course Rating* to the *Course Handicap* of each of the 88 players, could the committee subtract it from the *Course Handicap* of the 12 players playing the lower-rated set of tees?

**A:** Yes. The committee may subtract the difference in rating in such cases, since the overall effect will be the same.

**3-5/2. May a Golf Club Choose Not to Follow Section 3-5 of the Handicap System**

**Q:** May *golf clubs* choose not to follow Section 3-5 of the Golf Canada Handicap Manual if the club's groups are competing from different tees?

**A:** No. Not applying Section 3-5 of the Golf Canada Handicap Manual when players are competing from different tees would be waiving a Rule of Golf, and the committee in charge of a competition does not have the authority to waive a Rule of Golf.

**3-6/1. Player in Match Uses Established Handicap but Handicap is Too High Due to Player's Failure to Observe Provision of the Handicap System**

**Q:** Player A's *Course Handicap* is 23 and Player B's *Course Handicap* is 31. A and B compete in a match and, based on the *handicap allowance* from Section 9-4a(i), B receives 8 strokes, the difference between 31 and 23. B wins the match, 1 up. A questions B's handicap; B admits to not adjusting hole scores under the *Equitable Stroke Control* provision of the *Handicap System*. It is determined that if B had adjusted hole scores using ESC, *Course Handicap* would be 29 strokes. The committee disqualifies B under Rule 6-2a. Was the committee correct?

**A:** As provided in Rule 6-2a of The Rules of Golf, it states: "Before starting a

match in a handicap competition, the players should determine from one another their respective handicaps. If a player begins the match having declared a higher handicap which would affect the number of strokes given or received, the player is disqualified; otherwise, the player plays off the declared handicap.”

B’s *Course Handicap*, although incorrect due to the player’s failure to apply *Equitable Stroke Control*, was 31. Accordingly, B was not in breach of Rule 6-2a and the match should have stood as played.

As it is impracticable for a committee conducting a competition to determine whether a player has correctly recorded each score, turned in all scores, etc., for handicap purposes, The Rules of Golf assume that the player has done so. The solution to a situation such as this is for the *Handicap Committee* to take appropriate action against B under Section 8-4c of the Golf Canada Handicap Manual because of the player’s failure to apply *Equitable Stroke Control* to the scores the player returned for handicap purposes.

## Section 4 ADJUSTING HOLE SCORES

### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

The game of golf is based on the premise that a player will play as well as the player can play. Under the *Handicap System*, each player is required to record a hole score for a hole not finished, not played, or not played under The Rules of Golf, and to reduce any hole score when it is higher than the maximum number allowed under *Equitable Stroke Control*.

### 4-1. Unfinished Holes and Conceded Strokes

A player who starts, but does not complete a hole or is conceded a stroke must record for handicap purposes the *most likely score*. The *most likely score* may not exceed the player’s *Equitable Stroke Control* limit, defined in Section 4-3. This *most likely score* should be preceded by an “X.” (See Decision 4-1/1.)

There is no limit to the number of unfinished holes a player may have in a round, provided that failure to finish is not for the purpose of handicap manipulation.

Example 1: A and B are partners in a four-ball stroke-play competition. On a hole on which neither player receives a handicap stroke, A lies two, 18 feet from the hole. B lies two, 25 feet from the hole. B holes a putt for a 3. A picks up on the hole, because A cannot better B’s score. A records X-4 on the scorecard because 4 is A’s *most likely score*.

Example 2: A and B are playing a match. On a hole on which neither player receives a handicap stroke, A has holed out in 4; B has a 30-foot putt for a 5. B has lost the hole, and picks up. B records X-6 on the scorecard because 6 is B’s *most likely score*.

Example 3: A and B are playing a match. On a hole on which neither player receives a handicap stroke, A is one foot from the hole, lying 4. B is 10 feet from the hole, lying 3. B putts and misses. They both concede a half. Both players record X-5 because that is their *most likely score*.

**4-2. Holes Not Played or Not Played Under The Rules of Golf**

If a player does not play a hole or plays it other than under the Rules of Golf (except for preferred lies), the score recorded for that hole for handicap purposes must be par plus any handicap strokes the player is entitled to receive on that hole. This hole score, when recorded, should be preceded by an “X.”

Example: A player with a *Course Handicap* of 10 receives a handicap stroke on the first 10 allocated handicap-stroke holes. If the player does not play the sixth allocated *handicap-stroke hole* which is a par 4 because of construction on the green, the player must record a score of par plus one for handicap purposes, or X-5. (See Section 5-2b.)

*Note:* A score must not be posted if the majority of the holes are not played under The Rules of Golf.

**4-3. Equitable Stroke Control**

All scores for handicap purposes, including *tournament scores*, are subject to the application of *Equitable Stroke Control* (ESC). This mandatory procedure reduces high hole scores for handicap purposes in order to make handicaps more representative of a player’s potential ability.

**A handicap determined from scores to which ESC has not been applied may not be termed a *Handicap Factor*.**

**EQUITABLE STROKE CONTROL**

Course Handicap	Maximum Score on any Hole
9 or less	Double Bogey
10 through 19	7
20 through 29	8
30 through 39	9
40 or more	10

*ESC* is used when a player's actual or *most likely score* exceeds a maximum number, based on the table on page 24, for the player's *Course Handicap* from the tees played. (For nine-hole *Equitable Stroke Control* table, see Section 10-5c.)

Example: A player with a *Course Handicap* of 6 has a maximum number of *par* plus two strokes (double bogey) for any hole. A player with a *Course Handicap* of 13 has a maximum number of 7 for any hole regardless of *par*. A player with a *Course Handicap* of 42 has a maximum number of 10 for any hole.

A player without an established *Handicap Factor* must use the maximum *Handicap Factor* of 36.4 for men, or 40.4 for women, converted to a *Course Handicap*, to determine a maximum *ESC* number.

There is no limit to the number of individual hole scores on which an *Equitable Stroke Control* reduction may be made.

Example: A player with a *Course Handicap* of 23 has a score of 106, which includes individual hole scores of 9, 10 and 11. *ESC* reduces each hole score to the applicable maximum of 8. The player posts an *adjusted gross score* of 100 for handicap purposes  $((9-8) + (10-8) + (11-8) = 6)$ .

In consulting the *Equitable Stroke Control* table, a player uses the *Course Handicap* derived from that player's actual *Handicap Factor*, disregarding any strokes added or subtracted because of a condition of competition, a *handicap allowance*, players competing from different tees, or men and women from the same tees. (See Sections 3-5, 9-3c, and 9-4.)

Example 1: A player with a *Handicap Factor* of 35.4 and a *Course Handicap* of 39 might enter a competition in which the conditions of the competition establish a maximum *Handicap Factor* limit of 25.4, which would yield a *Course Handicap* of 28. When applying *ESC*, that player uses the *Course Handicap* of 39.

Example 2: A player with a *Course Handicap* of 30 might play in a four-ball stroke play competition in which the *handicap allowance* is 90 percent, or 27 strokes. When applying *ESC*, that player uses the *Course Handicap* of 30.

Example 3: A player with a *Handicap Factor* of 25.4 and a *Course Handicap* of 28 might enter a competition in which players are competing from different tees. The difference between the higher-rated set of tees (a *Course Rating* of 73.0) and the lower-rated set of tees (a *Course Rating* of 71.2) is 2 strokes  $(73.0-71.2=1.8$  rounded to 2). From the course with the *Course Rating* of 73.0, the player would receive two additional strokes, which would give the player a *Course Handicap* of 30 (see Decision 3-5/1 for the only exception). However, when applying *ESC*, the player uses a *Course Handicap* of 28.

Example 4: A player with a *Handicap Factor* of 25.4 and a *Course Handicap* of 28 is in a tournament where the player shot a score of 92 without applying ESC. The player turns in the score of 92 for the tournament, but must include any ESC adjustments when posting for handicap purposes.

Under no circumstances must the procedures of this section be used by a player to manipulate a *Handicap Factor*. The *Handicap Factor* of a player who uses this section for such a purpose must be adjusted or withdrawn by the *Handicap Committee* under Section 8-4.

## Section 4 ADJUSTING HOLE SCORES

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### 4-1/1. Explanation of “Most Likely Score” for Holes Not Completed

**Q:** Section 4, adjusting hole scores, says that a player who starts but does not complete a hole records for handicap purposes the “most likely score.” This score must not exceed the player’s maximum number under *Equitable Stroke Control*. Clarify the meaning of most likely score.

**A:** Most likely score is a judgment that each player must make based on the player’s own game. It consists of the number of strokes already taken plus, in the player’s best judgment, the number of strokes needed to complete the hole from that position more than half the time. The player must evaluate each situation based on what the player can reasonably expect to score.

Finally, the player compares the most likely score to the maximum permitted under *Equitable Stroke Control* and enters the lower of the two. For example, if most likely score is 8 but the applicable ESC maximum is 7, the player enters a score, for handicap purposes, of X-7.

### 4-2/1. Explaining Holes Not Played Under the “Rules of Golf” in Accordance with the “Golf Canada Handicap Manual”

**Q:** Are there any circumstances in which it is permissible for a player to record his or her most likely score for a hole, rather than recording par plus handicap strokes even though the hole was not played under the Rules of Golf?

**A:** Yes. Flexibility has been provided within the Golf Canada Handicap System for a score to remain acceptable for handicap posting purposes in limited situations where the player has not played a hole(s) under the Rules of Golf, but the hole was played in such a manner that the player’s score on the hole would be sufficiently accurate for handicap purposes. This policy better ascertains the player’s potential ability by attempting to capture more scores for handicap purposes.

*Example 1:* If a player uses a distance-measuring device or plays a round under



preferred lies where a Local Rule is not in effect, the score is acceptable for handicap purposes. (See Decision 5-1e/2 and Section 7.)

*Example 2:* A player starting, but not finishing a hole in stroke play (e.g., picking up before holing out) records the “most likely score” for handicap posting purposes (See Section 4-1) even though in breach of Rule 3-2 for failing to hole out.

*Example 3:* For situations that are generally out of the player’s control, such as an incorrectly marked golf course, or incorrectly installed hole liners, the player’s score for the hole is acceptable for handicap purposes. (REVISED).

#### **4-2/2. Procedure for Applying Section 4-2 for a Player with a Plus Course Handicap**

**Q:** When applying strokes to determine a net score, the player with a plus Course Handicap must add strokes according to the handicap allocation table beginning with the 18th stroke hole. What score does a player with a plus Course Handicap record for a hole not played or not played under the Rules of Golf (See Section 4-1 and 4-2 and Section 7)?

**A:** For handicap purposes, the player must record a score of par minus one for any handicap strokes the player must give on that hole. For example, if a player with a Course Handicap of +3 does not play the 17th handicap stroke hole, which is a par 5, the player must record a score of par minus one for an X-4 on the hole. If the hole were the 10th handicap-stroke hole, the player would record a score of par. (NEW)

## **PLAYER AND HANDICAP COMMITTEE**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Section 5 SCORES**

##### **Definitions**

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

#### **5-1. Acceptability of Scores**

Fair handicapping depends upon full and accurate information regarding a player’s potential scoring ability as reflected by a complete *scoring record*. Every player must be responsible for returning all acceptable scores, as defined in this section. For handicap purposes, all Section 4 adjustments, including *Equitable Stroke Control*, must be applied to all scores including *tournament scores*.

■ **a. Scores To Post**

To post a 9-hole score, the player must play 7 to 12 holes, and at least 7 holes must be played in accordance with the Rules of Golf. To post an 18-hole score the player must play at least 13 holes in accordance with the Rules of Golf. (See Decisions 5-1a/3 through 5-1a/5.)

■ **b. Scores on All Courses**

*Adjusted gross scores* from all courses with an official *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* made during an *active season*, both at home and away, must be posted by the player along with the appropriate *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*, date, and name of the course played. (See Decision 5-1b/1.)

■ **c. Scores in All Forms of Competition**

Scores in both match play and stroke play must be posted for handicap purposes. This includes scores made in match play, in multi-ball, or in team competitions in which players have not completed one or more holes or in which players are requested to pick up when out of contention on a hole. (See Decision 5-1c/1, 5-2a/5, 5-2a/7 and Section 4.)

■ **d. Disqualification**

A player who is disqualified from a competition, but has an acceptable score, must record an *adjusted gross score* for handicap purposes using Section 4-2.

*Example 1:* Player fails to hole out under Rule 3-2.

*Example 2:* Player fails to sign scorecard under Rule 6-6b.

*Example 3:* Player refuses to apply a Rule in stroke play which affects the rights of another player under Rule 3-4.

However, if the breach is determined to provide an advantage for the player (i.e., Rules 1-2, 1-3, subsequent offenses to Rule 14-3, etc.) the score is not acceptable for handicap purposes (See Section 5-1e (viii)).

■ **e. Unacceptable Scores**

Scores made under the following conditions are not acceptable for handicap purposes and must not be entered in the player's *scoring record*:

- (i) When fewer than seven holes are played (see section 5-1a);
- (ii) When made on a golf course in an area in which an *inactive season* established by the *authorized golf association* having jurisdiction over that area is in effect;
- (iii) When the length of the course is less than 3,000 yards for 18 holes (or

- less than 1,500 yards for 9 holes) (see Decision 5-1e/1 and Appendix A);
- (iv) When, as a condition of the competition, the maximum number of clubs allowed is less than 14, or types of clubs are limited as, for example, in a competition that allows only iron clubs;
  - (v) When scores are made on a course with no *Course Rating* or *Slope Rating*;
  - (vi) When a player uses non-conforming clubs, non-conforming balls, or non-conforming tees, or when a player incurs a second breach of Rule 14-3. (NEW);
  - (vii) When a player plays alone; (NEW)
  - (viii) When a player ignores one or more Rules of Golf and fails to post an adjusted hole score as required under Section 4-1 and 4-2, or fails to record the appropriate penalty for a breach of rule. For example, if a player anchored the club while making a stroke during a round and did not record a penalty for doing so (See Rule 14-1b), the score would not have been played under the Rules of Golf and therefore would not be acceptable for handicap purposes. (NEW)

## 5-2. Posting Scores

### ■ a. General

Posting scores in person immediately following the round at the course where the round is played is the preferred way to expose scores to *peer review*. This method of posting should be used whenever possible. The place for returning scores from all courses should be convenient to make it as easy as possible for players to record every round played. The form of reporting is the responsibility of the *golf club* or the *authorized provincial golf association*, and will depend upon the procedure adopted by the *Handicap Committee*. The posted scores for the day must be immediately available to all members for *peer review*. (See Decisions 5-2a/1.)

For handicap purposes, the following information must be returned in person immediately following the round at the course where the round was played or, if that is not possible, as soon as practicable.

- (i.) Player's name or identification number;
- (ii) Date;
- (iii) Course Name;
- (iv) *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* of the course played;
- (v) *Adjusted gross score*;

- (vi) *Score type for tournament scores* or scores posted via the Internet. (See *score type*.)

The *Handicap Committee* may adopt a policy to accept scores returned by e-mail or internet. Scores may not be returned verbally by the telephone.

Scores returned to the club by e-mail or internet must be exposed to the same *peer review* as scores posted in person at the club. If a club adopts a policy to accept scores via e-mail or internet, the *Handicap Committee* must designate an official at the club who is authorized to receive these scores. If a *golf club* adopts a policy to accept scores posted via the internet, the club must also provide the ability to review all scores of all members via the internet.

Total scores may be returned and need not be recorded hole-by-hole. The *Handicap Committee* may require the returning or attesting of scorecards periodically in order to assist in its responsibilities, but this requirement must not be used to affect the acceptability of a score. A score is acceptable for handicap posting purposes regardless of whether a scorecard accompanies it. (See Decisions 5-2a/3 and 5-2a/4.)

#### ■ **b. Posting a Score When a Complete Round is not Played**

If 13 or more holes are played, the player must post an 18-hole score. If 7 to 12 holes are played, the player must post a nine-hole score. In either case, scores for unplayed holes must be recorded as par plus any handicap strokes that the player is entitled to receive on the unplayed holes. (See Section 4-2 and 5-1a.)

Example: A player with a *Course Handicap* of 30 stops playing after 16 holes because of darkness. Hole 17 is a par 3 and is the number 18 *handicap-stroke hole*. The player will record 3 (par) plus 1 handicap stroke for an X-4 on hole 17. Hole 18 is a par 4 and is the number 12 *handicap-stroke hole*. The player will record 4 (par) plus 2 handicap strokes for an X-6 on hole 18.

#### ■ **c. Posting Nine-Hole Scores**

To be acceptable for handicap purposes, nine-hole scores must meet the following conditions:

- (i) The course must have a nine-hole *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*;
- (ii) At least seven holes must be played. (see Section 5-1a.)

There is no restriction on the number of nine-hole scores posted to a player's *scoring record*. Even if a player plays a majority of nine-hole rounds, that player can still utilize a *Handicap Factor* (see Section 10-2) rather than a *Handicap Factor* (N). (See Section 10-5 for computation of a *Handicap Factor* (N).) (See Decision 5-2c/1.)

#### ■ d. Treatment of Nine-Hole Scores

Once posted, a nine-hole score will be treated as follows:

- (i) Nine-hole scores must not be designated as *T-Scores*;
- (ii) When two nine-hole scores are combined, the *Course Rating* is the sum of each nine-hole *Course Rating* and the *Slope Rating* is the average of the *Slope Rating* of the two nines (if the average is .5, it is rounded upward to the next whole number);
- (iii) Two nine-hole scores combined to create an 18-hole score should be designated with the letter C (e.g. 85C). If either of the two nine-hole scores was posted via Internet (see Section 5-2a(vi)), the score should be designated CI;
- (iv) Nine-hole scores are combined in the order that they are received into the player's *scoring record* from any club or from any combination of nines, regardless of score type. For example, a front nine middle tee score could combine with a front nine back tee score made from any course.

An 18-hole score created by the combination of the two nine-hole scores will display the date and course name (if applicable) of the latest nine-hole score (e.g., April 29 and May 4 = May 4).

A nine-hole score will be retained for combination with another nine-hole score until it is older than the twentieth oldest 18-hole score in the *scoring record*. Nine-hole scores will be combined in the order they are received in the player's record, and not necessarily by date.

#### ■ e. Posting a Tournament Score

A *tournament score* is a score made in a competition organized and conducted by a committee in charge of the competition. The competition must identify a winner(s) based on a *stipulated round(s)*, and must be played under the principles of The Rules of Golf. The competition can be match play or stroke play.

The committee (preferably the *Handicap Committee*, in consultation with the committee in charge of the competition) must determine in advance if these conditions are met, and announce in advance whether the score must be identified by the letter "T" when posted. Routine events such as regular play days normally are not to be designated as T-scores because they are not significant in the traditions, schedules, formats, and membership of the club. (See Section 2 and Decisions 10-3/1 through 10-3/6.)

#### ■ f. Committee Posting a Score For a Player

If a player fails to post a score, the *Handicap Committee* may post the score

without the player's authorization. (See Section 8-4b.) In a competition, the Committee in charge of the competition may post the scores of all competitors. The Committee must notify the players that it will post the scores in order to prevent scores from being posted by both the players and the Committee.

## Section 5 SCORES

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### **5-1a/1. Use of Scores Made by Playing Nine Random Holes of a 18-Hole Course Twice**

**Q:** When the weather is unpredictable, many of our members play holes 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, all of which are relatively near the clubhouse. They then play the same holes again. May such scores be returned for handicap purposes?

**A:** Yes. Since this is common practice, the club may obtain from its *authorized provincial golf association* a *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* for the course when played in this manner so *Handicap Differentials* can be determined.

### **[5/1a/2. Reserved]**

### **5-1a/3. Returning Scores for Handicap Purposes While Playing on Temporary Greens or Tees**

**Q:** May a club accept scores for handicap purposes if temporary greens or tees are being used?

**A:** Yes. If The Rules of Golf can be followed during the reconstruction period, scores should be posted. The club must contact its *authorized golf association* for advice regarding its specific situation. If a temporary green (not an alternate permanent green) is played the recommendation of the *authorized golf association* may be for the club to advise players to post par plus any handicap strokes the player is entitled to receive on that hole. (See Section 4-2.)

### **5-1a/4. Acceptability of Scores Made While Taking Playing Lessons**

**Q:** May a player post a score made while taking a playing lesson?

**A:** No. Scores made when a player is receiving instruction are not made in accordance with The Rules of Golf—see Rule 8-1 of The Rules of Golf—and may not be used in computing a *Handicap Factor*.

### **5-1a/5. Status of Scores Made when Two Balls Played Throughout Round**

**Q:** A player frequently plays alone and plays two balls throughout the round. May the player return the score made with each ball for handicap purposes?

**A:** No. The player may not return the score made with either ball, as such scores are not made in accordance with The Rules of Golf—see Rule 7-2 of The Rules of Golf.

### **5-1b/1. Club Will Not Accept Away Scores**

**Q:** May a club decline to accept away scores for handicap purposes?

**A:** No. A basic premise of the *Handicap System* is that a player will post every acceptable round for *peer review*.

### **5-1c/1. Status of Scores Made When Match Play and Stroke Play Combined**

**Q:** Two players competed in a match in the club championship and at the same time competed in a stroke play competition. Such practice is prohibited under Rule 33-1 of The Rules of Golf. May players return their scores for handicap purposes?

**A:** The stroke play score is an acceptable score for handicap purposes.

### **5-1e/1. Returning Scores Made at Par-3 Golf Courses**

**Q:** Why is it not permissible for a *Handicap Factor* to be computed from scores made on par-3 courses which are less than 3,000 yards in length?

**A:** Such courses do not normally require the use of a full set of clubs. It would not be equitable to handicap players on such short courses on the same basis as players on standard courses. A score on such a course is analogous to a score made in a competition that limits types of clubs. Such scores are not acceptable.

However, scores made on par-3 courses may be used to produce equitable handicaps for use at such courses only. Please follow the policy in Appendix A.

### **5-1e/2. Scores Made Using a Distance-Measuring Device or Multi-Functional Device**

**Q:** Are scores made using information generated from a distance-measuring device or multi-functional device acceptable for handicap purposes?

**A:** In certain situations, yes. If a player uses a distance-measuring device to measure distance only, regardless of whether the Committee has established a Local Rule allowing the use of a distance-measuring device, then the score is acceptable for handicap purposes.

If a player uses a multi-functional device to access weather reports provided by weather stations through an application or internet browser, the player is not

participating in the specific act of gauging or measuring variable conditions that might affect a player's play as is prohibited under Rule 14-3 of "The Rules of Golf" and the score is acceptable for handicap purposes.

However, if a player uses the device or information available through an application or internet browser to gauge or measure other conditions that might affect a player's play as is prohibited under Rule 14-3 of "The Rules of Golf" (e.g., gradient or wind speed) the score is unacceptable for handicap purposes. (REVISED)

### **5-1e/3. Scores Made using an Artificial Device, Unusual Equipment, or use of any Equipment in an Abnormal Manner**

**Q:** Are scores made using an artificial device, unusual equipment, or equipment used in an abnormal manner acceptable for handicap purpose?

**A:** In certain situations, yes. If the player breaches Rule 14-3, the player incurs a penalty of two-strokes in stroke play or loss of hole in match play. Any subsequent breach of Rule 14-3 is disqualification and the score is unacceptable for handicap purposes according to Section 5-1e. (REVISED)

### **5-2a/1. Requiring Return of Scores Within a Prescribed Period**

**Q:** Since some members of a club have been posting scores up to two months after they were made, would it be proper for the *Handicap Committee* to require that scores be posted within a prescribed period of the date on which they were made?

**A:** Yes. Normally, scores may be posted immediately after the round or as soon as practical. The *Handicap Committee* may set a reasonable limit within which scores must be posted, taking into account extenuating circumstances.

### **5-2a/3. Requiring the Return of Scorecards for Handicap Purposes**

**Q:** May a *Handicap Committee* require the returning of scorecards from players in order for a score to be posted?

**A:** No. However, scorecards may be requested periodically if the *Handicap Committee* wishes to sample the accuracy with which players are adjusting scores. In any case, the club must not take punitive action regarding the *scoring record* or the *Handicap Factor* if a scorecard does not accompany a score.



**5-2a/4. Requiring the Return of Scorecards by a Player Whose Handicap Factor has been Withdrawn or Modified**

**Q:** If a player's *Handicap Factor* has been withdrawn or modified by the player's *Handicap Committee*, and the player is allowed to get a new *Handicap Factor*, may the *Handicap Committee* require the return of that player's scorecards?

**A:** Yes, the club *Handicap Committee* may request the return of scorecards for a probational period from a player who has had their *Handicap Factor* withdrawn or modified.

**5-2a/5. Assigning Scores in Four-Ball (Better-Ball) When the Hole Scores are Left Blank**

**Q:** During a *golf club's* four-ball (better-ball) tournament, a player leaves two individual hole scores blank on the scorecard because the partner's scores were used on those holes, as allowed under The Rules of Golf, Rule 31-4. For handicap purposes only, what scores may the committee enter for the player on those two holes?

**A:** If the player can be contacted and recall the strokes played on these two holes, the player must record the actual score for each hole, not to exceed the player's *Equitable Stroke Control* limit. If the player picked up on those holes, the committee must record the most likely score, had the player completed the holes. (See Section 4-1.) However, if that information is not available, the committee must record a score of par plus any handicap strokes to which the player was entitled based on the player's *Course Handicap*. (See Handicap Decision 4-1/1.)

*Note:* For handicap posting purposes, there is a limit to the number of holes a player can leave blank. A player must have played 13 holes for an 18-hole score and 7 for a nine-hole score; therefore, leaving at the most 5 holes blank for an 18-hole score and 2 holes blank for a 9-hole score.

**[5-2a/6. Reserved]**

**5-2a/7. Score to Post if Match Ends in Fewer Than 18 Holes and Player Completes Round**

**Q:** In match play, a player wins the match on the 16th hole. The player plays the remaining two holes. What score may the player post for these two holes?

**A:** The player should post the actual scores on the post-match holes. To post in any other manner would be at odds with the basic premise that contends that each player will try to make the best scores at every hole in every round. If the committee believes that the player is inflating hole scores on the post-match holes, it may apply provisions of Section 8. (See 8-4c(v).)

**5-2a/8. Posting Individual Scores Via a Palm-Size and/or Wireless Device**

**Q:** May a player individually post scores using a palm-size device and/or other wireless type device?

**A:** Yes. A member of a golf club may post scores in this manner as this method is similar in nature to Internet score posting. Therefore, there is no prohibition against using this type of device. (REVISED)

**5-2a/9. Web Site Computation**

**Q:** Can an individual get a *Handicap Factor* from a web site?

**A:** No. However, an individual can obtain a *Handicap Factor* from a licensed Golf Canada Member *golf club* that follows the *Handicap System* in its entirety and communicates with its members primarily through a web site. (See Decision 2/7.)

**5-2c/1. Method for Combining Nine-Hole Scores**

**Q:** What method should be used to combine nine-hole scores when multiple nines are played, such as in a 27-hole Round Robin format?

**A:** Golf Canada recommends that the following method be used to combine nine-hole scores in a Round Robin format or in other events when the format requires 27 holes or multiple individual nines. The first two nines played on any day are combined to form an 18-hole score. The third nine is posted as a nine-hole score and becomes a part of the *scoring record* when combined with another nine-hole score.

An exception would occur if, for example, a player plays 27 holes in one day, and the first nine is a practice round. If this were the case, the nine-hole practice round would be posted as a nine-hole score, and the subsequent two nine-hole rounds would be combined to form an 18-hole score.

Both the first two nines and subsequent two nine-hole rounds referenced in this answer are eligible to be posted and designated as an 18-hole *tournament score*.

## Section 6 SCORING RECORDS

### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

#### 6-1. Continuous Records

Scores made in a new playing season (or calendar year) must be added to those of the preceding playing seasons (or calendar years) to make up a *scoring record*. *Scoring records* must be maintained continuously from year to year. (See Decision 6-1/1)

#### 6-2. Inactive Season

The *authorized provincial golf association* having jurisdiction in an area is responsible for declaring the duration of any *inactive season*. A *golf club* located within the area covered by an *authorized provincial golf association* must observe any *inactive season* established by the *golf association*. (See Decision 6-2/1.)

Scores made at any golf course observing an *inactive season* are not acceptable for handicap purposes. Scores made at a golf course in an area observing an *active season* must be posted for handicap purposes, even if the *golf club* from which the player receives a *Handicap Factor* is observing an *inactive season*. The club's *Handicap Committee* must make it possible for a player to post these away scores at the beginning of the *active season*.

Example: If a player belonging to a *golf club* in Ontario plays golf in Florida during January, any scores made in Florida are acceptable and must be returned to the player's Ontario *golf club*. If the player is also a member of a *golf club* in Florida, scores must also be posted to the player's Florida club.

#### 6-3. Handicap Lists and Scoring Records

The accessibility of *scoring records* is an important component of *peer review*. Accordingly, the club must provide the ability to view the *scoring records* of all members that includes the last 20 scores (fewer if the scoring record has fewer than 20 scores), plus any eligible *tournament scores*. This information must be readily available for inspection by fellow members and others. (See Decisions 6-3/1 and 6-3/2.)

Handicap reports serve as an adequate working record for each player. The working record must, at a minimum, include the last 20 scores (fewer if the

*scoring record* has less than 20 scores), dates, a *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*, and the course name for each score. If a computer with handicap information is directly accessible to members, *scoring records* may be displayed in this manner. However, for the purpose of *peer review*, the club should print out a *Handicap Factor* list and the current *scoring record*.

#### **6-4. Membership Cards**

Every player should be issued a membership card which verifies that they are a member of their provincial golf association and Golf Canada, and consequently is eligible to maintain an official *Handicap Factor*.

#### **6-5. Player Belonging to More Than One Golf Club**

A player who belongs to more than one *golf club* must do either of the following:

- (a) Register as a multi-member with the *authorized provincial golf association* and their computation service, if such service is provided, so that all scores at every club will enter into the player's *scoring record* for computation; or
- (b) Return all scores to all clubs in person, or, if the club allows, by e-mail, or Internet, (See Section 5-2), together with the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*, course name, and date.

If a player maintains a *Handicap Factor* at more than one club, and the clubs do not use a networked computation service, all acceptable scores must be posted at all clubs. (See Decision 6-5/1.) This will result in the same *Handicap Factor* at all clubs. Failure to post all acceptable scores at all clubs produces a *Handicap Factor* that is not based on the player's best 10 of the last 20 scores and consequently may not be termed a *Handicap Factor*. If a player has a different *Handicap Factor* at different clubs, despite posting all scores at all clubs, the committee in charge of the competition must require the player to use the lowest *Handicap Factor* when competing with players from more than one club. (See Decision 6-5/3.)

#### **6-6. Player Changing Golf Clubs**

When changing *golf clubs*, a player should give the new club a record of the last 20 scores in chronological order plus any *eligible tournament scores* recorded with the appropriate *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*. This information will become part of the player's *scoring record* at the new club. The player must also have at least five scores in the *scoring record*. If the player's *scoring record* is unavailable, the player has no *Handicap Factor* until five scores have been posted. (See Section 3-1 and 8-2h.)



### **6-3/2. Posted Scores Being Readily Available/Scoring Records in a Prominent Location**

**Q:** In Section 5-2, posted scores are to be “readily available.” Section 6-3 requires that a list of *scoring records* (including a *Handicap Factor* list) must be in a “prominent location.” What satisfies these requirements?

**A:** “Readily available” means easy access to this information. If the sole place where posted scores, *scoring records*, and a *Handicap Factor* list are kept is at home, behind a golf shop counter, or in some other area where others cannot access this information easily, these requirements are not being satisfied. If a majority of the members of a club members of a *golf club* have internet access, maintaining a club web site via the internet with a distinctive web site address that displays posted scores, *scoring records*, and a *Handicap Factor* list will meet these requirements. Using a member’s identification number as the sole means of accessing that member’s information is not considered making records readily available; some additional means, such as a name search feature, must be offered.

### **6-3/3. Request from Competition Officials for Scoring Record**

**Q:** A *golf club*’s *Handicap Committee* or a committee in charge of a competition in which a golfer is entered asks another club for the *scoring record* of one of its members. Is it a violation of the Handicap Policy to refuse such a request?

**A:** Refusal to honour such a request is not a violation of the *Handicap System*, but Golf Canada encourages clubs to routinely honour such requests so that *peer review* can take place on a wide-scale basis. A committee in charge of a competition would be entitled to reject a golfer’s application to play in the competition if a request for such information were denied.

### **6-5/1. Maintaining Handicap Factor at Only One Club if Belonging to More Than One Club**

**Q:** A player is a member of three *golf clubs* in a close geographical area. The handicap service does not provide multi-member score routing services, and because of the location of the clubs, it is very inconvenient for the player to post all scores at all three clubs under Section 6-5. Can an exception be made to accommodate this player?

**A:** Yes. Since the player is a member of more than one club in the same area, a network handicap service is not available to the player, and it is very inconvenient for the player to post all scores at all clubs, the player can designate one club to issue a *Handicap Factor*. The additional conditions are as follows:

The designated club normally may be the club at which the player plays the most golf;

The player's other clubs in the area must agree to delete the player from their handicap records and cease issuing a *Handicap Factor* to that player;

All scores regardless of where they are played must either be posted at or routed through the player's designated club.

### [6-5/2. Reserved]

### 6-5/3. Procedure when Multi-Club Member's Handicap Factor is Modified

**Q:** A player is a member of multiple *golf clubs*. One of the clubs has modified the player's *Handicap Factor* under Section 8. What obligation does the club have to notify the other club(s)?

**A:** Golf Canada recommends that the club notify all additional clubs where the player receives a *Handicap Factor*. The modified *Handicap Factor* should become the player's *Handicap Factor* at all clubs.

## Section 7 PREFERRED LIES (WINTER RULES) AND ADVERSE COURSE CONDITIONS

### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

### 7-1. Acceptability of Scores When Playing Preferred Lies

Scores made when a local rule for *preferred lies* and/or winter rules is in effect must be posted for handicap purposes unless the committee (preferably the *Handicap Committee* in consultation with the committee in charge of the course) determines that conditions are so poor that such scores should not be posted. Individual players playing the course do not independently decide whether scores are acceptable because of this condition. If an individual decides to apply some form of this local rule and the committee has not invoked such a rule, the player's score is acceptable and must be posted for handicap purposes.

If adverse conditions, such as flooding, mud, heavy snow, etc. are widespread throughout the course the committee should consider suspending score posting until conditions improve. If the committee decides to suspend score posting due to poor course conditions, it should notify all players playing the course that scores should not be posted.

If the committee decides to adopt a Local Rule for preferred lies, it should publish Specimen Local Rule 4c in The Rules of Golf, Rule 33-8a and in Appendix I of The Rules of Golf. However, Specimen Local Rule 4c may not be printed or





## 7-2. Pitfalls in Adopting Preferred Lies

Before a committee adopts the local rule permitting *preferred lies* and winter rules, the following facts should be considered:

- (a) Such a local rule conflicts with the fundamental principle of playing the ball as it lies;
- (b) *Preferred lies* is sometimes adopted under the guise of protecting the course when, in fact, the practical effect is just the opposite—it permits moving the ball to the best turf, from which divots are then taken to injure the course further;
- (c) *Preferred lies* tends generally to lower scores and a *Handicap Factor*, thus penalizing players in competition with players whose scores are made without preferred lies;
- (d) Extended use or indiscriminate use of *preferred lies* will place players at a disadvantage when competing at a course where the ball must be played as it lies.

## 7-3. Maintaining Normal Scoring Difficulty

When the local rule for *preferred lies* is adopted, the committee should ensure that the course's normal scoring difficulty is maintained as nearly as possible through adjustment of tee markers and related methods. (See Course Set-up, Section 15.)

# HANDICAP COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

## Section 8 THE HANDICAP COMMITTEE

### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

An essential element of the *Handicap System* is the *Handicap Committee*. Each *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association* utilizing the *Handicap System* must appoint a *Handicap Committee* to ensure the integrity of the handicaps it issues. This committee must make certain that the members comply with the *Handicap System*.

## 8-1. Handicap Committee Chairperson

The position of *Handicap Chairperson* requires a substantial amount of time and a basic knowledge of the *Handicap System*. The more information the *Handicap*

*Chairperson* gives the members, the more cooperation the *Chairperson* is likely to receive. (See Decision 8-1/1 and 8-1/1.5.)

## 8-2. Duties and Responsibilities

The *Handicap Committee* is responsible within the *golf club* for all aspects of the *Handicap System*, including the computation of each member's *Handicap Factor*. The *Handicap Committee* must verify that all acceptable scores are reported for handicap purposes, and that recorded scores are available for *peer review*. In addition, the *Handicap Committee* has the authority to make the determination if course conditions are so poor that score posting should be suspended. If score posting is suspended for an extended period, the *golf club* must obtain approval from its *authorized golf association*.

### ■ a. Notice to Members

It is advisable to send a notice to members before the season starts in order to outline the *Handicap System*, to stress the importance of reporting all acceptable scores and to report the *Handicap Committee's* policies. The members may be advised of such matters as the following:

- (i) How and where scores are returned;
- (ii) How Membership cards are issued;
- (iii) How *Handicap Factors* are to be verified;
- (iv) The duration of any *inactive season* established by the *authorized provincial golf association* (See Section 6-2);
- (v) How away scores are posted prior to the start of the *active season*;
- (vi) *Handicap Factor* adjustment responsibilities of the *Handicap Committee* (See Sections 8-4 and 10-3);
- (vii) Penalties for players failing to return scores (See Section 8-4b);
- (viii) Which rounds will be designated as *tournament scores*. (See Sections 8-2l and 10-3.)

### ■ b. Display each Course Rating and Slope Rating of the Club

The *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* from every set of tee markers should be printed on the club scorecard and posted in a prominent place at the club, preferably by means of a poster certified by the *authorized provincial golf association*. The Ratings should also be easily retrievable on the screen of any computer used for score posting.

**■ c. Displaying Course Rating and Slope Rating of Area Courses**

A list of each *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* of area courses should be provided by the *authorized provincial golf association* and posted at the place where scores are returned or, if a computer is used for score posting, the list should be made easily available for viewing on the screen.

**■ d. Posting Course Handicap Tables**

The *Course Handicap Table* from every set of tee markers, as issued to a *golf club* by the *authorized provincial golf association*, must be posted in a prominent place at the club, on or near the first tee of every course at the club, and in any other place considered beneficial for assisting with the process of converting a *Handicap Factor* to a *Course Handicap*. The *Handicap Committee* is responsible for obtaining these tables from the issuing *authorized provincial golf association* and assuring their display. Each table should show the tee's *Slope Rating* and *Course Rating*, as well as the corresponding *Course Handicap* for a player's *Handicap Factor*. *Course Handicap Tables* may be obtained from the *authorized provincial golf association* that issued each rating.

**■ e. Utilization of the Current Course Rating and Slope Rating**

A club must accept and use the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* that has been issued by an *authorized provincial golf association*. If a club disagrees with its Ratings, it may request the *authorized provincial golf association* to review the Ratings.

A separate *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* must be made from each set of tee markers as practicable for each gender.

**■ f. Examining Results of Competitions**

The *Handicap Committee* should examine results of competitions. If net scores of any players appear exceptional, the *Handicap Committee* should take appropriate action under procedures in Sections 8-4 and 10-3. (See Appendix E.) The *golf club* or *Handicap Committee* should forward exceptional *tournament scores* of guests to the guest's *golf club* or *golf association*.

**■ g. Maintaining Players' Records**

The *Handicap Committee* must be responsible for maintaining players' records, including prominently displaying a *Handicap Factor* list. Current *scoring records* of all players in the club must be available to all members and others. It is preferable for only one committee member to be responsible for players' records and keeping the *Handicap Factor* of each member up-to-date.

If mathematical computations are made by a computer or computation service, the *Handicap Committee* still has the responsibility of reviewing the data entered into and received from the computer or computation service and applying all other procedures of the *Handicap System*.





If the answer to all questions is “yes,” the *golf club* is following the *Handicap System* and may issue a *Handicap Factor*.

If any answers are “no,” the *authorized provincial golf association* or Golf Canada should be contacted to determine necessary action to achieve compliance.

### **8-3. Handicap Revisions and Inactive Season**

The *Handicap Committee* at the *golf club* is responsible for following the procedures of the *authorized provincial golf association*.

#### **■ a. Inactive Season**

An *authorized provincial golf association* shall establish an *inactive season*. If established, the association must distribute the dates on which the *inactive season* starts and ends to all *member clubs* in its region.

#### **■ b. Frequency of Revisions**

*Handicap Factors* must be current, updated after every round. Each player is responsible for the authenticity of their *Handicap Factor*. If calculations are made manually at the club, *Handicap Factors* should be computed and made available at least every 15 days. The club *Handicap Committee* should verify *Handicap Factors* regularly.

#### **■ c. Scores Made in Inactive Season**

Scores made in an area when that area’s *authorized golf association* has declared an *inactive season* must not be accepted for handicap purposes (e.g. score made in Saskatchewan in December). However, scores made in an area having an *active season* (e.g. scores made in Florida in December) must be posted via the internet, at the player’s *golf club* at the start of the *active season*, or as soon as practical. All scores from the *active season* areas must be posted or if there are more than 20, the last 20 plus any *eligible tournament score* must be posted.

### **8-4. Penalty Scores, Handicap Factor Adjustment, and Withdrawal**

#### **■ a. General**

A player must earn a *Handicap Factor*. No player has an inherent right to a *Handicap Factor* without providing full evidence of ability to the *golf club’s Handicap Committee*. A *Handicap Factor* must be changed only as warranted by the *Handicap System*. Only the *Handicap Committee* where a player maintains a *Handicap Factor* can adjust that player’s *Handicap Factor*. There must be no automatic increases at the beginning of a playing season or year. A *Handicap Factor* is continuous from one playing season or year to the next. (See Decision 8-4a/1 and Section 6-1.)

**■ b. Penalty Score for Failure to Post**

If a player fails to post an acceptable score as soon as practicable after completion of the round, the *Handicap Committee* has three options:

- (1) Post the actual score made by the player;
- (2) Post a *penalty score* equal to the lowest/highest *Handicap Differential* in the *scoring record*;
- (3) Post the actual score and a *penalty score*.

The *Handicap Committee* is not required to notify the player prior to posting a *penalty score*.

**■ c. Handicap Factor Adjustment by Handicap Committee**

The *Handicap Committee* has the responsibility of making certain that each player has a *Handicap Factor* reflecting potential ability. Under the following circumstances, it will be necessary for the *Handicap Committee* to adjust the player's *Handicap Factor*. However, the following list is not all-inclusive, and a *Handicap Committee* has the ultimate authority to adjust a *Handicap Factor* under any circumstance that it feels necessary to do so. Before an adjustment becomes effective, the *Handicap Committee* must give the player an opportunity to explain the circumstances surrounding the proposed adjustment, either in writing or by appearing before the *Handicap Committee*. When an adjustment does become effective, it must be identified with the letter M, indicating that the *Handicap Committee* has modified the *Handicap Factor* (e.g., 4.9M).

*Note:* See Appendix B for a sample letter notifying a player of *Handicap Factor* adjustment.

**(i) Improving Faster Than The System Can React**

A player recently taking up the game may improve too rapidly for a *Handicap Factor* calculated by the standard procedure to reflect potential ability. For example, a player who is practicing aspects of that player's game and/or taking playing lessons may not have a *scoring record* that exhibits potential ability and may need a *Handicap Factor* adjustment.

**(ii) Numerous Away or Internet Scores Change Factor**

If a player's *Handicap Factor* increases by 3.0 or more due to the posting of numerous away or internet scores, and subsequent scores at the player's club clearly indicate that the increased *Handicap Factor* is too high, the *Handicap Committee* must adjust the player's *Handicap Factor* downward.

**(iii) Temporary Disability**

An increase in a *Handicap Factor* must not be granted because a player's game is temporarily off or the player has discontinued play. However, an increased handicap may be given for a temporary disability. The modified *Handicap Factor* must be identified by the letter "M" to indicate that it has been modified by the club's *Handicap Committee*. For example, a player having had recent surgery may be given a modified *Handicap Factor* while recovering. (See Decisions 8-4c/1, 8-4c/2.)

**(iv) Player Manipulates Round**

The *Handicap Committee* must adjust or withdraw the *Handicap Factor* of a player who manipulates scores. Examples of manipulating scores include the following:

- (a) Posting erroneous scores;
- (b) Stopping play prior 7 holes to avoid posting scores;
- (c) Repeatedly playing more than one ball to avoid posting scores (see Decision 5-1a/5);
- (d) Not adjusting hole scores under Section 4;
- (e) Deliberately reporting more or fewer strokes than actually scored;
- (f) Deliberately taking extra strokes to inflate a score;
- (g) Not observing either or both of the two basic premises that underlie the *Handicap System* (see Section 1-1);

**(v) Continued Violations of Section 5-1e.**

The *Handicap Committee* is responsible for identifying and notifying a player who regularly violates any provision within Section 5-1e that such rounds are unacceptable for handicap purposes. If the player persists in violating clause(s) within Section 5-1e after being notified by the *Handicap Committee*, the *Handicap Committee* is authorized and encouraged to consider withdrawal of the player's *Handicap Factor*.

**■ d. Duration of Adjustment by Handicap Committee**

The *Handicap Committee* must determine how long a player's *Handicap Factor* is to remain modified or withdrawn. Periodically, the *Handicap Committee* should compare the modified *Handicap Factor* to the value determined by normal computation method. For example, the *Handicap Committee* may lift a modified *Handicap Factor* of 4.9M, when subsequent scores posted to a player's *scoring record* produce a lower *Handicap Factor* (e.g., 4.0).





*Chairperson.* Is this permissible?

**A:** No. Any individual that receives payment or compensation for performing the duties of a member of the *Handicap Committee*, including the Handicap Chair, is deemed to be an employee and as such is not eligible to serve as the Handicap Chair. Compensation for what Golf Canada considers the equivalent to compensation, puts someone in a position to act like an employee, similar to Decision 8-1/1. This includes, but is not limited to compensation based on a percentage of revenue, deriving financial benefit from increased usage of a course, commissions, incentives, etc. A Handicap Chair or Committee member may receive a nominal benefit for services rendered, such as waiving the club's annual membership fee, annual green fees or complimentary use of the club's practice facilities.

### **8-2m/1. Club Representative No Longer Part of Club and/or Joins New Club**

**Q:** Is the handicap license of a *golf club* subject to revocation solely because its representative at a Golf Canada Handicap Seminar is no longer part of the club?

**A:** No. If a club representative has attended a seminar and passed a test exhibiting knowledge about the *Handicap System* at some point during the term of the licence, this requirement is considered to be met through the end of the current term. However, each *golf club* is encouraged always to have at least one active club representative who has met this requirement. An *authorized provincial golf association*, may have its own requirement that a *member club* continuously has a club representative who has attended a seminar and passed a test in order for the club to receive certain association membership benefits, but such a requirement does not impact the club's ability to be licensed to utilize the *Handicap System*.

In addition, if the representative of Club A joins Club B, which is in need of the seminar and test requirement, this will be considered to have been met for Club B. The club's Handicap Chairperson or a club official should contact the provincial golf association and/or Golf Canada to update its records when this occurs. (REVISED)

### **8-4a/1. Limiting Increase in Handicap to Certain Number of Strokes**

**Q:** A club wishes to adopt a regulation under which there would be a limit on the number of strokes a player's *Handicap Factor* would be allowed to increase from one time period to the next. Is the club entitled to adopt such a regulation?

**A:** No.

### **8-4c/1. Treatment of Player with Temporary Disability**

**Q:** A player with a *Handicap Factor* of 11.1 discontinued play due to hip

replacement surgery. The player has started to play again, but due to recovery and fatigue, the three latest scores have been 104, 100, and 102. May the player receive a special adjustment while recovering?

**A:** The player is entitled to a special adjustment under Section 8-4c(iii). The player should be assigned a modified *Handicap Factor* (M) to reflect current ability, as needed during the temporary disability, and it must be identified by the letter “M” to indicate that it is has been modified by the club *Handicap Committee*. (REVISED)

### **8-4c/2. Treatment of Player with Permanent Disability**

**Q:** Two players have suffered extreme physical disabilities. Both have been able to resume playing golf after not being able to play for many months. Neither will ever be able to play to the *Handicap Factor* established before illness. May these players be entitled to a special adjustment?

**A:** Yes. The disabilities described appear to be permanent and more extensive than contemplated by Section 8-4c(iii). The club *Handicap Committee* may discard the players’ previous scoring records and provide each with a modified *Handicap Factor* (M) for use until five scores have been returned to establish a new *Handicap Factor*. (REVISED)

### **8-4c/3. Player’s Handicap Factor Experiences Season Fluctuation**

**Q:** Almost every year, a player scores very well or poorly during a certain season in comparison to the previous season and the player’s *Handicap Factor* changes. The player suggests that this change in scoring is the result of seasonal changes in course conditions. May the *Handicap Committee* make an adjustment to the player’s *Handicap Factor* for this reason?

**A:** Yes. Changing course conditions by themselves, do not influence a player’s potential ability and should not result in a change to a *Handicap Factor*. If the *Handicap Committee* believes that the player’s potential ability is different than the *Handicap Factor* calculated from scores, it is authorized to adjust the player’s *Handicap Factor*.

If this sort of change in scoring is widespread because of changes in course conditions and the *Handicap Committee* believes it is not practical to maintain course difficulty consistent with its rating it should consider suspending posting, but must obtain approval from the *authorized golf association* that issued its ratings if this suspension is to be for an extended period of time.



**■ c. Player Has More Than One Handicap Factor**

If a player belongs to more than one *golf club* and has a different *Handicap Factor* at each club, the committee in charge of a competition must require the player to use the lowest *Handicap Factor* when competing with players from more than one club. (See Section 6-5 and Decision 6-5/3.)

**9-3. Assignment of Strokes****■ a. Where To Apply Strokes**

If handicap strokes are applied to a *gross score*, subtract the player's handicap strokes (usually the *Course Handicap*) recorded on the score card. The result is the player's *net score*.

In stroke play, the committee is responsible for the addition of scores and the application of the *Course Handicap* recorded on the score card. (“The Rules of Golf”, Rule 33-5).

For formats in which handicap strokes are used on specific holes during the course of play, a player generally takes them in the order assigned on the score card. For example, a player receiving three strokes takes them on the first, second, and third stroke holes. However, the committee in charge of the competition is permitted to assign a custom order. If so, it must publish a “Stroke Allocation Table” indicating the order of holes at which handicap strokes are to be given or received. For example, while the score card may assign holes 3, 13, and 8 as the first, second, and third stroke holes, the committee may choose to designate 4, 12, and 7 instead. (“The Rules of Golf”, Rule 33-4).

In mixed competitions where players play their own ball and where allocations are different for men and women, the players receive strokes based on their respective stroke allocations.

In mixed foursome and selected drive match play competitions, strokes are received based on the men's allocation.

**■ b. Where to Apply Stroke, Plus Handicaps**

A player with a plus *Course Handicap* must add strokes according to the allocation table beginning with the 18th stroke hole. For example, when a player with a plus *Course Handicap* competes in a partnership stroke play competition, a side with a *Course Handicap* of plus 1 must add a stroke to its score on the hole designated as the 18th stroke hole. In a match play competition, if the lower-handicapped side has a *Course Handicap* of plus 1, that side plays at scratch, and adds 1 stroke to the other side's *Course Handicap*. (See Decisions 9-3a/1, 9-3a/2, and 9-3a/3.)

When a plus-handicap player is part of a side, the percentage allowances, for























Example: On side A-B, Player A has a *Course Handicap* of 10 and Player B has a *Course Handicap* of 18. 60% of Player A's *Course Handicap* is 6 ( $10 \times 60\% = 6$ ); 40% of Player B's *Course Handicap* is 7 ( $18 \times 40\% = 7.2$ , rounded to 7) so the total is 13. Side A-B will receive 13 strokes.

**(viii) Stableford Competition**

The reckoning in Stableford competitions is made by points awarded in relation to a fixed score (usually par or net par) at each hole as shown below:

The winner is the competitor who scores the highest number of points (“The Rules of Golf”, Rule 32-1b). After *handicap allowances* are determined, Section 9-3c must be applied in competitions from different tees, or in competitions between men and women from the same tees.

Allowance: Players use full *Course Handicap*, and strokes are taken as they are allocated on the Stroke Allocation Table.

Hole Played In	Points
More than one over fixed score or no score returned	0
One over fixed score	1
Fixed Score	2
One under fixed score	3
Two under fixed score	4
Three under fixed score	5
Four under fixed score	6

Example: Player A has a *Course Handicap* of 16 in a Stableford competition based on net scores with par as the fixed score. Player A's *gross score* of 5 on a par 4 allocated as the 15th *handicap-stroke hole* results in a *net score* of 4 (par). Player A receives two points for the hole.



### ■ c. Course Handicap Allowance Table

The following table provides quick reference to the adjusted *Course Handicap* for recommended *handicap allowances* aforementioned.

## COURSE HANDICAP ALLOWANCE TABLE

Course Handicap	Allowance			Course Handicap	Allowance		
	80%	90%	95%		80%	90%	95%
1	1	1	1	26	21	23	25
2	2	2	2	27	22	24	26
3	2	3	3	28	22	25	27
4	3	4	4	29	23	26	28
5	4	5	5	30	24	27	29
6	5	5	6	31	25	28	29
7	6	6	7	32	26	29	30
8	6	7	8	33	26	30	31
9	7	8	9	34	27	31	32
10	8	9	10	35	28	32	33
11	9	10	10	36	29	32	34
12	10	11	11	37	30	33	35
13	10	12	12	38	30	34	36
14	11	13	13	39	31	35	37
15	12	14	14	40	32	36	38
16	13	14	15	41	33	37	39
17	14	15	16	42	34	38	40
18	14	16	17	42	34	39	41
19	15	17	18	44	35	40	42
20	16	18	19	45	36	41	43
21	17	19	20	46	37	41	44
22	18	20	21	47	38	42	45
23	18	21	22	48	38	43	46
24	19	22	23	49	39	44	47
25	20	23	24	50	40	45	48

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## 9-5. Flights

Under Rule 33-1 of “The Rules of Golf” it is the Committee’s responsibility to establish the conditions under which the competition is to be played. This would include establishing any flights for a handicap competition.

### ■ a. Match Play

For a match play competition, customarily the number of players or teams in a flight should be placed in the appropriate “General Numerical Draw” of 8, 16, 32, or 64 — see below. The players or teams in each flight may be determined on the basis of *Handicap Factor* or *Course Handicap* (prior to any additional adjustments based on the application of a handicap allowance or for players competing from a different *Course Rating*). In which case, if there are to be flights of 16, the 16 players with the lowest handicaps (or the 16 teams with the lowest combined handicaps) should comprise the Championship Flight, the next best 16 players or teams based on handicaps should comprise the First Flight, and so on.

Another commonly used method of determining the players or teams for each flight is a stroke-play qualifying round or rounds. If this method is used and there are to be flights of 16, the 16 players or teams with the lowest scores in the qualifying competition should comprise the Championship Flight. If there are to be flights other than the Championship Flight, the 16 players or teams with the next lowest scores should comprise the First Flight, and so on. It is recommended that a tie for last place in a Championship Flight be decided by a hole-by-hole playoff and that players should be advised in advance as to the time and place of the playoff — see the publication “How to Conduct a Competition,” Section 2; Part 7. If a playoff is not feasible, ties should be decided by matching scorecards — see Section 9-6 of “The Golf Canada Handicap Manual” for Golf Canada’s recommended method.

In the case of a handicap match-play competition in which flights are to be determined by a qualifying round, the qualifying round may be conducted at scratch or on a handicap basis. If it is desired not to have high and low-handicap players competing against one another in matches, qualifying at scratch is recommended. Although the draw for match play may be completely blind or certain players may be distributed (seeded) throughout different quarters or eighths, the General Numerical Draw is recommended if flights are determined by a qualifying round. When using the General Numerical Draw, each player is assigned a number based on the player’s qualifying score. The lowest qualifier is no. 1; the second lowest qualifier is no. 2, and so on. Under the General Numerical Draw, players are paired by number for matches as follows:

For purposes of determining places in the draw, recommendations can be found in “The Rules of Golf,” Appendix B, Part 10.

**Note:** If there are insufficient players to complete a flight, byes are used to complete it. If there is one bye, the player in the no. 1 position in the draw should receive it. If there are two byes, the players in the no. 1 and no. 2 positions in the draw should receive them, and so on. If the competition is made up of numerous flights, the Committee should fill in as many flights as possible before using the byes. The byes should be used in completing the last flight.

### ■ b. Stroke Play

If the field is to comprise high and low handicapped competitors, the Committee might wish to establish flights so that each competitor will be competing against other competitors with comparable ability. The handicap range for each flight is up to the Committee as well as if the flights are to be determined using *Handicap Factor* or *Course Handicap* (prior to any additional adjustments based on the application of a handicap allowance or for players competing from a different *Course Rating*).

For example, in an individual stroke play competition Flight A might be comprised of competitors with a handicap of 9 or less, Flight B might be for those with handicaps from 10 through 19, Flight C for those with handicaps of 20 through 29, and Flight D for those with handicaps of 30 and higher. Another option is to wait until entries are complete and then create flights with the players divided evenly by handicap or along natural breaks in the entries.

Upper Half	Lower Half
64 Qualifiers	
1 vs. 64	2 vs. 63
32 vs. 33	31 vs. 34
16 vs. 49	15 vs. 50
17 vs. 48	18 vs. 47
8 vs. 57	7 vs. 58
25 vs. 40	26 vs. 39
9 vs. 56	10 vs. 55
24 vs. 41	23 vs. 42
4 vs. 61	3 vs. 62
29 vs. 36	30 vs. 35
13 vs. 52	14 vs. 51
20 vs. 45	19 vs. 46
5 vs. 60	6 vs. 59
28 vs. 37	27 vs. 38
12 vs. 53	11 vs. 54
21 vs. 44	22 vs. 43

Upper Half	Lower Half
32 Qualifiers	
1 vs. 32	2 vs. 31
16 vs. 17	15 vs. 18
8 vs. 25	7 vs. 26
9 vs. 24	10 vs. 23
4 vs. 29	3 vs. 30
13 vs. 20	14 vs. 19
5 vs. 28	6 vs. 27
12 vs. 21	11 vs. 22
16 Qualifiers	
1 vs. 16	2 vs. 15
8 vs. 9	7 vs. 10
4 vs. 13	3 vs. 14
5 vs. 12	6 vs. 11
8 Qualifiers	
1 vs. 8	2 vs. 7
4 vs. 5	3 vs. 6

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## 9-6. How To Decide Ties In Handicap Competitions

(“The Rules of Golf”, Appendix I)

For reference purposes, a “side” is a player, or two or more players who are partners. A side is considered synonymous with the term “team.”

Rule 33-6 empowers the committee in charge of the competition to determine how and when a halved match or a stroke play tie is decided. The decision should be published in advance.

Golf Canada recommends:

### (i) Match Play

A match that ends all square should be played off hole by hole until one side wins a hole. The playoff should start on the hole where the match began. In a handicap match, handicap strokes should be allowed as in the *stipulated round*.

### (ii) Stroke Play

In the event of a tie in a handicap stroke-play competition a play-off with handicaps is recommended. The playoff may be over 18 holes or a smaller number of holes as specified by the committee. It is recommended that any such playoff consist of at least three holes.

If the playoff is less than 18 holes and is a form of play where the stroke-hole allocation is not relevant, such as individual stroke play, the percentage of 18 holes to be played should be applied to the players’ *Course Handicap* for the playoff. Fractions of one-half stroke or more should count as a full stroke; any lesser fractions should be disregarded.

Example 1: In an individual stroke play competition, A has a *Course Handicap* of 10 and B a *Course Handicap* of 7. If the committee decides to conduct a nine-hole play-off (50 percent of 18 holes), A will deduct 5 strokes from his score B will deduct 4 from B’s score.

If the playoff is less than 18 holes and is a form of play where the stroke-hole allocation is relevant, such as such as four-ball stroke play and stableford, handicap strokes should be taken as they were assigned for the competition, using the players’ respective Stroke Allocation Tables.

Example 2: In a four-ball stroke play competition, side A-B consists of A with a *Course Handicap* of 10 and B with a *Course Handicap* of 7 (after allowances). If the stroke hole allocation is set up so that the odd stroke holes are allocated to the front nine and the even stroke holes are



strokes should be taken as they were assigned for the competition, using the players' respective stroke allocation tables.

Example 4: In a four-ball stroke play competition, if the committee decides to match score cards for the last nine holes, it would determine each side's score for the last nine holes using the lower partner's net scores for each hole. This method results in a tie at 34. Side A-B has a score of 23 for the last six holes, C-D a score of 21, thus C-D win the match of score cards.

Example 4:

Hole	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
Handicap	3	5	11	9	7	15	17	1	13	
Player ( <i>Course Handicap</i> )										
Player A (5)	5*	4*	5	3	5	4	4	4*	5	
Player B (22)	7**	5*	5*	6*	5*	6*	5*	8**	7*	
A/B net	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	5	34
Player C (10)	6*	4*	6	3*	5*	6	3	6*	5	
Player D (15)	7*	5*	6*	5*	5*	5*	5	4*	6*	
C/D net	5	3	5	2	4	4	3	3	5	34
* = one stroke received										
** = two strokes received										

## Section 9 HANDICAP COMPETITIONS

### 9-1/1. Requiring Players to use a Handicap Factor based on Local Scores

**Q:** Is it proper to make it a condition of a handicap competition that a *Handicap Factor* must be based on scores made on four local courses?

**A:** The committee in charge of the competition is entitled to lay down the conditions. (See "The Rules of Golf", Rule 33-1.) However, if the committee requires that players base their handicaps on scores limited to four local courses, these players would not be using a *Handicap Factor* and could not term the handicap a *Handicap Factor*. The *Handicap System* requires players to return all scores, regardless of where they were made. (See Section 5-1b.) Golf Canada

recommends that the committee in charge of a competition require the use of a *Handicap Factor* in order to be fair and equitable.

### **9-1/2. Prohibiting Players whose Handicap Factor is based on Fewer than Ten Scores from Handicap Competition**

**Q:** A committee has prohibited players whose *Handicap Factor* is based on fewer than ten scores from handicap competitions on the basis that such a *Handicap Factor* is generally higher than a *Handicap Factor* based on ten or more scores. Is this proper?

**A:** The committee in charge of the competition is entitled to determine the conditions of competition. (See “The Rules of Golf”, Rule 33-1.) However, Golf Canada does not recommend prohibiting a player whose *Handicap Factor* is based on fewer than ten scores from the competition because the *Handicap Factor* that is based on fewer than ten scores is just as valid as a *Handicap Factor* that is based on 10 or more scores.

### **9-2b/1. Procedure when Play Suspended During Round and Handicap Factors Revised Prior to Resumption**

**Q:** A handicap competition was scheduled for a Sunday. The competition began and was interrupted because of rain. Finally, play was suspended for the day.

Play was resumed on the following Saturday. In the meantime, *Handicap Factors* had been changed.

A condition of the competition provided that players should use their *Handicap Factors* in effect at the time each round was played. Should the players have used the Factors with which they started the round or the *Handicap Factors* in effect on the day on which play was resumed?

**A:** The *Handicap Factors* in effect at the beginning of the round should have been used until the round was completed, even though the players’ *Handicap Factors* had been changed.

### **9-3a/1. Handicap Allowance in Singles Match Play when a Player with a Plus Handicap Competing**

**Q:** In a match, A’s *Course Handicap* is plus 2 and B’s is 8. How many strokes may B receive?

**A:** Golf Canada recommends that B receive 10 strokes, and A play at scratch.





On holes allocated 14, 15, 16, and 17, A will receive strokes and B will not. A will have a greater chance of winning those “easier” holes. The result will be more holes won and lost than halved and the better player (B) will have an unfair advantage in the match.

### **9-4a/2. Handicap Allowance in Four-Ball Match if One Player Unable to Compete**

**Q:** In a four-ball match played on a handicap basis, the player with the lowest *Course Handicap* is unable to play. May the absent player be disregarded in determining *Handicap Allowances*?

**A:** No. The *Course Handicap* of the three players may be reduced by the *Course Handicap* of the absent player, and the three players may be allowed 100 percent of the resulting difference. If an incorrect *Course Handicap* is declared for the absent player, Section 3-6a applies. (See “The Rules of Golf”, Rules 30-3a and 30-3e(i), and “The Decisions on the Rules of Golf”, Decision 30-3a/3.)

### **9-4a/3. Result of a Hole if Men’s and Women’s Par is Different**

**Q:** In a match-play competition, one hole is par four for men and par five for women. In a match between a man and a woman, if both score par, what is the result of the hole?

**A:** Par is irrelevant. The player who completes the hole in fewer strokes wins the hole.

### **9-4b/1. Handicap Allowance in Foursome Stroke Play when a Player with a Plus Handicap Involved**

**Q:** In foursome stroke play, a competitor’s *Course Handicap* is plus 1 and the partner’s *Course Handicap* is 12. How many handicap strokes does the side receive?

**A:** The side receives 50 percent of 11 strokes, which is 5.5, rounded to 6 strokes (see Section 9-4b(vi)).





















## 10-5. Nine-Hole Handicaps-Handicap Factor (N)

### ■ a. Nine-Hole Handicap Use and Identification

A nine-hole handicap is a *Handicap Factor* if the club follows the *Handicap System*. A nine-hole handicap, or *Handicap Factor* (N), may be used in inter-club play against other players with nine-hole handicaps. If a competition requires a *Handicap Factor*, a *Handicap Factor* (N) may be doubled for 18-hole play (see Decision 3-2/1 and 3-2/2).

A player with both a *Handicap Factor* and a *Handicap Factor* (N) should use the *Handicap Factor* (N) in inter-club nine-hole competition and the *Handicap Factor* in 18-hole competition.

A player with only a *Handicap Factor* playing in a nine-hole competition halves the *Handicap Factor* and rounds the decimal upward to the nearest tenth, then converts it to a *Course Handicap*, using the nine-hole *Slope Rating* from the *Course Handicap Table* for the tees being played.

### ■ b. Method of Computation

*Golf clubs* compute a *Handicap Factor* (N) by applying nine-hole adjusted *gross scores* to the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* of the nine holes played to determine *Handicap Differentials*.

*Note:* Players with a *Handicap Factor* (N) who play an 18-hole round, must post two nine-hole scores to their *scoring record* (N).

Example: For a nine-hole *adjusted gross score* of 45 with a nine-hole *Course Rating* of 36.2 and a *Slope Rating* of 121, the nine-hole *Handicap Differential* is  $(45 - 36.2) \times 113 / 121 = 8.2$ . If the average of the best ten nine-hole *Handicap Differentials* is 8.9, then the *Handicap Factor* (N) is  $8.9 \times .96 = 8.5$ . It is posted as “8.5N.”

### ■ c. Nine-hole Equitable Stroke Control

See definition of *Equitable Stroke Control*.

## EQUITABLE STROKE CONTROL

Nine-Hole Course Handicap	Maximum Score on Any Hole
4 or less	Double Bogey
5 through 9	7
10 through 14	8
15 through 19	9
20 or more	10

Example: A player with a nine-hole *Course Handicap* of 12 must adjust to a maximum score of 8 for any hole, regardless of par.

■ **d. Maximum Nine-Hole Handicap Factor (N)**

The maximum *Handicap Factor* (N) is 18.2 for men and 20.2 for women.

*Note:* A maximum *Handicap Factor* will convert to a *Course Handicap* that exceeds these numbers on tees with a *Slope Rating* greater than 113.

A player may have a *local handicap* above these limits, but it must be identified as a *local handicap* by the letters “NL” following the number on a handicap card or report (e.g. 24.5NL). (See *handicap type*.) When such a *local handicap* is used for inter-club play, Golf Canada recommends that it be reduced to the maximum *Handicap Factor* (N) specified above.

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**Section 10 HANDICAP FORMULA**

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**10-3/1. Designation of Tournament Score when Points are Awarded for a Year-End Prize**

**Q:** On ladies’ day, when no special event is planned, there is a low gross-low net competition. Points are awarded for finishing first, second, and third in each flight. At the end of the season, prizes are awarded to the player in each flight who has accumulated the most points. Are these scores considered *tournament scores*?

**A:** No. The end-of-season winners are not all required to play the same number of *stipulated rounds*.

**10-3/2. Designation of Tournament Score when the Prize is a Golf Ball**

**Q:** Is a score from a competition that offers only a golf ball as a prize posted as a *tournament score*?

**A:** The value or nature of a prize is not a factor in determining whether a score is posted as a *tournament score*. Scores must be identified by the letter “T” when posted if they meet the definition of a *tournament score*. (See *tournament score* and Section 10-3.)

**10-3/3. Designation of Tournament Score When Entries Are Accepted at Starting Time**

**Q:** Our club professional organizes competitions that you can enter just before you go out to play. The prizes are predicated on how many players enter the competition that day. May these scores be posted as *tournament scores*?

**A:** If the club’s tournament committee has authorized the club professional to conduct the competition, they have determined the selection of the winner(s) will be based on *stipulated round(s)* and played under The Rules of Golf (and

the committee has announced in advance that the score be identified by the letter “T”), scores from such events may be posted as *tournament scores*. The timing of acceptance of entries and the nature of the prizes do not affect whether a score is a *tournament score*. However, events such as women’s or seniors’ weekly play days normally are not to be designated as T-Scores because they are not significant in the traditions, schedules, formats and membership of the club. One example of a significant event is one that is scheduled to be held annually.

#### **10-3/4. Designation of Tournament Score When Pairings Are Not Made and Starting Times Are Not Assigned**

**Q:** Our club has a tournament committee that sets up weekly competitions with modest prizes, but does not make pairings or post starting times. May these scores be posted as *tournament scores*?

**A:** The fact that specific starting times and pairings are not assigned in advance does not alone determine the status of a competition. In addition, the fact that prizes are modest has no bearing. (See Decision 10-3/2.) The club’s tournament committee must decide whether any of the scores from these weekly competitions meet the definition of a *tournament score* for posting purposes. That is, the competition must be organized and conducted by a committee in charge, the selection of the winner(s) must be based on a *stipulated round(s)* and it must be played under The Rules of Golf. If so, the committee must announce in advance that the scores must be identified by the letter “T” when posted. The purpose of the *tournament scores* procedure is to identify players who excel in competition well beyond their current *Handicap Factor*. If the competition, in the judgment of the *Handicap Committee*, would identify such players, the committee may announce that scores from the competition must be identified as *tournament scores* when posted. However, events such as women’s or seniors’ weekly play days normally are not to be designated as T-Scores because they are not significant in the traditions, schedules, formats and membership of the club. One example of a significant event is one that is scheduled to be held annually. Careful consideration should be given to the possibility that too many events identified as *tournament scores* inhibits Section 10-3 from effectively identifying and reducing the *Handicap Factor* of players who excel in competition.

#### **10-3/5. Designation of Tournament Score From Weekly Club Sweep**

**Q:** Our committee read above Decisions 10-3/3 and 10-3/4. We conduct a weekly sweep every Wednesday. The groups are made up with participants and non-participants as they arrive to play. Players entering the sweep give the Pro \$2 for the prize pool. There are no posted pairings or starting times. Winners receive gift certificates equal to the prize pool of the day. Some Wednesday formats conform totally to The Rules of Golf and others do not. All of these scores are eligible for the annual ringers tournament. May these scores be designated as *tournament scores*?



followed, and the integrity of each *Handicap Factor* issued is maintained. (See Section 8.)

### 11-2. Peer Review

See definition of *peer review*.

### 11-3. Worst 10 Handicap Differentials Disregarded

A player's worst 10 of the last 20 *Handicap Differentials* are not used in computing the *Handicap Factor* since these scores do not represent the player's potential ability. (See Section 10.)

### 11-4. Fewer than 20 Scores

A player who has posted fewer than 20 scores has a *Handicap Factor* that is based on a lower percentage of scores than the 50 percent ideally used (best 10 of the last 20). The accuracy and reliability of the *Handicap System* improves as the number of acceptable scores approaches 20. A *Handicap Factor* based on 20 acceptable scores is more representative of a player's potential ability than one based on fewer than 20. (See Section 10.)

### 11-5. Equitable Stroke Control

See definition of *Equitable Stroke Control*.

### 11-6. Reduction of Handicap Factor Based on Exceptional Tournament Scores

An alternate calculation is used to determine the *Handicap Factor* of a player who has two or more *eligible tournament scores* with *tournament score* differentials at least 3.0 better than the player's *Handicap Factor*. (See Section 10-3.)

### 11-7. Handicap Factor Adjustment or Withdrawal

The *Handicap Committee* is authorized to modify or withdraw a *Handicap Factor* of a player who does not return all acceptable scores, or does not otherwise observe the spirit of the *Handicap System*. The *Handicap Committee* has the authority to increase the *Handicap Factor* of a player who, because of exceptional circumstances, has a *Handicap Factor* that is too low. The *Handicap Committee* must review a *Handicap Factor* that is modified, reduced, or withdrawn. (See Sections 8-4d, 8-4e, and 10-3e.)







## 12-2. Measuring

### ■ a. How To Measure

Each hole must be measured horizontally (air line) by an electronic measuring device (EMD), surveying instruments, or a global positioning system (GPS) from the permanent yardage marker for every tee to the center of the green. Only trained individuals may perform course measurement, subject to review by the *authorized provincial golf association* that issues the *Course Rating* to the *golf club*. Yardages on the score card should accurately reflect this measurement.

A hole with a dogleg must be measured on a straight line from each permanent marker to the center of the fairway at the pivot point. If the pivot point is not easily discernible, select a pivot point that is approximately 250 (men) or 210 (women) yards from the most commonly played tee for each gender. The measurement must continue from that point on a straight line to the center of the green or to the next pivot point if applicable.

### ■ b. Tee Markers; Posting of Ratings

The tee markers used to designate the teeing ground (see “The Rules of Golf”, Definitions) need to be consistent in color or design for each hole and distinguishable from other tee markers. The actual color, design, or other method for identifying a particular set of tee markers is up to the committee in charge of the course in consultation with the *Handicap Committee*. *Course Handicap Tables* (see Section 3-3), score cards, and signage where scores are posted should use the same terminology in referring to various tees. This material should include the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* for each set of tees to make it easy for players to convert a *Handicap Factor* to a *Course Handicap* before play and then to post a score for handicap purposes, complete with Ratings, after play.

Where tees generally used by one gender are also used by the other, there should be a *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* for men and for women from those tees so that for all players may post their scores accurately for handicap purposes.

Nine-hole Ratings should be displayed by the *golf club* to assist players who are returning nine-hole scores for handicap purposes. This also applies for a combination of nines. Using a combination of tees throughout the round must be determined and published prior to the start of the round and is a matter for the Committee in charge of the competition to determine in consultation with the *Handicap Committee*.

## MEASURING TECHNIQUE

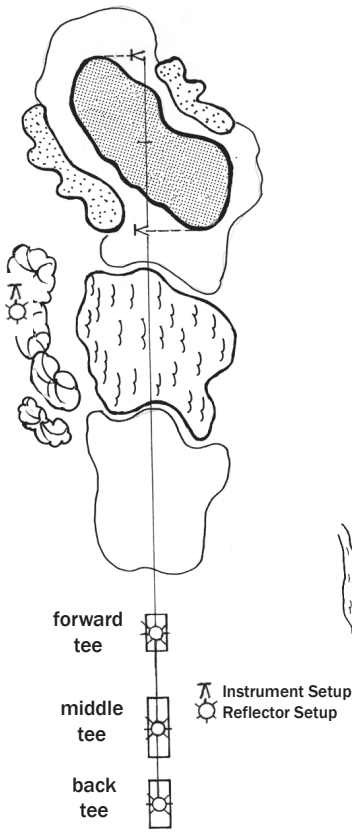


Fig. 1 - Example: Measuring setup for a par-3 hole.

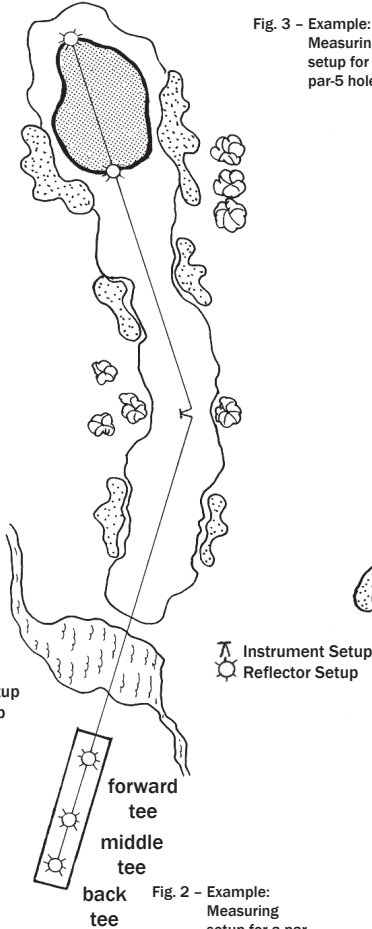
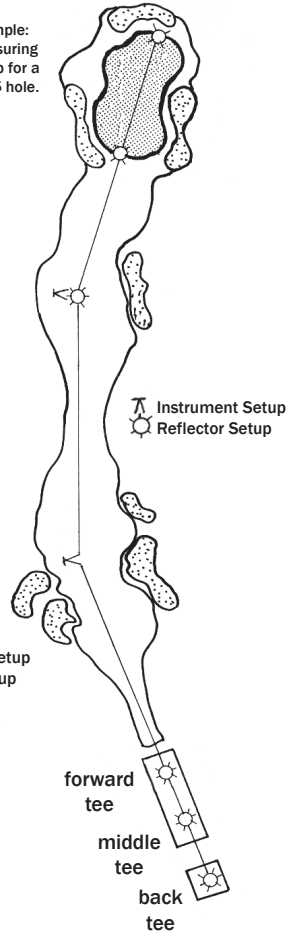


Fig. 2 - Example: Measuring setup for a par-4 hole.

Fig. 3 - Example: Measuring setup for a par-5 hole.



Course Rating and Slope Rating Examples				
Tees	Men's Course Rating	Men's Slope Rating	Women's Course Rating	Women's Slope Rating
Champ	74.0	125	—	—
Back	72.0	119	74.5	128
Middle	71.3	113	73.7	122
Forward	69.5	105	72.0	118
Front	—	—	69.3	113

## Section 13 COURSE RATING

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### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

#### 13-1. Definitions

##### ■ a. Scratch golfer

See definition of *scratch golfer*.

##### ■ b. Yardage Rating

Yardage rating is the evaluation of the playing difficulty of a course based on effective playing length.

##### ■ c. Obstacle Factors

Obstacle factors are hazards, natural features, vegetation, and playing conditions found on the golf course that make play harder or easier than a standard course with the same effective playing length.

##### ■ d. Effective Playing Length

Effective playing length is the measured length of the golf course adjusted by factors such as roll, elevation changes, dogleg/forced lay-up, prevailing wind, and altitude above sea level that make the course play longer or shorter than its measured length. For example, when forced lay-ups result in a course playing effectively longer for the *scratch golfer*, the rating team modifies the yardage rating upward to arrive at the *Course Rating*.

##### ■ e. Course Rating

See definition of *Course Rating*.

Courses are rated by *authorized provincial golf associations*. (See Section 14.)

*Note:* Yardage rating and *Course Rating* are not to be confused with par. *Par* is not an accurate measure of the playing difficulty of a golf course. It is possible for two golf courses to have the same par, but differ greatly in *Course Rating* and yardage rating.

##### ■ f. Bogey Golfer

See definition *Bogey Golfer*.

##### ■ g. Bogey Rating

See definition of *Bogey Rating*.

### ■ h. Slope Rating

See definition of *Slope Rating*.

## 13-2. Conditions for Rating

### ■ a. Placement of Tee Markers and Holes

On the day a course is to be rated, the club is requested to do the following:

- (i) Place tee markers opposite the permanent yardage markers from which measurements were made (see Section 12);
- (ii) Cut average hole locations;
- (iii) Set up the course, and maintain conditions for normal scoring difficulty.

### ■ b. In-Season Playing Conditions

A *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* must reflect conditions normal for the season(s) when the most rounds are played.

### ■ c. The Rules of Golf

The *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* are based on the assumption that players observe and courses are marked under The Rules of Golf. Any local rules must conform with the spirit of The Rules of Golf and Golf Canada policy. (See Section 7.)

## 13-3. Course Rating Procedures

### ■ a. Components

An *authorized provincial golf association*, through the following components, determines the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*:

- (i) Effective playing length is obtained from official measurements of the course and an evaluation of the factors that cause the course to play significantly longer or shorter than its measured length. (Section 13-1d.) A difference of only 22 yards for men or 18 yards for women in overall length will change the *Course Rating* by 0.1 of a stroke.
- (ii) Yardage ratings for both the *scratch golfer* and *bogey golfer* are determined by applying the effective playing length to the appropriate yardage rating formulas. (Sections 13-1d and 13-3d.)
- (iii) *Course Rating* is the scratch yardage rating of a course modified by the obstacle factors as they affect the *scratch golfer*. (See Definitions.)
- (iv) *Bogey Rating* is the bogey yardage rating of a course modified by the obstacle factors as they affect the *bogey golfer*. (See Definitions.)

- (v) *Slope Rating* is the difference between the *Bogey Rating* and the *Course Rating* multiplied by 5.381 for men and 4.24 for women. (See Definitions and 13-3f.)

### ■ b. Effective Playing Length

On each hole, the rating team evaluates four factors that affect the playing length: roll, elevation, dogleg / forced lay-up and prevailing wind. The effect of these factors, plus the altitude above sea level of the course as a whole, is converted to yardage that is added to or subtracted from the measured length to yield effective playing length. Effective playing length is then applied to the yardage rating formulas to produce scratch and bogey yardage ratings.

#### (i) Roll

Non-irrigated, thin fairways and downhill landing areas result in the ball rolling farther than the normal 20 yards per full shot. Irrigated, lush fairways and uphill landing areas result in the ball rolling less than 20 yards per full shot.

#### (ii) Elevation

Holes that are uphill from tee to green play longer than those that are downhill from tee to green.

#### (iii) Dogleg/Forced Lay-up

Holes in which the fairway bends short of the normal landing area that force the player to hit less than a full tee shot. The same is true on holes where an obstacle, such as a water hazard, is situated in the landing area.

#### (iv) Prevailing Wind

The force and direction of the prevailing wind can affect the playing difficulty of the golf course.

#### (v) Altitude Above Sea Level

The yardage rating of a course at an altitude at or above 2,000 feet is adjusted downward. The ball will carry a greater distance at high altitudes.

### ■ c. Obstacle Factors

The rating team separately evaluates 10 obstacle factors on a scale of 0 through 10 on each hole, for their effect on the play of the *scratch golfer* and *bogey golfer*. The numbers for each factor are totaled and multiplied by a relative weight factor when the evaluation process has been completed. The total weighted obstacle values are applied to scratch and bogey formulas and converted to strokes. These strokes, which may be positive or negative, are added to the yardage ratings to produce the *Course Rating* and *Bogey Rating*. The obstacles are evaluated as follows:

- (i) Topography: the difficulty of stance in the fairway landing areas and any elevation change from the landing areas to the green;
- (ii) Fairway: the effective width of the landing area, which can be reduced by a dogleg, trees, or fairway tilt;
- (iii) Green Target: the size, firmness, shape, and slope of a green in relation to the length of the approach shot;
- (iv) Recoverability and Rough: the existence of rough and other penalizing factors in the proximity of the landing area and around the green;
- (v) Bunkers: the existence of bunkers in the proximity of the landing areas and around the green;
- (vi) Out of Bounds/Extreme Rough: the existence of out of bounds in the proximity of the landing areas and around the green, or the existence of extreme unmown rough that is similar in effect to out of bounds;
- (vii) Water Hazards: the existence of water hazards, particularly in the proximity of the landing areas and around the green;
- (viii) Trees: the strategic location, size, height, and density of trees—along with the probability of recovering from the trees;
- (ix) Green Surface: the contour and normal speed of the putting surface;
- (x) Psychological: the mental effect on play created by the presence of a combination of difficult obstacles.

#### ■ d. Yardage Rating Formulas

Yardage ratings are obtained by using the following formulas:

##### (i) Scratch Yardage Rating for Men

Scratch Yardage Rating:  $(\text{Scratch Effective Playing Length of Course} / 220) + 40.9$

Example: If the effective playing length of the course is 6,419 yards, the scratch yardage rating for men is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Playing Length} / 220: \quad 6419 / 220 = 29.18$$

$$\text{Result} + 40.9: \quad 29.18 + 40.9 = 70.08$$

$$\text{Scratch Yardage Rating (rounded):} \quad 70.1$$

**(ii) Bogey Yardage Rating for Men**

Bogey Yardage Rating:  $(\text{Bogey Effective Playing Length of Course} / 160) + 50.7$

**(iii) Scratch Yardage Rating for Women**

Scratch Yardage Rating:  $(\text{Scratch Effective Playing Length of Course} / 180) + 40.1$

**(iv) Bogey Yardage Rating for Women**

Bogey Yardage Rating:  $(\text{Bogey Effective Playing Length of Course} / 120) + 51.3$

**■ e. Course Rating Formulas**

**(i) Course Rating for Men and Women**

*Course Rating*:  $\text{Scratch Yardage Rating} + \text{Scratch Obstacle Stroke Value}$

**(ii) Bogey Rating for Men and Women**

*Bogey Rating*:  $\text{Bogey Yardage Rating} + \text{Bogey Obstacle Stroke Value}$

**■ f. Slope Rating Formulas**

A *Slope Rating* is obtained by using the following formulas:

**(i) Men**

*Slope Rating*:  $5.381 \times (\text{Bogey Rating} - \text{Course Rating})$

**(ii) Women**

*Slope Rating*:  $4.24 \times (\text{Bogey Rating} - \text{Course Rating})$

The *Slope Rating* for a course of standard difficulty is 113. A course is given this *Slope Rating* when the difference between the *Bogey Rating* and *Course Rating* is 21 strokes for men, or 26.65 strokes for women (21 multiplied by 5.381, equals 113; 26.65 multiplied by 4.24, equals 113).

*Note*: Full details on *Course Rating* are contained in the books entitled “The USGA Course Rating System Guide” and “The USGA Course Rating System,” which are available only to *authorized provincial golf associations*.

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**Section 14 INSTALLING COURSE RATINGS IN A REGION**

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**Definitions**

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.



### 14-1. Authorized Provincial Golf Associations to Rate Courses

All courses must be rated in accordance with Golf Canada approved procedures by a course rating team representing an *authorized provincial golf association*. A Course Rating Review Committee established by the *authorized provincial golf association* must evaluate each rating. If more than one *authorized provincial golf association* covers the same territory, a joint rating team is suggested.

A club must never rate its own course. If a club is unable to obtain Ratings from an *authorized provincial golf association*, it should immediately contact the Golf Canada Handicap Department for assistance. A *golf club* cannot use the *Handicap System* until it has been issued an *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* by an *authorized provincial golf association*.

### 14-2. Authorized Provincial Golf Associations to Re-rate Courses

*Authorized provincial golf associations* must periodically review Ratings of courses and revise them as necessary. Newly constructed courses change rapidly in the first few years and must be re-rated within five years. An established course must be re-rated at least every ten years, even if it has not been changed in any way. A course must no longer use its *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* if its ratings are more than ten years old and scores recorded on the course must not be posted to a player's *scoring record*. Each course must contact an *authorized provincial golf association* within its jurisdiction to schedule a re-rating.

### 14-3. Personnel of Course Rating Team

A course rating team should be composed of at least three trained and experienced individuals. A team may be assisted by a club representative, preferably a player with a low *Handicap Factor* (or the club professional), who can inform the team of any unusual course conditions, including wind. Team members should have a practical knowledge of both a *scratch golfer* and a *bogey golfer*.

One member of the team must be designated as the team leader by the *authorized provincial golf association*. The team leader must have attended a course rating seminar conducted by Golf Canada. The team evaluates each obstacle on each hole on a scale of 0 through 10 and should attempt to agree, within one number, on the evaluation for each obstacle. The opinion of the team leader should prevail if an agreement is not reached.

It is recommended that the team play the course before or after the rating to substantiate the rating results. The team leader must submit completed rating forms to the *authorized provincial golf association* for review by the Course Rating Review Committee. This Committee may modify the results within specified limits, or it may direct a re-rating by another rating team. Once finalized by the

Course Rating Review Committee, the *authorized provincial golf association* must issue these ratings to the club.

#### 14-4. Golf Association Records

##### ■ a. Information To Be Kept

A file of each *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* must be kept by the *authorized provincial golf association* for future reference. The checklist for the file should include: the scorecard, the names of the persons rating the course, the date on which the course was rated, the information regarding weather and other conditions on the day of rating, the fairway watering system, the types of grasses, the height of the rough, the official measurements of each hole, the names of persons who measured the golf course, and the presence of permanent yardage markers.

##### ■ b. List of All Ratings

The Course Rating Review Committee must compile a list showing total yardage and the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* for each course in its jurisdiction that has been rated. The committee must periodically review this list for accuracy.

The Course Rating Review Committee of each *authorized provincial golf association* should alphabetize the list by course name and send it to every club in the area. This club listing should help members post their scores made on area courses. A copy must be submitted to the Golf Canada Handicap Department annually by the *authorized provincial golf association*.

#### 14-5. Modification of Courses

##### ■ a. Temporary Changes

The *Handicap Committee* must notify the *authorized provincial golf association* when temporary tees and/or greens are used. The *authorized provincial golf association* will decide whether scores made under those conditions are to be accepted for handicap purposes, and whether the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* should be modified temporarily. The *Handicap Committee* has a responsibility to notify its members that when a hole is not played due to construction, the score for that hole must be *par* plus any handicap strokes to which the player is entitled. (See Section 4-2.)

##### ■ b. Permanent Changes

The club must notify the *authorized provincial golf association* when permanent changes are made to the course. Permanent changes to the course require the *authorized provincial golf association* to review the current *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* and to determine whether a re-rating is necessary.

## 14-6. Temporary Rating by a Golf Club

A club must never rate its own course. If a club is unable to obtain Ratings from an *authorized provincial golf association*, it should immediately contact the Golf Canada Handicap Department for assistance. A *golf club* cannot use the *Handicap System* until it has been issued a *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* by an *authorized provincial golf association*.

## Section 15 COURSE SET-UP

### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

## 15-1. Keeping Course Difficulty Constant

A golf course is rated on its effective playing length and its playing difficulty under normal conditions. Each hole may be evaluated in determining the course setup from a distance standpoint in order to provide a fair test and to require a player to use most or all clubs during a round. If the length or normal playing difficulty changes materially, a *Handicap Factor* will be distorted. A difference of 22 yards for men or 18 yards for women will change the *Course Rating* 0.1 of a stroke. The *Handicap Committee* should seek the cooperation of the Green Committee in maintaining both length and normal playing difficulty at a constant and fair level.

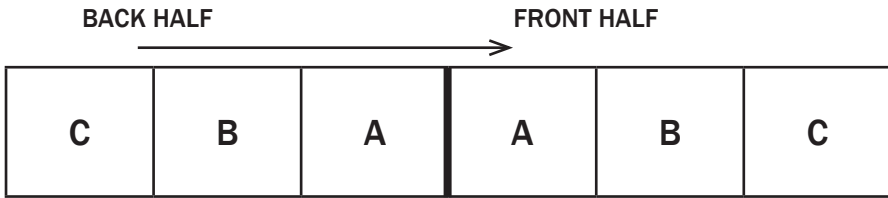
## 15-2. Balancing Placement of Tees

Placement of tee markers should be balanced so that the course's effective playing length is approximately the same on a daily basis. Adjustment may be made to allow for weather and turf conditions.

In "The Rules of Golf", the "teeing ground" is defined as a rectangular area two club-lengths in depth, the front and the sides of which are defined by the outside limits of two tee markers. The tee markers must always be at least two club-lengths forward of the back edge of the teeing ground.

In the illustration on page 102, the total area represents the usual teeing ground, and the heavy line in the center indicates the point of the permanent marker from which the hole was measured.

Balance tee placement as follows:



### ■ a. Normal conditions

Place tee markers on odd-numbered holes on front half in area A (or B or C); on even numbered holes, place tee markers on back half of same-lettered area. When changing tee markers, place odd-hole markers on back half and even-hole markers on front half. In other words, alternate between the halves and rotate among lettered areas, always using areas of the same letter at the same time, except under conditions outlined below.

### ■ b. Abnormal conditions

Use rear areas for a fast course and forward areas for a slow course. When the course is firm and fast, place the front-half markers in A and the back-half markers in C. When the course is soft and slow, place front-half markers in C and back-half markers in A.

Under extreme conditions, all markers should be placed in the back half or the front half of all tees, depending upon what is necessary to try to achieve normal playing distance.

The above recommendation should be followed for each set of tee markers.

## 15-3. Hole Locations

Many factors affect the selection of hole locations. The first and most important is good judgment in deciding what will give fair results.

Following are specific points:

- (i) Study the design of the hole as the architect intended it to be played. Know the length of the shot to the putting green and how it may be affected by the probable conditions for the day—that is, wind and other weather elements, condition of the turf from which the shot will be played, and holding quality of the putting green.
- (ii) There must be enough putting green surface between the hole and the front and the sides of the green to accommodate the required shot. For example, if the hole requires a long iron or wood shot to the green, the

hole may be located deeper in the green and farther from its sides than may be the case if the hole requires a short pitch shot.

In any case, it is recommended that the hole be located at least four paces from any edge of the putting green. If a bunker is close to the edge, or if the ground slopes away from the edge, the distance should be greater, especially if the shot is more than a pitch.

Consideration should be given to fair opportunity for recovery after a reasonably good shot that just misses the putting green.

- (iii) An area two to three feet in radius around the hole should be as nearly level as possible and of uniform grade. In no case should holes be located in tricky places, or on sharp slopes where a ball can gather speed. A player above the hole should be able to stop the ball at the hole.
- (iv) Consider the condition of nearby turf, especially taking care to avoid old hole plugs that have not completely healed.
- (v) Holes should be cut as nearly on the vertical as possible, not plumb with the contour of the putting green.
- (vi) There should be a balanced selection of hole locations for the entire course with respect to left, right, central, front, and back positions.
- (vii) For a competition played over several days, the course should be kept in balance daily as to degree of difficulty. In a stroke play competition, the first hole of the first round is as important as the last hole of the last round, and so the course should not be set up appreciably more difficult for any round—balanced treatment is the aim. An old concept of making the course progressively harder round after round is fallacious.

#### 15-4. Preparing the Course

The location of the tee markers should take into consideration both the length and the various obstacles of the hole in order to provide a consistent and fair test that accurately reflects the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*.

The various obstacles should be maintained in a manner that is similar to how they were rated, consistent with the principles of Section 15-1.

### 15-5. Marking the Course

It is extremely important for the committee in charge of the competition or in charge of the course to ensure that the course has been properly and completely marked. It is difficult to play under The Rules of Golf on an unmarked golf course, and the *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* is based on the course being properly marked. If all boundaries, water hazards, and ground under repair have been properly marked, the committee will have few problems during the golf season.

## Section 16 PAR COMPUTATION

### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

Yardages for guidance in computing par are given below. The effective playing length of a hole for the *scratch golfer* determines par. (See Section 13-3b.) These yardages may not be applied arbitrarily; the configuration of the ground and the severity of the obstacles should be taken into consideration.

*Authorized provincial golf associations* are empowered to adjudicate questions of hole par. (See Decision 16/1.)

## YARDAGE GUIDELINES

Par	Men	Women
3	up to 250	up to 210
4	251 to 470	211 to 400
5	471 to 690	401 to 590
6	691 and over	591 and over

## Section 16 PAR COMPUTATION

### 16/1. Failure of Club to Establish Par in Accordance with Golf Canada Guidelines

**Q:** What may be done if par is not established in accordance with Section 16? For example, a club has designated a 330-yard hole without any unusual features as a par-5 for women. This designation is well outside the guidelines. Must clubs using the *Handicap System* establish par within the guidelines?

**A:** Yes. If notified in writing, Golf Canada will request the *authorized provincial golf association* in the area to contact the club about changing par. If the

*authorized provincial golf association* is unable to persuade the club to change par on the hole, Golf Canada will write to the club requesting the change.

## Section 17 ALLOCATION OF HANDICAP STROKES

### Definitions

Within each section, all defined terms are in italics and are listed alphabetically in Section 2—Definitions.

#### 17-1. Discretion of Committee

The basic principle of allocating handicap strokes is to equalize the abilities of players at different handicap levels. A handicap stroke should be an equalizer rather than a winning stroke and should be available on a hole where it will most likely be needed by the higher-handicapped player to obtain a half in singles or four-ball match play. The following procedure is recommended but is not mandatory because it has minimal effect on handicaps (see Section 9-3). Stroke allocations for men and women will usually be different because the need to equalize holes may vary from hole to hole. The *Handicap Committee* should use good judgment when reviewing the course hole-by-hole. Difficulty in making *par* on a hole is not an effective indicator of the need for a stroke (see Section 17-5).

#### ■ a. Basis of Allocation

Allocate strokes based on the most commonly played tee markers.

Allocate the first stroke to the hole on the first nine on which the higher-handicapped player most needs a stroke as an equalizer and the second stroke to the hole on the second nine on which the higher-handicapped player most needs a stroke as an equalizer. Alternate in this manner for the full 18 holes.

Generally the longer the hole, the greater the need for the higher-handicapped player to receive a stroke.

#### ■ b. Distribution of Strokes

##### (i) Odd Strokes/Even Strokes

It is recommended that the odd-numbered strokes be assigned to the holes on the first nine and the even-numbered strokes to the holes on the second nine.

This format equalizes the distribution of handicap strokes over the entire 18 holes and makes matches more equitable. In a case where the second nine is determined to be more difficult than the first nine, consideration should be given to allocating odd-numbered strokes to the second nine.

**(ii) Importance of Low Strokes**

The first handicap stroke should be allocated so that this stroke is most useful in matches between players of almost equal ability, such as matches involving players with a *Course Handicap* of 0 and 1, 10 and 11, or 29 and 30.

The second handicap stroke should be allocated so that this stroke is most useful in a match between players having a slightly greater difference in *Course Handicap* (e.g., a match involving players with a *Course Handicap* of 0 and 2, 10 and 12, or 29 and 31). This process should be continued until the first six strokes have been assigned.

Without substantially deviating from the above principles, allocating low-numbered strokes to holes near the end of each nine should be avoided so that players receiving strokes will have the opportunity to use these strokes before either nine or 18-hole matches are decided. Lower-numbered strokes should not be allocated to the first and second holes of a course in the event that a hole-by-hole playoff is necessary.

**17-2. Allocation Based on Scores**

The committee may allocate handicap-stroke holes by collecting hole-by-hole data. The following procedures may be applied separately with men's and women's scores.

**Note:** The *Handicap Committee* must give priority to the considerations of 17-1. See Step (vii) below.

**■ a. Comparison Method**

- (i) Collect about 200 hole-by-hole scores of a group of players (Group A) with a *Course Handicap* not exceeding 8 strokes for men and 14 strokes for women. A club having a limited number of low-handicapped players may use 200 scores from 25 percent of its players with the lowest *Course Handicap*. These scores should not be adjusted by *Equitable Stroke Control*.
- (ii) Average the score for each hole for Group A, and average the *Course Handicap* of the players in Group A.
- (iii) Collect about 200 hole-by-hole scores of a middle-to high-handicapped group of players (Group B). The average of the *Course Handicap* of each player in Group B should be 15 to 20 strokes higher than the average for each player in Group A. It is preferable for the *Course Handicap* of each player in Group B to range from 20 to 28 strokes for men and from 26 to 40 strokes for women. These scores should not be adjusted by *Equitable Stroke Control*.



- (iv) Average the score for each hole for Group B and average the *Course Handicap* of each player in Group B.
- (v) Determine the difference in the average scores for each group on each hole by subtracting the average score of Group A from the average score of Group B.
- (vi) List the holes in order from 1 through 18 with corresponding Group A average scores, Group B average scores and average score difference. Rank the holes in order, with the hole having the highest average score difference first, and the hole having the lowest average score last.
- (vii) Modify the rankings of the holes, as based on average-score differences in accordance with Section 17-1b on distribution of strokes, and in accordance with Notes 1 and 2 below.

*Note 1:* Occasionally, this method will result in one hole (Hole A) ranked ahead of another hole (Hole B). The committee believes that Hole B should be ranked ahead of Hole A. The committee may first determine the average range by subtracting the average-score difference of the 18th ranked hole from the average-score difference of the first ranked hole and divide the result by 18. If the difference between the average-score differences of Holes A and B is no greater than the average range, it would be appropriate for the committee to rank Hole B ahead of Hole A.

*Note 2:* A hole with a water hazard that presents a significant problem for high-handicapped players may be ranked as the first or second *handicap-stroke hole* based on its average-score difference. The committee believes that this ranking is not justified when players of comparable ability are competing. In this instance, the committee may downgrade the ranking of the hole. The committee should always use good judgment in deciding what will give fair results.

### ■ b. Regression Method

An alternative method of allocating handicap strokes which uses all data points is to use linear regression. A minimum of 400 hole-by-hole scores is required from players representing the full range of *Course Handicap*. This is similar to the method in Section 17-2a of allocating handicap strokes using a large number of scores, but instead of comparing an average of scores among two distinctively-defined groups (Group A and B) with a large disparity in *Course Handicap*, the regression method uses all scores covering the whole *Course Handicap* range to allocate handicap strokes.

- Step 1:** Collect at least 400 hole-by-hole scores from the same tee and gender. This number equals N.
- Step 2:** For every hole, take each of the hole-by-hole *Course Handicap*/score pairs and compute:
- 1) The sum of all the *Course Handicaps* = S1  
(this value is the same for all holes)
  - 2) The sum of all the scores = S2
  - 3) Compute square of each *Course Handicap* and then sum all these squared values = S3 (this value is also the same for all holes)
  - 4) Compute the product of *Course Handicap* multiplied by score for each handicap/score pair and then sum these values = S4
  - 5) Compute the difference factor value (DF)

$$DF = [(N \times S4) - (S1 \times S2)] / [(N \times S3) - (S1)^2]$$

**Note:** A plus *Course Handicap* must be entered as a negative (-) number for the regression calculation.

- Step 3:** Rank all holes based on this DF value. The greater the DF value the greater the expected score difference between a low and a high handicapped golfer (i.e., the hole with largest DF value is handicap-stroke hole number one).
- Step 4:** Assign the final allocation of handicap strokes based on the committee's discretion.

### 17-3. 9-Hole Courses

These principles also apply to a 9-hole course played twice for a stipulated 18-hole round.

### 17-4. 27-Hole Courses

Strokes should be allocated to each nine holes separately 1 through 9. When two nines are combined for a handicap competition, the odd stroke-hole allocations should be on the nine holes considered the first nine, and the even stroke-hole

allocations should be on the second nine. The example below shows the stroke-hole allocation for two nines combined for a competition.

### SAMPLE STROKE ALLOCATION

	First Nine									Second Nine								
Hole	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9-Hole Allocation	5	4	9	2	8	1	3	7	6	4	9	2	1	3	5	6	8	7
18-Hole Allocation	9	7	17	3	15	1	5	13	11	8	18	4	2	6	10	12	16	14

In mixed competitions, the separate 9-hole stroke allocations for men and women should be converted to separate 18-hole stroke allocations. (See Section 9-3a.)

#### 17-5. Four-Ball and Best-Ball Stroke Play; Stableford

The Committee may develop a separate allocation table based on difficulty relative to *par* for four-ball stroke play, best-ball-of-four stroke play, and Stableford competitions.

In these forms of play, a *golf club* may find that comparing hole difficulty in relationship to *par* provides an effective basis for stroke allocation. If the *golf club* has used the method based on scores as described in Section 17-2, the following method can be used for stroke play to determine the relative difficulty in relation to *par* for the holes on a golf course. It averages the difficulty of holes of group A and B players to produce a representative difficulty in relation to *par* of the holes:

Total the group A and B average score for each hole;

## EXAMPLE OF ALLOCATION METHOD BASED ON SCORES

Example for Men Average Course Handicap of Group A: 6 Average Course Handicap of Group B: 22 Average Range = $(2.38 - .73) / 18 = .09$						
Hole	Group A Average Score	Group B Average Score	Average Score Difference	Rank	* Modification Under Section 17-1b(i)	** Modification under Section 17-1b(ii)
1	4.12	5.25	1.13	10	8	8
2	4.31	5.72	1.41	6	4	4
3	3.35	4.10	0.75	15	14	14
4	5.35	7.45	2.10	2	2	2
5	4.16	4.90	0.74	17	16	16
6	3.90	4.63	0.73	18	18	18
7	3.12	4.05	0.93	12	10	10
8	5.10	6.32	1.22	8	6	6
9	3.95	4.83	0.88	13	12	12
10	4.25	6.29	2.04	3	3	1
11	4.30	5.75	1.45	5	7	7
12	4.10	5.15	1.05	11	13	13
13	3.41	4.80	1.39	7	9	9
14	4.95	5.75	0.80	14	15	15
15	4.28	5.50	1.22	9	11	11
16	3.25	4.00	0.75	16	17	17
17	5.21	7.05	1.84	4	5	3
18	4.45	6.83	2.38	1	1	5
* Odd-numbered strokes allocated to the second nine because it is decidedly more difficult than the first nine.						
** Hole 18 allocated fifth handicap stroke instead of first, as recommended in Section 17-1b(ii).						

## EXAMPLE OF ALLOCATION METHOD BASED ON DIFFICULTY RELATIVE TO PAR

Example for Men						
Hole	Par	Group A Average Score	Group B Average Score	Group A + B Score	Group A + B Score Minus 2 Par	Rank
1	5	5.25	6.52	11.77	1.77	10
2	3	3.46	3.96	7.42	1.42	14/15
3	4	4.76	5.57	10.33	2.33	4
4	4	4.69	5.89	10.58	2.58	2
5	4	4.50	5.56	10.06	2.06	6
6	5	5.28	6.61	11.89	1.89	7
7	4	3.96	4.74	8.70	0.70	18
8	3	3.38	4.04	7.42	1.42	14/15
9	4	4.22	5.06	9.28	1.28	16
10	5	5.21	6.53	11.74	1.74	11
11	3	3.50	4.13	7.63	1.63	12
12	4	4.70	5.84	10.54	2.54	3
13	4	4.77	6.24	11.01	3.01	1
14	4	4.62	5.51	10.13	2.13	5
15	5	5.34	6.46	11.80	1.80	9
16	4	4.33	4.93	9.26	1.26	17
17	3	3.54	4.30	7.84	1.84	8
18	4	4.37	5.11	9.48	1.48	13

Subtract from this sum two times the *par* of each hole;  
Rank each hole result from largest to smallest;  
Do not modify the rankings of the holes.

## PART IV APPENDICES

### Appendix A Short Course Handicap Computation Procedure

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A Short Course Handicap is Golf Canada's service mark used to indicate a measurement of a player's potential ability on a Short Course (e.g. a golf course, as defined below, that is under 3,000 yards in length for 18 holes or 1,500 yards for nine holes). Potential ability is measured by a player's best scores, and is expressed as a whole number. These scores are identified by calculating the Short Course Handicap differential for each score.

#### A-1. Golf Clubs Permitted to Use Short Course Handicap Procedure

*Golf clubs* following procedures of the *Handicap System* are allowed to issue a Short Course Handicap under the following conditions:

- (i) Short Course Handicaps may be issued by clubs with courses under 3,000 yards in length for 18 holes. However, such courses may not be issued a *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*.
- (ii) A Short Course Handicap is not portable to any golf course other than the one where the Short Course Handicap was produced;
- (iii) The *golf club* must be rated by an *authorized provincial golf association* using the guidelines set forth in Section 18 of the "The USGA Course Rating System" (USGA Short Course Rating Procedure);

**Note:** Such handicaps may not be termed a "*Handicap Factor*" and must be identified by an "SL" to indicate that they are Short Course Handicaps.

#### A-2. Short Course Handicap Formula

##### ■ a. How To Determine Short Course Handicaps

A Short Course Handicap differential is the difference between a player's adjusted gross score and the Short Course Rating. Short Course Handicap differentials are expressed in strokes taken to one decimal place.

##### (i) Plus Differential

When the adjusted gross score is higher than the Short Course Rating, the Short Course Handicap differential is a positive number. The following is an example for determining a differential using a score made on a course with a Short Course Rating of 51.2.

Adjusted gross score:	64
Short Course Rating:	<u>-51.2</u>
Short Course Handicap differential:	12.8

**(ii) Minus Differential**

When the adjusted gross score is lower than the Short Course Rating, the Short Course Handicap differential is a negative number. The following is an example for determining a differential using a score made on a course with a Short Course Rating of 51.2.

Adjusted gross score:	50
Short Course Rating:	<u>-51.2</u>
Short Course Handicap differential:	-1.2

**■ b. Computation of Short Course Handicap**

The Short Course Handicap formula is based on the best Short Course Handicap differentials in a player's *scoring record*. If a player's *scoring record* contains 20 or more scores, the best 10 Short Course Handicap differentials of the most recent 20 scores are used to calculate the Short Course Handicap. The percentage of scores used in the *scoring record* decreases as the number of scores in the *scoring record* decreases. If the *scoring record* contains 9 or 10 scores, only the best three scores (30 to 33 percent) in the *scoring record* will be used. The accuracy of a player's Short Course Handicap is proportional to the number of acceptable scores posted. A Short Course Handicap must not be issued to a player who has returned fewer than five acceptable scores. A Short Course Handicap is expressed as a whole number (e.g. 10SL).

Example 1: The following is a sample *scoring record* of a player with 20 scores in the *scoring record* that shows how the Short Course Handicap is calculated by a *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association*.

Date	Adjusted Score	Short Course Rating	Handicap Differential
12/21/06	65	51.2	13.8
12/12/06	*58	51.2	6.8
11/10/06	*66	53.6	12.4
11/20/05	*63	51.2	11.8
11/18/05	68	53.6	14.4
11/17/05	65	51.2	13.8
11/16/05	*58	51.2	6.8
10/12/05	*63	51.2	11.8
10/10/05	68	53.6	14.4
9/8/05	*60	53.6	6.4
9/4/05	*59	51.2	7.8
9/1/05	65	51.2	13.8
8/24/05	*61	53.6	7.4
8/16/05	67	53.6	13.4
8/12/05	68	53.6	14.4
8/2/05	65	51.2	13.8
7/14/05	68	53.6	14.4
7/5/05	65	51.2	13.8
7/4/05	*63	51.2	11.8
7/1/05	*60	53.6	6.4
*10 scores with lowest handicap differentials			

Total of 10 lowest Short Course  
Handicap differentials: 89.4

Average (89.4 / 10): 8.94

Short Course Handicap (rounded): 9SL\*

Example 2: The following procedure illustrates how to calculate a player's Short Course Handicap if the number of acceptable scores in the player's record is fewer than 20 (11 scores available).

- (i) Use the following table to determine the number of Short Course Handicap differentials to use based on the number of acceptable scores returned;



Number of Acceptable Scores	Handicap Differential(s) To Use
5 or 6	Lowest 1
7 or 8	Lowest 2
9 or 10	Lowest 3
11 or 12	Lowest 4
13 or 14	Lowest 5
15 or 16	Lowest 6
17	Lowest 7
18	Lowest 8
19	Lowest 9
20	Lowest 10

- (ii) Determine Short Course Handicap differentials;
- (iii) Average the Short Course Handicap differential(s) to be used;
- (iv) Round fractions of .5 or greater upward

Total of lowest 4 Short Course  
Handicap differentials: 44.3

Average (44.3 / 4): 11.075

Short Course Handicap (rounded): 11SL\*

\*Note: A Short Course Handicap is expressed as a whole number, not a decimal number like a Handicap Factor. A Short Course Handicap is not portable and not valid at any golf course other than the player’s home *golf club*.

## Appendix B Sample Letter Applying Section 8-4

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[Club Stationery]

[Date]

Dear

After reviewing your *scoring record*, the *Handicap Committee* of [club name] has determined that your *Handicap Factor*® does not accurately reflect your potential playing ability. We have concluded that [your rapid improvement, your numerous away scores, your recent injury, your failure to post scores, your posting of erroneous scores] has produced a *Handicap Factor* that is not accurate.

In the interest of fair play, the *Handicap Committee* is going to modify your *Handicap Factor* under Section 8-4c of the Golf Canada Handicap Manual. Your *Handicap Factor* will become [e.g. 7.6M]. Before the adjustment becomes effective, you may appeal to the *Handicap Committee* either by letter or in person by [date]. If the *Handicap Committee* does not hear from you or determines that the reasons for modification are still valid, the modified *Handicap Factor* will become effective on [date].

The *Handicap Committee* will review this adjustment periodically to determine if your *Handicap Factor* should revert to the normal handicap formula computation by Section 10-2. In the meantime, continue to post all of your scores and observe all aspects of the *Handicap System*™.

Sincerely,

Handicap Chairperson

## Appendix C Junior Par

Junior par is the adjustment of par to realistic levels for junior players of various ability levels. Junior par provides a realistic standard against which a junior can measure improvement until acquiring a game capable of being measuring against par. A *Handicap Factor* for juniors is calculated by the formula in Section 10. A *Handicap Factor* is converted to a *Course Handicap* for the course being played.

### C-1. Establish Junior Playing Levels

Using junior par, players are identified as beginner, intermediate, or advanced players. A beginner will have a *Course Handicap* of 41 or above; an intermediate will have a *Course Handicap* from 25 through 40; and an advanced junior player will have a *Course Handicap* under 25. (*Course Handicap* for juniors based on *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* is normally established from the forward tees.)

The *golf club* can categorize the abilities of juniors who do not have a *Handicap Factor* by other methods. For example, some *golf clubs* have their beginners play only three or six holes until they can achieve a target score. Then they move on to playing nine holes, and eventually 18 holes. The club might designate its three-hole or six-hole players as beginners and the nine-hole and 18-hole players as intermediates until they develop a *Course Handicap* of 24 or better.

### C-2. Establish Junior Par

Junior par for any hole is based on the yardage of the hole measured from the forward tees and the ability of the junior player. The following tables show how junior par is calculated for girls and boys.

Girls							
	Junior Par for Hole Length (in yards)						
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Beginner	90 or less	91-160	161-230	231-300	301-370	371-440	441+
Intermediate	140 or less	141-250	251-355	356-470	471+	—	—
Advanced	— Same as Adult Par —						
Example: <i>Par</i> for a beginner girl on a 150-yard hole is 4. <i>Par</i> for an intermediate girl on a 400-yard hole is 6.							

Boys							
	Junior Par for Hole Length (in yards)						
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Beginner	100 or less	101-180	181-260	261-340	341-420	421-500	501+
Intermediate	150 or less	151-270	271-390	391-510	511+	—	—
Advanced	— Same as Adult <i>Par</i> —						
Example: <i>Par</i> for a beginner boy on a 150-yard hole is 4. <i>Par</i> for an intermediate boy on a 400-yard hole is 6.							

### C-3. Junior Scorecard

Forward Tees	Junior Par				Stroke Allocation			±	Hole			±
	BOYS		GIRLS									
	Bgnr.	Intrmd.	Bgnr.	Intrmd.								
333	6	5	7	5	7			1				
125	4	3	4	3	17			2				
442	8	6	9	6	1			3				
360	7	5	7	6	11			4				
167	4	4	5	4	15			5				
326	6	5	7	5	13			6				
358	7	5	7	6	9			7				
406	7	6	8	6	5			8				
496	8	6	9	7	3			9				
3013	57	45	63	48	Out							
361	7	5	7	6	10			10				
496	8	6	9	7	2			11				
318	6	5	7	5	12			12				
282	6	5	6	5	14			13				
123	4	3	4	3	18			14				
359	7	5	7	6	8			15				
168	4	4	5	4	16			16				
443	8	6	9	6	4			17				
385	7	5	8	6	6			18				
2935	57	44	62	48	In							
5948	114	89	125	96	Total							
Less Handicap												
Net Score												
Scorer			Attest			Date						

---

#### **C-4. How to Post Scores Under Junior Par**

Each junior will adjust hole scores according to Section 4. Junior players post scores with the appropriate *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* according to Section 5-2.

**Appendix D Sample letter explaining Section 3-5 and 9-3c**

---

(Club Stationary)

(Date)

Dear,

This letter is in regard to your recent question regarding what procedure to follow when players are competing against each other and are playing from different *Course Rating*<sup>™</sup>.

The Golf Canada *Handicap System*<sup>™</sup> is set up so each player converts a *Handicap Factor*<sup>®</sup> to a *Course Handicap*<sup>™</sup> and plays with the *Course Handicap* as calculated. However, if players are competing against each other and a difference in *Course Rating*<sup>™</sup> exists, an additional adjustment must be made to the *Course Handicap* of the player playing from the higher-rated set of tees.

When a difference in *Course Rating* exists among competitors, their benchmark has changed and the difference must be accounted for in order for the competition to be equitable. (See example(s) under Section 3-5 in the *Handicap System*.)

There are two options when applying this adjustment. The rounded difference in *Course Rating* can be either added to the higher rated tee players or subtracted from the lower rated tee players. (See Decision 3-5/1 for further reference.)

Please keep in mind that this adjustment is only applied when players are competing against each other. A *Handicap Factor* is a number based on a standard calculation and not specific to any set of tees. A *Course Handicap* only gives a player the number of strokes needed to play down to the *Course Rating* for a particular set of tees.

It is important to remember that a *Handicap Factor* is just a mathematical representation of potential ability, and we need to make a conversion to the set of tees we play, and then an additional adjustment if we are competing against a player who is playing from a different set of tees, so that an equitable competition can be played.

Also, not applying Section 3-5 of the *Handicap System* when players are competing from different tees would be waiving a Rule of Golf. The committee in charge of a competition does not have the authority to waive a Rule of Golf (see Decision 3-5/2).

Sincerely,

*The Handicap Committee*

**Appendix E Score Frequency and Probability Table**

**HANDICAP FACTOR RANGES**

Net Handicap Differential	Less than 0	0.0–4.9	5.0–9.9	10.0–14.9	15.0–19.9	20.0–24.9	25.0–29.9	30.0 or more
3.0	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.6	2.8
2.0	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.5	2.9	3.4	3.6
1.0	3.0	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.5	4.1	4.8	4.9
0.0	4.8	4.3	4.3	4.7	5.2	6.2	7.1	6.8
-1.0	8.8	7.6	7.2	7.6	8.3	9.7	11	9.8
-2.0	19	15	13	13	14	16	17	15
-3.0	45	33	26	24	25	27	29	22
-4.0	134	81	56	48	47	48	49	34
-5.0	502	222	128	102	92	89	84	53
-6.0	2134	709	320	227	190	167	150	85
-7.0	9216	2837	846	535	389	312	269	133
-8.0		8795	2200	1251	803	591	479	209
-9.0		24723	5825	2995	1674	1130	810	325
-10.0			16012	7110	3483	1950	1326	486
-11.0		<b>OFF THE CHART</b>	36884	13532	7332	3408	2047	722
-12.0				46328	14429	4994	3167	1055

\*A Net Handicap Differential is the Handicap Differential for a particular score minus the player’s Handicap Factor. This becomes a negative value when the Handicap Differential for a score is lower than the player’s Handicap Factor.

The values in the table represent the average number of rounds it takes to score a given Net Handicap Differential EQUAL TO OR BETTER THAN the value in the left column.

Example: A player with a Handicap Factor of 10.5 shoots a 74 from a set of tees with a Course Rating of 70.2 and a Slope Rating of 126.

$$(74 - 70.2) = 3.8 \times 113 / 126 = 3.4 \text{ Handicap Differential}$$

$$3.4 - 10.5 = -7.1 \text{ Net Differential}$$

From the table, it would take an average of 535 rounds to score this Net Handicap Differential or better for a player in the 10.0 to 14.9 Handicap Factor range. The probability can be determined by taking 1 divided by the table value; thus the probability of this occurring is **1 in 535**.

\***Note:** The values in the table were derived from an analysis of over 7.3 million scores posted by players with a Handicap Factor.

## Appendix F Handicap System Licensing Program for Clubs

---

Any group desiring to be a Golf Canada Member *golf club* must contact an *authorized provincial golf association* in its area to begin the licensing process. (See the Golf Canada web site at [www.golfcanada.ca](http://www.golfcanada.ca) for a listing of *authorized provincial golf associations* or call the Golf Canada Handicap Department at 1-800-263-0009 ext. 399). The *authorized provincial golf association* must review the licensing application, and confirm that the *golf club* is following all principles of the *Handicap System*.

A “*golf club*” is an organization of at least ten individual members\* that operates under bylaws with committees (especially a *Handicap Committee*) to supervise golf activities, provide *peer review*, and maintain the integrity of the *Handicap System* (see Club Compliance Checklist, Section 8-2m and Decision 2/7). A *golf club* must be licensed by Golf Canada to utilize the *Handicap System*. A club can obtain a license through its membership in an *authorized provincial golf association* that is already licensed by Golf Canada and that has jurisdiction in the geographic area that includes the principal location of the *golf club*.

Members of a *golf club* must have a reasonable and regular opportunity to play golf with each other. They must be able to return scores personally, and these scores must be readily available for inspection by others, including, but not limited to, fellow members and the club’s *Handicap Committee*.

A *golf club* is one of two (2) Types:

Type 1. Clubs With Property: The members of a Type 1 club are located at a single specific golf course with a valid *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* where a majority of the club’s events are played and where the club’s *scoring records* reside; or

Type 2. Clubs Without Property: The members of a Type 2 club may be affiliated, or known to one another, via a business, fraternal, ethnic, or social organization. The majority of the club members had an affiliation prior to organizing the club; alternatively they may have no prior affiliation and a majority of the recruiting and sign up of the membership is done by solicitation to the public (e.g. newspaper, internet).

\*Note: For administrative reasons, some *authorized provincial golf associations* may require a *golf club* to have more than the minimum of ten members in order for the *golf club* to be a member of the *authorized provincial golf association*.

Any licensed *golf club* is subject to an audit by Golf Canada to ensure compliance. When a *golf club* is chosen for an audit, the *authorized provincial golf association* in the area will be notified. A *golf club* to be audited should receive assistance from



the *authorized provincial golf association* that it initially contacted regarding the licensing process. (See Appendix G.)

## **Appendix G Golf Club Audit Procedure**

---

Golf Canada has initiated an audit program for *golf clubs* to ensure the integrity of the *Handicap System*. All licensed *golf clubs* are subject to being audited by Golf Canada, regardless of whether there is a compliance item in question.

Any licensed *golf club* that is reported to Golf Canada in writing as having a potential compliance issue is immediately subject to an audit.

If an audited *golf club* does not satisfy the audit process, Golf Canada will send a letter stating the non-conforming issues. A time limit will be set for the club to cure its deficiencies or run the risk of being dropped from the authorized *golf club* list located at [www.golfcanada.ca](http://www.golfcanada.ca), including losing its ability to utilize the *Handicap System*.

### **Enforcement Procedure**

Golf Canada will ask an *authorized provincial golf association* in the area to contact the club about compliance. If neither that association nor Golf Canada is able to persuade the *golf club* to comply, Golf Canada will advise the club in writing that the club may not utilize the *Handicap System* and may not use Golf Canada trademarks in any manner.

The club will be withdrawn from the list of *golf clubs* authorized to utilize the *Handicap System*. Golf Canada reserves the right to inform others that the club's right to utilize the *Handicap System* has been withdrawn.

### **Appeal Process**

If a *golf club* is dissatisfied with the initial decision, it may appeal to the *Handicap Committee* by sending written notice to Golf Canada within 30 days after being notified of the loss of its ability to utilize the *Handicap System*. If the *golf club* elects to appeal, its representative must be given reasonable notice of that committee's next meeting at which the matter is to be heard, and will be entitled to present its case. The *Handicap Committee* will issue a final decision on the matter, using all information provided by the *golf club*, together with the findings and recommendations of the staff.

### **Reinstatement Policy and Procedure**

A *golf club* that has lost the privilege of utilizing the *Handicap System* will be required to apply for reinstatement of that privilege and resubmit an application for a license agreement. Upon receipt of the completed application, Golf Canada

will provide a list of requirements that need to be satisfied in order for the application to be considered. Upon the *golf club* satisfying Golf Canada that these requirements have been met, Golf Canada will notify the *golf club* and all parties that were previously notified of the club's non-compliance that the club is again eligible to utilize the *Handicap System*. However, the reinstated *golf club* is subject to the audit process during each of the next two years.

**Appendix H Method for Determining Most Improved Player**

---

The recommended method for determining a club's most improved player at the end of a season or year is as follows:

Add 12\* to the player's *Handicap Factor* at the start of the season. This is value A.  
Add 12 to the player's *Handicap Factor* at the end of the season. This is value B.

Divide value A by value B, calculating to three decimal places. This is the improvement factor. The player with the highest improvement factor should receive the most improved player award.

Example:

Starting <i>Handicap Factor</i> :	22.6
Ending <i>Handicap Factor</i> :	17.4
Value A:	$22.6 + 12 = 34.6$
Value B:	$17.4 + 12 = 29.4$
A / B:	$34.6 / 29.4 = 1.177$
Improvement Factor:	1.177

Continue this process for every player who improved during the year. The player with the highest improvement factor is the most improved player.

Note: Add 6\* instead of 12 in the case of a nine-hole *Handicap Factor* (N).

\*The numbers 6 and 12 have been determined by Golf Canada as equitable in gauging the improvement of players encompassing the entire spectrum of handicaps. For example, it is relatively the same improvement factor to go from a 20.0 to a 10.0 *Handicap Factor* (improvement factor of 1.454) as it is to go from a 5.0 to a scratch, or zero *Handicap Factor* (improvement factor of 1.416), yet the change in *Handicap Factor* is "10" (20 – 10) versus "5" (5 – 0) strokes. The numbers of 6 and 12 take into consideration the level of a player's improvement rather than the net change in *Handicap Factor*.

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## RULES AND HANDICAPPING EDUCATION

Golf Canada offers several programs to learn the Rules of Golf and Handicapping. The online Handicap Certification program allows the members of Handicap Committees and golfers who are interested in the topic to easily access the education seminar and stay certified. To learn more about this program or to register visit **[handicap.golfcanada.ca](http://handicap.golfcanada.ca)**

The Rules Education Program is designed for all golfers wishing to improve their level of knowledge about the Rules of Golf including recreational golfers, competitive golfers, professionals and Rules officials.

**Level 1** — The introductory online program designed to introduce the basic Etiquette and Rules of Golf

**Level 2** — Begin to learn the details of the Rules including the specific language and words needed to understand the Rules of Golf.

**Level 3** — A two-day seminar available across the country, through your provincial golf association. Learn how to become a Rules official and gain practical experience on the golf course.

**Level 4** — A rigorous three-day seminar for experienced Rules officials to gain the highest level of certification in Canada.

For more information on the Rules of Golf Education visit **[golfcanada.ca/rules-of-golf](http://golfcanada.ca/rules-of-golf)**

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**NOTES:**