



The RCGA Handicap Manual

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

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CHANGES SINCE 2006

- Revised definition of Golf Club to clarify the term memberSection 2
- Changed local nine-hole handicap from J to NLSection 2
- Added Regression Method of handicap-stroke allocationSection 17

DECISIONS CHANGES:

- Decision 2/7.5: Club Sponsored Event (NEW)
- Decision 5-1f/2: Scores Made Using a Distance-Measuring Device (REVISED)
- Decision 6-3/3: Request from Competition Officials for Scoring Record (NEW)
- Decision 8-1/1.5: Compensation of Handicap Committee (NEW)
- Decision 8-2m/1: Club Representative No Longer Part of Club (NEW)
- Decision 8-4c/1: Treatment of Player with Temporary Disability (REVISED)
- Decision 8-4c/3: Player's Handicap Factor Experiences Season Fluctuation (NEW)
- Decision 10-3/4: Designation of Tournament Score When Pairings Are Not Made and Starting Times Are Not Assigned (REVISED)

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual is the complete book of information and instruction about the RCGA Handicap System. First, you will find the purpose and requirements of the RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap System formulas, checks and balances of the system, RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap System. Knowing the proper procedure will help provide a framework for fair and enjoyable games.

With the exception of the terms “RCGA”, “RCGA Handicap Factor”, “Handicap Factor”, and “Factor”, some of the trademarks and service marks in this manual are the property of the United States Golf Association (USGA), which has generously given the RCGA permission to use the system. As the owner of the term RCGA and a Licensee of those well established trademarks and service marks, the RCGA has the sole right to authorize the use of those marks by others.

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PART I – PURPOSE, AUTHORIZATION, LICENSING, & DEFINITIONS

Section 1 PURPOSE, AUTHORIZATION, and LICENSING

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 *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Handicap* for each player, regardless of ability, and adjusts a player's *RCGA 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 an *RCGA Handicap Factor* continuous from one playing season or year to the next. An *RCGA Handicap Factor* is useful for all forms of play, and is issued only to individuals who are members of an *RCGA Member golf club*.

Two basic premises underlie the *RCGA 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 joint responsibility for adhering to these premises.

An *RCGA Handicap Factor*, issued by an *RCGA 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. An *RCGA Handicap Factor* is issued only to individuals who are members of an *RCGA Member golf club*.

An *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* and *RCGA Slope Rating* to make up the *scoring record*. An *RCGA 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.

An *RCGA 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 an *RCGA Handicap Factor* to an *RCGA Course Handicap* based on the *RCGA Slope Rating* of the tees played.

Each player locates the *RCGA Handicap Factor* on the appropriate *Course Handicap Table* and finds the corresponding *RCGA Course Handicap*. A *Course Handicap Table* can be found in the clubhouse or near the first tee of an *RCGA 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 (*RCGA Course Handicap*) is based upon the relative difficulty (*RCGA Slope Rating*) of the course.

An *RCGA Course Rating* is the RCGA'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. An *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* and *RCGA 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 *RCGA Slope Rating* will be and the more strokes players will receive. Conversely, the less the difference, the lower the *RCGA 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 *RCGA Handicap System*, will make all competitions more enjoyable.

Section 1-2 – Authorization and Licensing

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

Policies of *RCGA Member golf clubs* and golf associations issuing *RCGA Handicap Factors* must be consistent with the principles of the Rules of Golf and the *RCGA Handicap System*. An essential element of the *RCGA Handicap System* is the requirement that each *RCGA Member golf club* that issues *RCGA Handicap Factors* must have a *Handicap Committee* to ensure the integrity of the *RCGA Handicap Factors* issued by the club. An *RCGA Member golf club* must use *RCGA Course Ratings* and *RCGA Slope Ratings* issued by an *authorized provincial golf association*. Temporary Course and Slope Ratings may not be used for issuing *RCGA 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 an *RCGA Member golf club* or *golf association* does not follow all of the procedures of the *RCGA 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 an “*RCGA Handicap Factor*”, “*Handicap Factor*” or as a handicap authorized or approved by the RCGA.

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

Section 1 PURPOSE, AUTHORIZATION, AND LICENSING

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

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

A: No. An RCGA Handicap Factor is based on the best play for every round. Accordingly, the RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap Factor based on scores made playing left-handed?

A: The RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap Factor based on scores made when playing right-handed.

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

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

A: If notified in writing, the RCGA 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 the RCGA is able to persuade the club to comply, the RCGA will advise the club in writing that, without compliance, the club may not issue an RCGA Handicap Factor, may not use any part of the RCGA Handicap System, and may not use RCGA trademarks in any manner. If a club refuses to comply, the RCGA will inform other RCGA member clubs in the region that the club's privilege to issue an RCGA Handicap Factor has been withdrawn. The RCGA will not accept an entry into RCGA Championships from the membership of this club.

1-2/2. Golf Club not Licensed by RCGA

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

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

Section 2 DEFINITIONS

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 provincial golf association* having jurisdiction in a given area.

Adjusted Gross Score

An "*adjusted gross score*" is a player's *gross score* adjusted under *RCGA 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 the RCGA to utilize the *RCGA Handicap System* and/or the *RCGA 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 the RCGA’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 the RCGA’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 *RCGA Course Rating* that changes a *Course Handicap* 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 (See RCGA Course Rating.)

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.

***Note:** In other countries, the system of ESC may be different than the RCGA system, (e.g. USGA system). When a score is made under a system of ESC different to the RCGA ESC system, that score must be adjusted to the RCGA ESC system before it is entered as an *adjusted gross score* under the *RCGA Handicap System*.

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 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 *RCGA Handicap System* (see Club Compliance Checklist, Section 8-2m and Decision 2/7). A *golf club* must be a member in good standing of the RCGA and *authorized provincial golf association* and be licensed by the RCGA to utilize the *RCGA Handicap System*. A club can obtain a license from an *authorized provincial golf association* that is already licensed by the RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* and *RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 *RCGA 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 chairman.

Handicap Differential

A “*Handicap Differential*” is the difference between a player’s *adjusted gross score* and the *RCGA 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 the RCGA’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, 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 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 during which scores made in an area are not accepted for handicap purposes determined by the *authorized provincial golf association* having jurisdiction in a given area.

Factor (See Handicap Factor.)

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 an expert player would be expected to make for a given 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 *RCGA Handicap System* or *RCGA Course Rating System*. (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*.

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 *RCGA Handicap System*. (See Section 8-4b(iv).)

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.)

RCGA Course Rating

An “*RCGA Course Rating*” is the RCGA’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.)

RCGA Handicap Factor (See Handicap Factor)

RCGA Handicap System

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

RCGA Member Golf Club (see Golf Club)

RCGA Slope Rating (see Slope Rating)

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
AI	=	Away Internet
C	=	Combined Nines
CI	=	Combined Nines Internet
I	=	Internet
P	=	Penalty
T	=	Tournament
TI	=	Tournament Internet

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 *RCGA 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 the RCGA’s mark that indicates the measurement of the relative difficulty of a course for players who are not scratch golfers compared to the *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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*” 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 principles of The Rules of Golf.

Using the above definition as a guideline, 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 *eligible tournament score*.)

Examples of inter-club competition scores that may be posted as tournament scores when they meet the above conditions are: competitions restricted by age, member-guest competitions, team matches, qualifying rounds for city, province and national competitions, and competitions conducted by golf associations.

Examples of intra-club competition scores that may be posted as tournament scores when they meet the above conditions are low gross-low net competitions, four-ball match or stroke-play competitions, Stableford competitions, and club championships which are stroke or match play, scratch, or with handicap.

USGA

United States Golf Association

Winter Rules (See Preferred Lies.)

Section 2 DEFINITIONS

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 RCGA 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 the RCGA'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 RCGA Handicap System are followed. Is this group eligible to be licensed to utilize the RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap System definition of a golf club and utilize the RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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)

The RCGA 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 RCGA 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 the principles of 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. (NEW)

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 *RCGA 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. (See Decisions 3-2/1, 3-2/2.) 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 *RCGA 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 *RCGA Handicap System* by an *authorized provincial golf association* and a *golf club* that has a valid *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*.

Note: The *Course Handicap Table* should include the *RCGA 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 RCGA 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, the RCGA 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 an *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* receives additional stroke(s) equal to the difference between each *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* is 70.3 compete against men playing from the back tees where the men’s *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* is 73.4 compete against men playing from the middle tees from which the men’s *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* is 77.3 compete against men playing from the middle tees from which the men's *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* is 73.7 and the woman is playing from the front tees

from which the *RCGA Course Rating* is 69.8.

RCGA Course Rating 73.7 – *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating*. (See Decision 3-5/1.)

Example: A man playing the tees with the higher *RCGA 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

Gary Gold Tees <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">10.4</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">130</div> 12 <u>+71.1</u> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">83</div>	vs. Handicap Factor Slope Rating Course Handicap RCGA Course Rating Target Score	Bob Blue Tees <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">10.4</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">140</div> 13 <u>+73.2</u> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">86</div>
83 -12 <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">=71</div>	Target Score (minus) Course Handicap (<u>adjusted for Section 3-5</u>) =Net Score	86 -15 <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">=71</div>

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

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) and 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 an 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 RCGA 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 RCGA Course Rating between two sets of tees, a player playing from the higher-rated set of tees must add the difference in RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap System

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

A: No. Not applying Section 3-5 of the RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 *RCGA 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 principles of 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*.

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

EQUITABLE STROKE CONTROL

Course Handicap	Maximum Number on any Hole
0 or plus	1 over par
1 through 18	2 over par
19 through 32	3 over par
33 and over	4 over par

Example: A player with a *Course Handicap* of 13 has a maximum of double bogey for any hole regardless of par. A player with a *Course Handicap* of 42 has a maximum of quadruple bogey 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.

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 *RCGA Course Rating* of 73.0) and the lower-rated set of tees (a *RCGA Course Rating* of 71.2) is 2 strokes (73.0-71.2=1.8 rounded to 2). From the course with the *RCGA 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

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.

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

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. (See Decision 5-1a/3.)

■ b. Scores on All Courses

Adjusted *gross scores* from all courses with a *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*, or equivalent, made during an *active season*, both at home and away, must be posted by the player along with the appropriate *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* 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 and Section 4.)

■ d. Scores Made under The Rules of Golf

Scores must be made in accordance with the principles of The Rules of Golf. (See Decisions 5-1d/1 and 5-1d/2.)

■ e. Disqualification

A player who is disqualified from a competition, but has an acceptable score, must record an *adjusted gross score* for handicap purposes. For example, a player who is disqualified from a competition for failure to sign a scorecard has an acceptable score for handicap purposes.

■ f. 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;
- (ii) When made on a golf course in an area in which an *inactive season* established by the *authorized provincial golf association* is in effect;
- (iii) When a majority of the holes are not played in accordance with the principles of The Rules of Golf (except for preferred lies);
- (iv) When the length of the course is less than 3,000 yards for 18 holes (or less than 1,500 yards for 9 holes);
- (v) 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;

- (vi) When scores are made on a course with no *RCGA Course Rating* or *Slope Rating* or equivalent;
- (vii) When a player carries or uses non-conforming clubs or uses non-conforming balls or tees;
- (viii) When artificial devices (as defined under Rule 14-3) are used during the execution of a stroke. (See Decision 5-1f/2 for an exception.)

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 must 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) *RCGA 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, facsimile, Internet, or surface mail. Scores may not be returned verbally by the telephone.

Scores returned to the club by e-mail, facsimile, Internet, or surface mail 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, facsimile, Internet, or surface mail, 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 *RCGA Course Rating and Slope Rating*;
- (ii) At least seven holes must be played.

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 *RCGA Course Rating* is the sum of each nine-hole *RCGA 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);

An 18-hole score created by the combination of two nine-hole scores will display the date of the second nine hole score posted.

- (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, the score should be designated CI;
- (iv) Nine-hole scores will be combined with other nine-hole scores regardless of score type. The combining of nine-hole scores may be any combination of nines, e.g. with a front nine middle tee score combined with a front nine back tee score;

A nine-hole score will be retained within a player's *scoring record* until it is older than the twentieth 18-hole score in that *scoring record*.

■ 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 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.

■ 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

5-1a/1. Use of Scores Made by Playing Nine Random Holes of 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 an RCGA Course Rating and Slope Rating for the course when played in this manner so Handicap Differentials can be determined.

5-1a/2. Score Made When Playing Alone

Q: If a player plays alone, should the score be returned for handicap purposes?

A: Yes, provided the round is played in accordance with The Rules of Golf.

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 should contact its authorized provincial golf association for assistance in modifying the Ratings.

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 RCGA 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.

5-1d/1. 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.

5-1d/2. 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.

5-1f/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.

5-1f/2. Scores Made Using a Distance Measuring Device

Q: Are scores made using information generated from a Distance Measuring Device acceptable for handicap purposes?

A: In certain situations, yes. If the Distance Measuring Device measures distance only, the score is acceptable for handicap purposes, regardless of whether the Committee has established a Local Rule allowing the use of a distance measuring device. However, the use of a device that gauges or measures other conditions that might affect a player's play (e.g., wind or gradient) is not permitted and makes the score unacceptable for handicap purposes, even if these capabilities are disabled or not used. (REVISED)

5-1f/3. Scores made using an Artificial Device During the Execution of the Stroke

Q: Are scores made using artificial device(s), such as a towel placed under the arms during the execution of the stroke, acceptable for handicap purpose?

A: No. If artificial devices, as defined under Rule 14-3, are used during the execution of a stroke, the score is unacceptable for handicap purposes according to Section 5-1f(viii).

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 nine-hole score.

5-2a/6. Internet Score Posting

Q: What are some of the important aspects of Internet Score Posting?

A: Due to the ease of use of the Internet, the RCGA believes that golf clubs and Handicap Committees can implement a positive Internet score posting component. Adopting Internet score posting requires that the golf club display scoring records of all members over the Internet as well. This may improve an aspect of peer review by giving members better ability to view other members' scores at any time. These features will continue to enhance the foundation of the golf club and the RCGA Handicap System.

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. If the committee believes that the player is inflating hole scores on the post-match holes, it may apply provisions of Section 8. (See 8-4b(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 (which has adopted the policy to accept Internet-posted scores) may post scores in this manner since this method is similar in nature to Internet score posting at a computer terminal. Therefore, there is no prohibition

against using this type of device.

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 RCGA Member golf club that follows the RCGA 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: The RCGA 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 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 display a *Handicap Factor* member listing as well as current *scoring records* of all players. This must be in a prominent location 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, an *RCGA 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 on which the player's *Handicap Factor* is recorded. Handicaps on cards issued by an *authorized provincial golf association* or a *golf club* that follows the *RCGA Handicap System* must be identified as a *Handicap Factor*. The name of the *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association* issuing the *Handicap Factor* must be displayed on such cards. (See appendix I)

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, facsimile, Internet, or surface mail (See Section 5-2), together with the *RCGA 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 Decisions 6-5/2 and 6-5/3 for exceptions.)

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 *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating*. This information will become part of the players' *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.

6-7. Records of Resigned Members

The *scoring record* of a member who resigns should be preserved by the previous *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association* for at least one year in the event the new *golf club* may need it.

Section 6 SCORING RECORDS

6-1/1. Procedure for Player who Discontinues Play for Lengthy Period and Then Resumes Play

Q: A player with an established Handicap Factor discontinues play for a lengthy period, and then resumes play. Should the player use the last Handicap Factor on resumption of play or establish a new Handicap Factor?

A: Regardless of the length of inactivity, the player shall use their last Handicap Factor when resuming play. Scores made after resuming play shall be entered into the players existing scoring record.

If the scoring record of the player is unavailable when resuming play, they shall, under the principle of Section 8-2h, use their last Handicap Factor until they return five scores and establish a new Handicap Factor.

6-2/1. Establishing an Active and an Inactive Season in the Same Area

Q: In the southern part of a province, golf is a 12-month sport, but this is not true in the northern part of the province. What may the authorized provincial golf association do with respect to establishing an inactive season?

A: The golf association may declare an inactive season for the northern part of the province, but not for the southern part.

6-3/1. Display of Scoring Records for Peer Review Purposes

Q: A player with a Handicap Factor has scoring records readily available for peer review on the golf club's Web site and on the Web site of the club's handicap computation service. The general public can access both sites. Is this violating the player's privacy?

A: No. A player who decides to obtain a Handicap Factor gives up privacy regarding scoring records. Because an essential part of the RCGA Handicap System is peer review, scoring records (including a Handicap Factor list) are to be available for inspection by others, including, but not limited to, fellow members and the club's Handicap Committee.

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 in a 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 all 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 RCGA Handicap Policy to refuse such a request?

A: Refusal to honor such a request is not a violation of the RCGA Handicap System, but the RCGA 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. (NEW)

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. Procedure when Multiple Club Member's Handicap Factor is Lower at Golf club with an Inactive Season than at Club with Active season

Q: A player is a member of golf club “M” in Manitoba and golf club “A” in Arizona. The player’s Handicap Factor at club M was 15.2 when the season closed on October 15. The player spends several months in Arizona playing golf at club A where the player’s Handicap Factor, based on the most recent 20 scores, is 16.8. Based on Section 6-5, the player is required to play with the lower Handicap Factor of 15.2. May the player be permitted to play with the Handicap Factor of 16.8, which is based on most recent scores?

A: Yes. Since the player’s Handicap Factor at club A is based on the most recent 20 scores, and that is not the case for the Handicap Factor at club M, because club M is inactive and not processing the Arizona scores, it would be equitable to use the higher Handicap Factor.

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: The RCGA 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)

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.

Adverse conditions, including the poor condition of the course or the existence of mud, are sometimes so general, particularly during winter months that the

committee may decide to grant relief by temporary local rule either to protect the course or to promote fair and pleasant play. The local rule should be withdrawn as soon as the conditions warrant.

If the committee decides to adopt such a local rule it should publish Specimen Local Rule 3b in The Rules of Golf, Rule 33-8a and Appendix I. However, Specimen Local Rule 3b may not be printed or referred to on a score card as it is of limited duration.

(The Rules of Golf, Appendix I)

4. Course Conditions — Mud, Extreme Wetness, Poor Conditions and Protection of the Course

Preferred Lies and Winter Rules

Occasional local abnormal conditions that might interfere with fair play and are not widespread may be defined as ground under repair (The Rules of Golf, Rule 25).

However, adverse conditions, such as heavy snows, spring thaws, prolonged rains, or extreme heat can make fairways unsatisfactory and sometimes prevent use of heavy mowing equipment. When these conditions are so general throughout a course that the committee believes preferred lies or winter rules would promote fair play or help protect the course, the following local rule is recommended:

“If a player’s ball lies on a closely-mown area through the green [or specify a more restricted area, e.g., at the 6th hole], the player may mark, lift, and clean the ball without penalty. Before lifting, the player must mark the position of the ball. The player must then place the ball on a spot within [specify area, e.g., six inches, one club-length, etc.] of and not nearer the hole than where it originally lay, that is not in a hazard or on a putting green.

A player may place the ball (only once), and it is in play when it has been placed (The Rules of Golf, Rule 20-4). If the ball fails to come to rest on the spot on which it was placed, The Rules of Golf, Rule 20-3d applies. If the ball, when placed, comes to rest on the spot on which it is placed and it subsequently moves, there is no penalty and the ball must be played as it lies, unless the provisions of any other Rule (in The Rules of Golf) apply.

If the player fails to mark the position of the ball before lifting it or moves the ball in any other manner, such as rolling it with a club, the player incurs a penalty of one stroke.

***PENALTY FOR BREACH OF LOCAL RULE:**

Match play — Loss of hole; Stroke play — Two strokes

*If a player incurs the general penalty for a breach of this local rule, no additional penalty under the local rule is applied.”

For example, in stroke play, a player who incurs a two-stroke penalty for incorrectly invoking the local rule when it was not declared in effect will not also receive a one-stroke penalty for failing to mark the position of the ball before lifting it.

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 *RCGA Handicap System* is the *Handicap Committee*. Each *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association* utilizing the *RCGA 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 *RCGA Handicap System*.

8-1. Handicap Committee Chairperson

A majority of the *Handicap Committee* shall be members of the club. Club employees may serve on the *Handicap Committee*, but an employee may not serve as chairperson. The position of handicap chairperson requires a substantial amount of time and a basic knowledge of the *RCGA 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.)

8-2. Duties and Responsibilities

The *Handicap Committee* is responsible within the *golf club* for all aspects of the *RCGA 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*.

■ a. Notice to Members

It is advisable to send a notice to members before the season starts in order to outline the *RCGA 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/*Handicap Factor* cards are issued;
- (iii) How *Handicap Factors* are to be verified;
- (iv) The maintenance of the current *Handicap Factor*;
- (v) The duration of any *inactive season* established by the *authorized provincial golf association* (See Section 6-2);
- (vi) How away scores are posted prior to the start of the *active season*;
- (vii) *Handicap Factor* adjustment responsibilities of the *Handicap Committee* (See Sections 8-4 and 10-3);
- (viii) Penalties for players failing to return scores (See Section 8-4b(iv));
- (ix) Which rounds will be designated as *tournament scores*. (See Sections 8-21 and 10-3.)

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

The *RCGA 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 RCGA Course Rating and Slope Rating of Area Courses**

A list of each *RCGA 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 *RCGA Slope Rating* and *RCGA 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. Comparing RCGA Course Rating and Slope Rating**

The *Handicap Committee* should compare each *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* from its club with those of other courses. A separate *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* must be made from each set of tee markers as practicable for each gender.

A club must accept and use the *RCGA 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.

■ **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 *RCGA Handicap System*.

■ h. New-Member Records

The *Handicap Committee* has the responsibility for obtaining the *scoring record* (including *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* accompanying each score) of a new member. The *Handicap Committee* may seek the *scoring record* through the player's previous *golf club*, *authorized provincial golf association*, or computation service, or by communicating directly with the player.

■ i. Resigned Member Records

The *scoring record* of a member who resigns should be preserved by the former *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association* for at least one year in the event the new *golf club* may need it.

■ j. Corrections in Records and Calculations

The *Handicap Committee* must review the accuracy of scoring records and information entered by any computation service. If any errors exist, the committee must investigate and inform the *authorized provincial golf association* or computation service, which must correct the *scoring record* as soon as practical. The *Handicap Committee* must issue a corrected *Handicap Factor* as soon as possible after a scoring error is noted. A *golf club* may wish to consult the *golf association* or computation service for assistance. All reports must be amended to reflect the corrected information.

■ k. Club Membership Cards

The *Handicap Committee* shall issue each player an *RCGA Membership card* on which the *RCGA Handicap Factor* is recorded. (See Section 6-4.)

■ l. Cooperation With Other Committees

The *Handicap Committee* may check periodically and consult with other club committees, including, but not limited to:

- The allocation of *handicap-stroke holes* on the course according to *RCGA* guidelines (see Section 17);

- The determination of course set up and par (see Section 15 and 16);
- Work with the tournament committee/committee in charge of the competition to determine whether scores will be defined as *tournament scores* (see Section 2, Section 8-2, Section 10, and Decisions 10-3/1 through 10-3/6);
- The maintenance of playing difficulty of the course (see Section 15);
- Invocation of any local rule on *preferred lies* (see Section 7-1).

In working with other committees, the *Handicap Committee* has the responsibility to provide handicap information in a timely manner.

■ m. Requirements For Compliance

To determine if a *golf club* is complying with the *RCGA Handicap System*, use the following checklist (see checklist page 47):

CLUB COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

Does the *golf club*?

• Have a membership in good standing with an <i>authorized provincial golf association</i> and the RCGA?
• Meet the RCGA definition of a <i>golf club</i> ?
• Make it possible for a player to record the correct <i>RCGA Course Rating</i> and <i>Slope Rating</i> with each posted score from every set of tees? (Sections 5-2 and 8-2b and c)
• Require the posting of all scores made at home and away? (Section 5-1)
• Require use of RCGA procedures to adjust hole scores before posting? (Section 4)
• Require that nine-hole scores be posted? (Section 5-2c and 5-2d)
• Insist that the principles of <i>The Rules of Golf</i> be followed? (Section 5-1d)
• Follow the posting season of the <i>authorized provincial golf association</i> having jurisdiction in the region? (Section 8-3a and c)
• Ensure that all acceptable scores are entered correctly? (Section 5-2)
• Perform computations and adjustments in accordance with the RCGA Handicap Formula? (Sections 8-4 and 10)
• Make current <i>scoring records</i> and a <i>Handicap Factor</i> listing of all members readily available for inspection by others? (Section 6-3)
• Reduce or increase a <i>Handicap Factor</i> of any player whose handicap does not reflect the player's potential ability? (Section 8-4c)
• Notify an <i>authorized provincial golf association</i> when permanent changes have been made to the golf course so that the association can issue a new <i>RCGA Course Rating</i> and <i>Slope Rating</i> ? (Section 14-5b)
• Include the letter "L" after <i>local handicaps</i> , which exceed the RCGA maximum limits of 36.4 for men and 40.4 for women? (Section 3-4)
• Utilize the current <i>RCGA Course Rating</i> and <i>Slope Rating</i> issued by an <i>authorized provincial golf association</i> ? (Section 14)
• Have a representative from the <i>golf club</i> participate in a RCGA Handicap Seminar (whether conducted by the RCGA or an <i>authorized provincial golf association</i>) including passing a test exhibiting knowledge about the system?
• Have a signed license agreement in place with a local <i>authorized provincial golf association</i> and the RCGA prior to issuing a <i>Handicap Factor</i> ?

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

If any answers are "no," the *authorized provincial golf association* or the RCGA 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

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

■ c. Scores Made in Inactive Season

Scores made in an area when the area's *authorized provincial golf association* has declared an *inactive season* must not be accepted for handicap purposes (e.g. score made in the Saskatchewan in December). However, scores made in an area having an *active season* (e.g. scores made in Florida in December) must be posted 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 normally be changed only as warranted by the *RCGA Handicap System*. Only the *Handicap Committee* where a player maintains a handicap 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 Scores

If a player fails to post an acceptable score as soon as practicable after completion of the round, the *Handicap Committee* should post the score and/or a *penalty score* and Ratings equal to the lowest *Handicap Differential* in the player's *scoring record*. However, if the score not returned is unusually high, the *Handicap Committee* should enter the score and/or a *penalty score* and Ratings equal to the highest *Handicap Differential* in the player's *scoring record*.

■ 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*. 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 committee. When an adjustment does become effective, it should be identified with the letter M, reflecting 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.

(ii) Numerous Away or Internet Scores Change Factor

If a player's *Handicap Factor* increases by three or more strokes 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 increased handicap is not a *Handicap Factor*, and it must be identified by the letter "L" to indicate that it is for local use. For example, a player having had recent surgery may be given a higher handicap while recovering. (See Decisions 8-4b/1, 8-4b/2, and *local handicap*.)

(iv) Failure to Post

A *Handicap Factor* must be adjusted up or down if the player does not turn in all acceptable scores or otherwise does not observe the spirit of the *RCGA Handicap System*. The *Handicap Committee* must determine the amount of adjustment.

(v) Player Manipulates Round

The *Handicap Committee* must adjust or withdraw the *Handicap Factor* of a player who manipulates scores. (See Section 8-4e.)

Examples of manipulating scores include the following:

- (a) Posting erroneous scores;
- (b) Stopping play after 6 holes to avoid posting scores;
- (c) Repeatedly playing more than one ball to avoid posting scores;
- (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;

(vi) Continued Violations of Section 5-1f.

The *Handicap Committee* is responsible for identifying and notifying a player who regularly violates any provision within Section 5-1f that such rounds are unacceptable for handicap purposes. If the player persists to violate clause(s) within Section 5-1f 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* (say 4.0).

■ e. Tournament Performance Review

The *Handicap Committee* must review the reduction of a player's *Handicap Factor* for exceptional *tournament scores*. The procedure for reducing a player's *Handicap Factor* is explained in Section 10-3 and is an automatic calculation of the *golf club's* handicap software or handicap computation provider.

Periodically, the *Handicap Committee* should re-evaluate the player's reduced *Handicap Factor* under Section 10-3, choosing one of the following:

- Continue to allow the reduction to run its normal course, as described in Section 10-3d, or
- Further reduce the *Handicap Factor* (See Section 10-3e), or

- Override the reduction. For example, the *Handicap Committee* may *override* a reduction of the *Handicap Factor* of a player who has returned, say, 50 *tournament scores*, and whose *Handicap Factor* reduction was based on early scores.

■ f. Handicap Factor Withdrawal

The *Handicap Committee* must withdraw the *Handicap Factor* of a player who repeatedly fails to meet the player responsibilities under the *RCGA Handicap System*. Before any action is taken, the player must be advised of the information available to the *Handicap Committee* and be invited to respond to the *Handicap Committee* either in writing or by appearing in person. A withdrawn *Handicap Factor* may be reinstated under conditions set forth by the *Handicap Committee*. (See Decision 5-2a/4.)

Section 8 THE HANDICAP COMMITTEE

8-1/1. Status of Owners and Employees

Q: In the definition of Handicap Committee, it states that an employee may not serve as chairman. Is the owner of a golf club considered an employee? Or an employee of a third party that assists in the operation of a golf club? Or an employee of a municipality that owns/operates a golf course?

A: In each of these cases, as well as that of a club professional, the person referenced is in a position where pleasing the club member is a key responsibility. This makes it difficult for such a person to play an impartial role. These “employees” are not eligible to chair the Handicap Committee of a golf club where they are employed.

8-1/1.5. Compensation of Handicap Committee

Q: A company that organizes or operates a golf club pays its Handicap Chairman. 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 the RCGA 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, paying travel expenses, 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. (NEW)

8-2m/1. Club Representative No Longer Part of Club

Q: Is the handicap license of a golf club subject to revocation solely because its representative at a RCGA 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 RCGA 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 representative who has met this requirement.

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 temporary local handicap (L) to reflect current ability, as needed during the temporary disability, and it should be identified by the letter "L" to indicate that it is for local use only. The temporary local handicap (L) may be used only with permission of the club Handicap Committee or the committee in charge of a competition. (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 8-4b(iii).

The club Handicap Committee may discard the players' previous scoring records and provide each with a local Handicap for use until five scores have been returned

to establish a new Handicap Factor.

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. (NEW)

Section 9 HANDICAP COMPETITIONS

Definitions

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

9-1. Handicap Required for Competition

The RCGA recommends that a player have a *Handicap Factor* in order to enter competitions conducted by all golf associations, *golf clubs*, and other organizations. (See Decisions 9-1/1, 9-1/2.)

■ a. Effective Date of Handicap Required

When a *Handicap Factor* is a requirement for entering a competition, a player must submit the *Handicap Factor* in effect on the date of entry.

■ b. Handicap Factor Changed by Committee

A *Handicap Factor* adjusted by the *Handicap Committee* is the player's *Handicap Factor* unless noted otherwise in the manual. (See *local handicap*, Sections 3-4, 8-4c, and 8-4d.)

9-2. Handicap Factor to Use

■ a. At the Start of the Competition

The *Handicap Factor* to be used at the start of a competition must be determined by the committee in charge of the competition. The RCGA recommends that the committee require use of a *Handicap Factor* in effect on the date the competition commences.

■ b. Changes During the Competition

Whether a player's *Course Handicap* may be changed during a competition is a matter for the committee in charge of the competition to determine and publish prior to the competition. Rule 33-1 of The Rules of Golf provides in part: that the committee must lay down the conditions under which a competition is to be played. (See Decision 9-2b/1.)

The committee may, in an exceptional individual case, modify a player's *Course Handicap* before or between rounds of the competition; however, a player's *Handicap Factor* can only be adjusted by the player's *Handicap Committee*. (See Section 8-4c.)

The RCGA recommends that, when practical, each player use the *Handicap Factor* in effect at the time each round is played.

■ 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.)

9-3. Assignment of Strokes

■ a. Where To Take Strokes

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

The committee in charge of the competition is responsible, after play, for the addition of scores and for subtracting handicap strokes recorded on the score card from *gross score* to arrive at *net score*. (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.

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 different types of play, described in Section 9-4, bring that player’s handicap closer to zero. For example, a 50 percent allowance applied to a plus 2 *Course Handicap* makes that player a plus 1.

■ b. Handicap Factor Relates to 18 Holes

A *Handicap Factor* relates to 18 holes. Each allowance in Section 9-4 applies to each 18-hole round, even though the competition may consist of more than one round.

■ c. Players Competing From Different Tees or Men and Women From Same Tees

(i) Different Tees: Men vs. Men; Women vs. Women; Women vs. Men

Different tees usually have different Ratings. Since an *RCGA Course Rating* reflects the probable scores of scratch golfers, the higher-rated course is more difficult, and the player playing from the set of tees with the higher *RCGA Course Rating* receives additional stroke(s) equal to the difference between each *RCGA Course Rating*, with the resulting figure rounded off to the nearest whole number (.5 or more is rounded upward). (See Decision 3-5/1 for an exception.)

Example 1: If men playing from the middle tees, from which the men’s *RCGA Course Rating* is 70.3, compete against men playing from the back tees, from which the men’s *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* is 73.4, compete against men playing from the middle tees, from which the men's *RCGA Course Rating* is 70.9, the women will add three strokes ($73.4 - 70.9 = 2.5$ rounded to 3) to *Course Handicap*.

(ii) Same Tees: Men vs. Women

Men and women playing from the same set of tees will have different Ratings. Since the women's *RCGA Course Rating* usually will be higher, women receive additional strokes equal to the difference between men's and women's *RCGA Course Rating*, with the resulting figure rounded off to the nearest whole number (.5 or more is rounded upward). (See Decision 3-5/1 for an exception.)

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

(iii) Foursome Competitions Using Different Tees or Men and Women Using Same Tees

In foursome competitions using different tees or men and women from the same tees, players use half the difference in *RCGA Course Rating* between sets of tees.

Example: A, a man, and B, a woman, are partners in a foursome competition against C, a man, and D, a woman. The men play the white tees, rated 71.2, and the women play the red tees, rated 73.6. The difference in Ratings is 2.4. After the *Course Handicap* of each team is determined, one-half of the difference between Ratings (1 stroke) is added to the *Course Handicap* of each team with the resulting figure rounded off to the nearest whole number (.5 or more is rounded upward). If A and B are both men, the procedure applies only to side C and D (a man and a woman).

In a foursome competition in which sides are using different tees, the side playing from the set of tees with the higher *RCGA Course Rating* receives additional strokes equal to the difference between Ratings with the resulting figure rounded off to the nearest whole number (.5 or more is rounded upward). (See Decision 3-5/1 for an exception.)

Example: A, a man, and C, a man, are partners in a foursome competition against B, a woman, and D, a woman. The men play the white tees, rated 71.2, and the women play the red tees, rated 73.6. The difference in Rating is 2.4. After the *Course Handicap* of each team is determined, the full difference between the Ratings (2 strokes) is added to the *Course Handicap* of the women's team.

Note: Additional strokes received under this procedure are to be disregarded when applying ESC for handicap purposes. (See Section 4-3, Example 3.)

9-4. Handicap Allowances

Handicap allowances have no effect in determining a *Handicap Factor*; however, their use is recommended to produce fair and equitable competition.

The allowances are designed to make all forms of play fair. In some forms of play, it is equitable for players to use full *Course Handicap*. However, in some team competitions, using full *Course Handicap* would give higher-handicapped sides an advantage over lower-handicapped sides. Less than full *Course Handicap* is recommended in such competitions.

To make proper use of *handicap allowances*:

- Step 1: Players must first determine *Course Handicap* (from tees played).
- Step 2: Players should then apply the *handicap allowances* for the appropriate format.
- Step 3: Finally, if players are competing from different tees or men and women are competing from the same tees (see Sections 3-5 and 9-3c), players must apply the adjustment for the difference in *RCGA Course Rating* from the tees played.

It is essential to follow the order of steps 2 and 3 above so that players from higher-rated tees receive the full number of strokes representing the difference in higher- and lower-rated tees. For example, when correctly adjusted, first for a *handicap allowance* of 80 percent, then for playing from tees four strokes more difficult than a competitor's, player A's *Course Handicap* of 30 is first reduced by six strokes to 24 ($30 \times 80\% = 24$), then increased by four strokes to 28 ($24 + 4 = 28$). Had the order of adjustment been incorrectly reversed, A's *Course Handicap* of 30 would first have been increased by four strokes to 34 ($30 + 4 = 34$), then reduced by seven strokes to 27 ($34 \times 80\% = 27.2$, rounded downward to 27) – a loss of one stroke.

The amount of the adjustment in step 3 is added to *Course Handicap*, even if it causes a *Course Handicap* to exceed the maximum *Handicap Factor* possible for the *Slope Rating* of the set of tees being played. (See Section 3-4.)

Note: If the percentage of a player's *Course Handicap* results in a decimal in steps 2 and/or 3 above, the resulting figure is rounded to the nearest whole number (.5 or more is rounded upward).

■ **a. Match Play**

In match play, the game is played by holes. Except as otherwise provided in The Rules of Golf, a hole is won by the side that holes its ball in fewer strokes. In a handicap match, the lower *net score* wins the hole. A match (which consists of a *stipulated round*, unless otherwise decreed by the committee) is won by the side which is leading by a number of holes greater than the number of holes remaining to be played. 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 (The Rules of Golf, 2-1, 2-3). The committee must also determine the proper *handicap allowances* before adjusting for competitions from different tees, or in competitions between men and women from the same tees. (See Section 9-3c.)

(i) Singles Match Play

In singles match play, the match is won by the player who is leading by a number of holes greater than the number of holes remaining to be played. 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: The higher-handicapped player receives the full difference in *Course Handicap* between the two players; the lower-handicapped player plays from scratch. (See Decision 9-4a/1.)

Example: A player with a *Course Handicap* of 17 receives four strokes from a player with a *Course Handicap* of 13. The player receives them on the holes allocated as the first four handicap-stroke holes.

(ii) Singles Match Play vs. Par or Bogey

Bogey or par competitions are forms of competition in which play is against a fixed score at each hole. The reckoning is made as in match play. Any hole for which a competitor returns no score must be regarded as a loss. The winner is the competitor who is most successful in the aggregate of holes (The Rules of Golf, 32-1). 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: Each player receives full *Course Handicap*.

Example: Player A with a *Course Handicap* of 17 receives one stroke on the first 17 handicap-stroke holes.

(iii) Four-Ball Match Play

In four-ball match play, two play their better ball against the better ball of two other players (The Rules of Golf, Rule 30 and Definitions). 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: The *Course Handicap* of all four players is reduced by the *Course Handicap* of the player with the lowest handicap, who then plays from scratch. Each of the three other players is allowed 100 percent of the difference. (See Decisions 9-4a/2, 9-4a/3).

Example: Players A, B, C, and D have a *Course Handicap* of 5, 10, 15 and 20, respectively. Player A plays at scratch, B receives 5 strokes, C receives 10 strokes, and D receives 15 strokes.

In mixed four-ball match play, strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation table. The committee in charge of the competition designates the tees to be played.

(iv) Four-Ball Match Play vs. Par or Bogey

In four-ball match play vs. par or bogey, two play their better ball against par or bogey at each hole. The winner is the team who is most successful in the aggregate of holes. 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: Men receive 90 percent of *Course Handicap*; Women receive 95 percent of *Course Handicap*.

Example: On men's side A-B, Player A with a *Course Handicap* of 10 would receive 9 strokes ($10 \times 90\% = 9$) and Player B with a *Course Handicap* of 16 would receive 14 strokes ($16 \times 90\% = 14.4$, rounded to 14). Strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation table.

(v) Total Score of Partners Match Play

Two players form a side, but play their own ball. The combined total

of their scores for each hole is the score recorded for the side. 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: The *Course Handicap* of all four players is reduced by the *Course Handicap* of the player with the lowest handicap, who must then play from scratch. Each of the three other players is allowed 100 percent of the difference.

Example: Side A-B is comprised of Player A with a *Course Handicap* of 5 and Player B with a *Course Handicap* of 10. Side C-D is comprised of Player C with a *Course Handicap* of 15 and Player D with a *Course Handicap* of 20. Player A plays at scratch, B receives 5 strokes, C receives 10 strokes, and D receives 15 strokes.

(vi) Best-Ball-of-Four Match Play vs. Par or Bogey

In best-ball-of-four match play vs. par or bogey, four play their best ball against par or bogey at each hole. The winner is the team that is most successful in the aggregate of holes. 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: Men receive 80 percent of *Course Handicap*; Women receive 90 percent of *Course Handicap*.

Example: Men's side A-B-C-D with a respective *Course Handicap* of 5, 10, 15, and 20 would each receive 80 percent of their *Course Handicap* (4, 8, 12, and 16 respectively). Their best net ball of the four would then be used to score vs. par or bogey. Strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation table.

(vii) Foursome Match Play

In a foursome match, two play against two and each side plays one ball. In a foursome during any *stipulated round* the partners play alternately from the teeing grounds and alternately during the play of each hole (The Rules of Golf, Rules 29, 29-1, and Definitions). After *handicap allowances* are determined, Section 9-3c(iii) must be applied in competitions from different tees, or in competitions between men and women from the same tees.

Allowance: The allowance for the higher-handicapped side is 50 percent of the difference between the combined *Course Handicap* of

the members of each side. (When selected drives are permitted, the allowance is 40 percent.) The lower handicapped side competes at scratch.

Example: Side A-B with a combined *Course Handicap* of 15 competes against side C-D with a combined *Course Handicap* of 36. The higher handicapped side, C-D, receives 11 strokes ($36 - 15 = 21 \times 50\% = 10.5$ rounded to 11). Strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation table.

(viii) Foursome Match Play vs. Par or Bogey

In foursome match play vs. par or bogey, a match is played against par or bogey. The winner is the side that is most successful in the aggregate of holes. After *handicap allowances* are determined, Section 9-3c(iii) must be applied in competitions from different tees, or in competitions between men and women from the same tees.

Allowance: The allowance is 50 percent of the partners' combined *Course Handicap*. (When selected drives are permitted, the allowance is 40 percent.)

Example: On side A-B, Player A has a *Course Handicap* of 5 and Player B has a *Course Handicap* of 10. Side A-B receives 8 strokes ($15 \times 50\% = 7.5$, rounded to 8). Strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation table.

(ix) Chapman or Pinehurst Match Play

In a Chapman or Pinehurst match, two play against two. Each partner plays from the teeing ground, but plays the partner's ball for the second shot. After the second shot, partners select the ball with which they wish to score, and play that ball alternately to complete the hole. After *handicap allowances* are determined, Section 9-3c(iii) must be applied in competitions from different tees, or in competitions between men and women from the same tees.

Allowance: The partner with the lower *Course Handicap* receives 60 percent of *Course Handicap*. The partner with the higher *Course Handicap* receives 40 percent of *Course Handicap*. The side with the higher *Course Handicap* receives the difference between the *Course Handicap* of the each side. The lower-handicapped side plays from scratch.

Example: Side A-B is comprised of Player A with a *Course Handicap* of 5 and Player B with a *Course Handicap* of 10. Player A ($5 \times 60\% = 3$) + Player B ($10 \times 40\% = 4$) = 7 strokes for side A-B ($3 + 4 = 7$). Side

C-D is comprised of Player C with a *Course Handicap* of 14 and Player D with a *Course Handicap* of 17. Player C ($14 \times 60\% = 8.4$ rounded to 8) + Player D ($17 \times 40\% = 6.8$ rounded to 7) = 15.

Side A-B plays at scratch and Side C-D receives one stroke per hole on the first 8 allocated handicap-stroke holes.

■ b. Stroke Play

The competitor who plays the *stipulated round* or rounds in the fewest net strokes is the winner (The Rules of Golf, 3-1). 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.

(i) Individual Stroke Play

Allowance: Each competitor receives full *Course Handicap* (A plus *Course Handicap* must be added to the *gross score* to determine the *net score*.)

Example: Player A has a *Course Handicap* of 10 and scores 82. A's *net score* is 72. Player B has a *Course Handicap* of +2 and scores 70. Player B's *net score* is 72.

(ii) Four-Ball Stroke Play

In four-ball stroke play, two competitors play as partners, each playing their own ball. The lower of the partners' scores is the score for the hole (The Rules of Golf, Rule 31 and Definitions). 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: Men receive 90 percent of *Course Handicap*; Women receive 95 percent of *Course Handicap*.

Example 1: On men's side A-B, Player A has a *Course Handicap* of 8 and Player B has a *Course Handicap* of 20. At 90 percent of *Course Handicap*, Player A receives 7 strokes ($8 \times 90\% = 7.2$, rounded to 7) and Player B receives 18 strokes ($20 \times 90\% = 18$).

In mixed four-ball stroke play, strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation tables, and players must play from the sets of tees designated by the committee in charge of the competition.

Example 2: If men are playing the middle tees and women are playing the forward tees, strokes must be taken by men as they are allocated

from the middle tees and by women as they are allocated from the forward tees.

Note: It is recommended that committees consider it a condition of four-ball stroke-play competitions that the *Course Handicap* (after allowance) of the members of a side may not differ by more than eight strokes. A side with a large difference has an advantage over a side with a small *Course Handicap* difference. If a difference of more than eight strokes cannot be avoided, it is suggested that an additional 10 percent reduction be applied to the *Course Handicap* of each member of the advantaged side.

Example 3: In Example 1, there is more than an eight stroke difference between partners (after allowance, $18 - 7 = 11$). Therefore, both players would then be reduced an additional 10 percent based on the rounded *Course Handicap*. Player A receives 6 strokes ($7 \times 10\% = .7$; $7 - .7 = 6.3$, rounded to 6) and Player B receives 16 strokes ($18 \times 10\% = 1.8$; $18 - 1.8 = 16.2$, rounded to 16.) Strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation table.

(iii) Total Score of Partners Stroke Play

In this format, two players form a side, each plays their own ball, and the combined total of their scores for the round is the score for the side. 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: Partners receive full combined *Course Handicap*.

Example: Player A has a *Course Handicap* of 12 and scores 87. Player B, A's partner, has a *Course Handicap* of 26 and scores 101. The team score is: $(87 - 12) + (101 - 26) = 75 + 75 = 150$.

(iv) Best-Ball-of-Four Stroke Play

In best-ball-of-four stroke play, four players score with their best ball at each hole. 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: Men receive 80 percent of *Course Handicap*; Women receive 90 percent of *Course Handicap*.

Example: On a mixed side A-B-C-D (A,B men, C,D women), Player A with a *Course Handicap* of 8 receives 6 strokes ($8 \times 80\% = 6.4$,

rounded to 6). Player B with a *Course Handicap* of 10 receives 8 strokes ($10 \times 80\% = 8$). Player C with a *Course Handicap* of 12 receives 11 strokes ($12 \times 90\% = 10.8$, rounded to 11). Player D with a *Course Handicap* of 14 receives 13 strokes ($14 \times 90\% = 12.6$, rounded to 13). The lowest *net score* for each hole is then counted towards the overall score for the *stipulated round*. Strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation table.

(v) Two-Best-Balls-of-Four

In two-best-balls-of-four, four players score with their two best balls on each hole. 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: Men receive 90 percent of *Course Handicap*; Women receive 95 percent of *Course Handicap*.

Example: On women's side A-B-C-D, Player A with a *Course Handicap* of 11 receives 10 strokes ($11 \times 95\% = 10.45$, rounded to 10). Player B with a *Course Handicap* of 16 receives 15 strokes ($16 \times 95\% = 15.2$, rounded to 15). Player C with a *Course Handicap* of 22 receives 21 strokes ($22 \times 95\% = 20.9$, rounded to 21). Player D with a *Course Handicap* of 35 receives 33 strokes ($35 \times 95\% = 33.25$, rounded to 33). Strokes are taken as assigned on the players' respective stroke allocation table.

(vi) Foursome Stroke Play

In foursome stroke play, partners play one ball. The partners play alternately from the teeing grounds and alternately during the play of each hole (The Rules of Golf, 29-1). After *handicap allowances* are determined, Section 9-3c(iii) must be applied in competitions from different tees, or in competitions between men and women from the same tees.

Allowance: The allowance is 50 percent of the partners' combined *Course Handicap*. When selected drives are permitted, the allowance is 40 percent. A plus combined *Course Handicap* side must be added to the *gross score* to determine the *net score*. (See Decision 9-4b/1.)

Example: On side A-B, Player A has a *Course Handicap* of 5 and Player B has a *Course Handicap* of 12. Side AB's combined *Course Handicap* is 17. Side A-B will receive 9 strokes ($17 \times 50\% = 8.5$, rounded to 9).

(vii) Chapman or Pinehurst Stroke Play

In Chapman or Pinehurst stroke play, two players play as partners, each playing from the teeing ground and each playing the partner's ball for the second shot. After the second shot, partners select the ball with which they wish to score, and play that ball alternately to complete the hole. After *handicap allowances* are determined, Section 9-3c(iii) must be applied in competitions from different tees, or in competitions between men and women from the same tees.

Allowance: The player with the lower *Course Handicap* is allowed 60 percent of *Course Handicap*. The player with the higher *Course Handicap* is allowed 40 percent of *Course Handicap*. The total is rounded off with fractions of .5 or more rounded upward.

Example: On side A-B, Player A has a *Course Handicap* of 8 and Player B has a *Course Handicap* of 18. Sixty percent of Player A's *Course Handicap* is 5 ($8 \times 60\% = 4.8$, rounded to 5); forty percent of Player B's *Course Handicap* is 7 ($18 \times 40\% = 7.2$, rounded to 7). Side A-B will receive 12 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, 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.

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

Allowance: Players use full *Course Handicap*, and strokes are taken as they are allocated on the stroke allocation table.

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 gives the adjusted *Course Handicap* for allowances recommended above.

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

9-5. 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.”

■ a. Committee To Determine Procedure

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.

The RCGA 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’ handicaps to determine their playoff handicaps. 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 his 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 table(s).

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 allocated to the back nine and the playoff is conducted over the back nine, A receives one stroke on the holes allocated 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 (for five total strokes) and B receives one stroke on the holes allocated 2, 4, and 6 (for three total strokes).

(iii) Playoff Not Feasible; Matching Score Cards

If a playoff of any type is not feasible, matching score cards is recommended. The method of matching cards should be announced in advance and should also provide what will happen if this procedure does not produce a winner. An acceptable method of matching cards is to determine the winner on the basis of the best score for the last nine holes. If the tying players have the same score for the last nine, determine the winner on the basis of the last six holes, last three holes and finally the 18th hole. If this method is used in a competition with a multiple tee start, it is recommended that the “last nine holes, last six holes, etc.” is considered to be holes 10-18, 13-18, etc.

For competitions where the stroke-hole allocation is not relevant, such as individual stroke play, if the last nine, last six, last three holes scenario is used, one-half, one-third, one-sixth, etc. of the *Course Handicap* should be deducted from the score for those holes. Fractions should not be disregarded.

Example 3:

Hole	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
Player (<i>Course Handicap</i>)										
Player E (12)	4	6	6	4	3	4	5	6	3	41
Player F (10)	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	40

Player E and F have an equal 18-hole net total.

Last nine holes: E: $12 \times .5 = 6$. $41 - 6 = 35$; F: $10 \times 0.5 = 5$, $40 - 5 = 35$.

Last six holes: E: $12 \times .33 = 3.96$, 25 (*gross score* for last six holes) $- 3.96 = 21.04$; F: $10 \times .33 = 3.33$, $26 - 3.33 = 22.67$. E wins the matching of cards.

In competitions where the stroke hole allocation is relevant, such as four-ball stroke play, match play, match play vs. par or bogey and stableford, handicap strokes should be taken as they were assigned for the competition, using the

players' respective stroke allocation table(s).

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, The Rules of Golf, 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 RCGA Handicap System requires players to return all scores, regardless of where they were made. (See Section 5-1b.) The

RCGA 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 lay down the conditions-see The Rules of Golf, Rule 33-1. However, the RCGA 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 ten or more scores. Furthermore, a player whose Handicap Factor is computed from fewer than ten scores has no advantage over other players. (See Section 11-4.)

9-2b/1. Procedure when Play Suspended During Round and RCGA 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, revised Handicap Factors had been changed.

A condition of the competition provided that players should use their RCGA 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' RCGA Handicap Factors had been revised.

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: The RCGA recommends that B receive 10 strokes, and A play at scratch.

9-3a/2. Handicap Allowance in a Four-Ball Match when a Player with a Plus Handicap Involved

Q: In a four-ball match played on a handicap basis, the Course Handicap of each player involved is as follows: player A has a plus 2, player B has a 6, player C has a 2, and player D has a 4. How should Course Handicap be allocated?

A: The RCGA recommends that Player A receive no strokes, player B receive 8 strokes, player C receive 4 strokes, and player D receive 6 strokes. (See Section 9-4a(iii).)

9-3a/3. Handicap Strokes Given or Received in Four-Ball Stroke Play when Partner has a Plus Handicap

Q: In a four-ball stroke play net competition, A and B are partners. A's Course Handicap is plus 2 and B's is 2. On which holes may handicap-strokes be received or given?

A: A should add one stroke on the holes allocated as the 17th and 18th handicap-stroke holes. B should deduct one stroke on the holes allocated as the 1st and 2nd handicap-stroke holes. (See Section 9-4b(ii).)

9-3a/4. Minus or Zero Net Score

Q: In a handicap match, a player entitled to two handicap strokes at a par-3 hole scores a 2 or a hole-in-one. What would be the player's net score in each case?

A: The player's net score would be zero (0) if the player scored a 2 or minus one (-1) if the player had a hole-in-one. The same would be true in a four-ball stroke play or Stableford competition since scores are calculated on a hole-by-hole basis. (See The Decisions on The Rules of Golf, 2-1/2.)

9-4a/1. Players Choose to Use Full Handicaps in Singles Match Play

Q: In singles match play, player A has a Course Handicap of 17 and player B has a Course Handicap of 13. Based on Section 9-4a(i), player A may receive four strokes from player B on the holes allocated as the first four handicap-stroke holes. However, the players decide to play the match with their full Course Handicap, A taking a handicap stroke on 17 holes and B taking a handicap stroke on 13 holes. Is this procedure equitable?

A: No. Handicap-stroke holes are established to maximize the number of halved holes in a match by assigning strokes where player A most needs four strokes in order to obtain a half on those holes. If both A and B receive strokes on those four holes, the better player (B) will have a greater chance of winning those holes.

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. (The Rules of Golf, 30-3a and 30-3e(i).)

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.

FORMULAS

Section 10 RCGA HANDICAP FORMULA

Definitions

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

Potential ability is defined by the term *Handicap Factor* and is measured through a calculation using the player's best scores. These best scores are determined by calculating the *Handicap Differential* for each score. The *Handicap Factor* is calculated by taking 96 percent of the average of the best *Handicap Differential(s)*, and applying Section 10-3 for players with two or more *eligible tournament scores*.

10-1. Calculation of Handicap Differentials

A *Handicap Differential* is computed from four elements: *adjusted gross score*, *RCGA Course Rating*, *Slope Rating*, and 113 (the *Slope Rating* of a course of standard difficulty). To determine the *Handicap Differential*, subtract the *RCGA Course Rating* from the *adjusted gross score*; multiply the difference by 113; then divide the resulting number by the *Slope Rating*. Round the final number to the nearest tenth. $Handicap\ Differential = (Adjusted\ gross\ score - RCGA\ Course\ Rating) \times 113 / Slope\ Rating$

■ a. Plus Handicap Differential

When the *adjusted gross score* is higher than the *RCGA Course Rating*, the *Handicap Differential* is a positive number. The following is an example for determining a *Handicap Differential* using an *adjusted gross score* of 95 made on a course with a *RCGA Course Rating* of 71.5 and a *Slope Rating* of 125:

$$Adjusted\ gross\ score - RCGA\ Course\ Rating: \quad 95 - 71.5 = 23.5$$

$$Difference \times Standard\ Slope\ Rating: \quad 23.5 \times 113 = 2655.5$$

$$Result / Slope\ Rating: \quad 2655.5 / 125 = 21.24$$

$$Handicap\ Differential\ (rounded): \quad 21.2$$

■ b. Minus Handicap Differential

When the *adjusted gross score* is lower than the *RCGA Course Rating*, the *Handicap Differential* is a negative number. The following is an example for determining a *Handicap Differential* using an *adjusted gross score* of 69 made on a course with a *RCGA Course Rating* of 71.5 and a *Slope Rating* of 125:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Adjusted gross score - RCGA Course Rating:} & \quad 69 - 71.5 = -2.5 \\ \text{Difference x Standard Slope Rating:} & \quad -2.5 \times 113 = -282.5 \\ \text{Result / Slope Rating:} & \quad -282.5 / 125 = -2.26 \\ \text{Handicap Differential (rounded):} & \quad -2.3 \end{aligned}$$

10-2. Handicap Factor Formula

The *Handicap Factor* formula is based on the best *Handicap Differential(s)* in a player's *scoring record*. If a player's *scoring record* contains 20 or more scores, the best 10 *Handicap Differentials* of the most recent 20 scores are used to calculate the *Handicap Factor*. As the number of scores in the *scoring record* decreases the percentage of scores used in a *scoring record* decreases from the maximum of the best 50 percent. 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. Thus, the accuracy of a player's *Handicap Factor* is directly proportional to the number of acceptable scores posted. A *Handicap Factor* must not be issued to a player who has returned fewer than five acceptable scores. The following procedures illustrate how *authorized provincial golf associations, golf clubs, and computation services* calculate a player's *Handicap Factor*.

The procedure for calculating a *Handicap Factor* is as follows:

Step 1: Use the table below to determine the number of *Handicap Differential(s)* to use:

Number of Acceptable Scores	Differential(s) to be Used
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

- Step 2:** Determine *Handicap Differential(s)*;
- Step 3:** Average the *Handicap Differential(s)* being used;
- Step 4:** Multiply the average by .96*;
- Step 5:** Delete all numbers after the tenths' digit (truncate). Do not round to the nearest tenth.

Example 1: Fewer than 20 scores (11 scores available).

Total of lowest 4 <i>Handicap Differentials</i> :	104.1
Average (104.1 / 4):	26.025
Multiply average by .96:	24.984
Delete digits after tenths:	24.9
<i>Handicap Factor</i> :	24.9

* Bonus for Excellence is the incentive for players to improve their golf games that is built into the *RCGA Handicap System*. It is the term used to describe the small percentage below perfect equity that is used to calculate a *Handicap Factor* (96 percent). As a *Handicap Factor* improves (gets lower), the player has a slightly better chance of placing high or winning a handicap event.

Example 2: Twenty scores available. The following is an example of a *Handicap Factor* calculation for a player with 20 scores.

Total of 10 lowest <i>Handicap Differentials</i> :	154.8
Average (154.8 / 10):	15.48
Average multiplied by .96:	14.861
Delete all digits after tenths:	14.8
<i>Handicap Factor</i> :	14.8

- Step 6:** Apply Section 10-3 for players with two or more eligible tournament scores.

Date	RCGA Adjusted Score	Score Type	RCGA Course Rating	Slope Rating	Handicap Differential
1/15/06	90	A	70.1	116	19.4
1/11/06	91	A	70.1	116	20.4
1/5/06	94	A	72.3	123	19.9
1/3/06	*88	A	70.1	116	17.4
1/1/06	89	A	70.1	116	18.4
12/25/05	*90	A	72.3	123	16.3
12/13/05	*91	A	72.3	123	17.2
12/1/05	91	I	70.1	116	20.4
11/18/05	91	I	70.1	116	20.4
11/7/05	86	A	68.7	105	18.6
11/2/05	90	A	70.1	116	19.4
10/30/05	*92	AI	72.3	123	18.1
10/23/05	*85	T	68.0	107	18.0
10/13/05	*78	T	68.7	105	10.0
10/4/05	*82	A	70.1	116	11.6
9/30/05	*84	A	70.1	116	13.5
9/29/05	94	A	72.3	123	19.9
9/21/05	93	A	72.3	123	19.0
9/17/05	*89	A	72.3	123	15.3
9/12/05	*88	A	70.1	116	17.4
*10 scores with lowest handicap differentials					
Two Lowest Eligible Tournament Scores					
Date	RCGA Adjusted Score	Score Type	RCGA Course Rating	Slope Rating	Handicap Differential
10/13/05	78	T	68.7	105	10.0
7/4/05	83	T	70.1	116	12.6

10-3. Reduction of Handicap Factor Based on Exceptional Tournament Scores

Using the definition of a *tournament score* (see *tournament score* and Decisions 10-3/1 through 10-3/6), the committee (preferably the *Handicap Committee* in consultation with the committee in charge of the competition) must determine in

advance whether a score is to be designated as a *tournament score* that is to be identified by the letter “T” when posted (e.g. 82T). These scores are often referred to as “T-Scores” as in Section 10-3c.

■ a. Purpose

The following procedure must be used as an alternate calculation of a *Handicap Factor* for players with two or more *eligible tournament scores*. A player’s *Handicap Factor* may be reduced under this procedure when a player has a minimum of two *eligible tournament score* differentials that are at least 3.0 better than the player’s *Handicap Factor* calculated under Section 10-2.

■ b. Determination of Handicap Factor Based on Tournament Scores

The *Handicap Committee* or handicap computation service must apply the following steps to determine if there is a reduction in *Handicap Factor* calculated under Section 10-2.

Example: A player with a *Handicap Factor* of 17.3 has three *eligible tournament scores*, an 82T, 83T and 85T. Two of these *eligible tournament scores*, an 82T and 83T, produce the lowest *tournament score* differentials. They were made on a course with a *RCGA Course Rating* of 70.6 and a *Slope Rating* of 130.

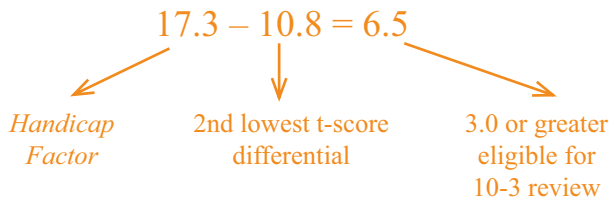
Step 1: Calculate *tournament score* differentials by subtracting the *RCGA Course Rating* from each *eligible tournament score*; multiply the result by 113, and divide by the *Slope Rating* for each course played. Select the two lowest *eligible tournament score* differentials.

$$82T - (82 - 70.6) \times 113 / 130 = 9.9$$

$$83T - (83 - 70.6) \times 113 / 130 = 10.8$$

$$85T - (85 - 70.6) \times 113 / 130 = 12.5$$

Step 2: Subtract the second lowest differential from the *Handicap Factor* under Section 10-2. Continue with the next step if the result is 3.0 or greater.



Step 3: Average the two lowest *tournament score* differentials.

$$(9.9 + 10.8) / 2 = 10.35$$

↓
2 best t-score
differentials

↓
Differential average of
2 lowest t-scores

Step 4: Subtract that average from the player's *Handicap Factor*.

$$17.3 - 10.35 = 6.95 \text{ (rounded to 7.0)}$$

↓
*Handicap
Factor*

↓
Use this value and the number of
eligible tournament scores to enter
the Handicap Reduction Table

Step 5: Using the number (rounded to the nearest tenths place (7.0)) from step 4 and the total number of tournament scores in the player's record (3), use the Handicap Reduction Table to determine the amount the player's *Handicap Factor* is to be reduced.

Step 6: Subtract the table value from the player's *Handicap Factor*. The result of that subtraction will be the player's reduced *Handicap Factor*, provided that it is at least one less than the *Handicap Factor* based on the Formula in Section 10-2. The reduced *Handicap Factor* is to be identified with the letter R when displayed in handicap reports or on the computer screen, e.g. 12.3R.

$$17.3 - 5.0 = 12.3R$$

↙
*Handicap
Factor*

↓
Amount the Handicap
Reduction table states to
reduce the handicap by

↘
New Reduced
Handicap Factor

	Number of Eligible Tournament Scores								
	2	3	4	5-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	≥ 40	
Average of best two T-score differentials below Handicap Factor	3.0 to 3.4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	3.5 to 3.9	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	4.0 to 4.4	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	4.5 to 4.9	1.8	1	*	*	*	*	*	*
	5.0 to 5.4	2.6	1.9	1	*	*	*	*	*
	5.5 to 5.9	3.4	2.7	1.9	1	*	*	*	*
	6.0 to 6.4	4.1	3.5	2.8	1.9	1	*	*	*
	6.5 to 6.9	4.8	4.3	3.7	2.9	2	1	*	*
	7.0 to 7.4	5.5	5.0	4.5	3.8	3	2.1	1	*
	7.5 to 7.9	6.2	5.7	5.3	4.7	3.9	3.1	2.2	1
	8.0 to 8.4	6.8	6.4	6	5.5	4.8	4.1	3.2	2.2
	8.5 to 8.9	7.4	7.1	6.7	6.2	5.7	5	4.2	3.3
	9.0 to 9.4	8.1	7.8	7.4	7	6.5	5.9	5.2	4.4
	9.5 to 9.9	8.7	8.4	8.1	7.7	7.3	6.7	6.1	5.4
	10.0 to 10.4	9.2	9.0	8.8	8.4	8	7.6	7	6.4
	10.5 to 10.9	9.8	9.5	9.4	9.1	8.7	8.3	7.8	7.2
	11.0 to 11.4	10.4	10.2	10	9.7	9.4	9.1	8.6	8.1
	11.5 to 11.9	11.0	10.8	10.6	10.4	10.1	9.8	9.4	8.9
	12.0 to 12.4	11.5	11.4	11.2	11	10.7	10.5	10.1	9.7
	12.5 to 12.9	12.1	11.9	11.8	11.6	11.4	11.1	10.8	10.5
	13.0 to 13.4	12.6	12.5	12.4	12.2	12	11.8	11.5	11.2
	13.5 to 13.9	13.2	13.1	12.9	12.8	12.6	12.4	12.2	11.9
	14.0 or more	13.7	13.6	13.5	13.4	13.2	13.0	12.8	12.6

Example:

Value from Handicap Reduction Table 5.0

Handicap Factor -- Table Value: $17.3 - 5.0 = 12.3$

Reduced *Handicap Factor*: 12.3R

■ c. Counting Tournament Scores

- (i) T-Score Counter -- The number of *eligible tournament scores* will be counted on a revolving twelve-month basis. In order to keep track of the counter, but not save every T-Score, a counter for each month is needed. The T-Score counter will be the sum of the latest twelve

monthly counters plus any T-Scores older than one year that are a part of the twenty score history. The monthly counter will increase based on the date a score is processed, not the date of the score.

- (ii) Best T-Score File -- Up to the best six *eligible tournament scores* are saved in a “Best T-Score File,” separate from the player’s handicap record of the latest 20 scores.
- (iii) Adding T-Scores -- When a new *tournament score* is posted, it becomes part of the player’s normal handicap record as a score and *Handicap Differential*. If the “Best T-Score File” has fewer than six *eligible tournament scores*, the new T-Score is added to that file. If the file already has six T-Scores, the new T-Score, if better than any T-Score in the file, is added to the file and the worst T-Score in the file is deleted from the file, regardless of the date of the T-Score.
- (iv) Discarding Old T-Scores -- At each handicap revision, each T-Score in the “Best T-Score File” is checked to see if the score is older than one year and no longer part of the player’s current twenty score history. If so, the score is deleted from the file. Deleted T-Scores are replaced by the best *eligible tournament scores* (if any) in the player’s handicap record that are not already in the “Best T-Score File.”

■ **d. Duration and Variation of Reduction**

Handicap Factor reduction for exceptional *tournament scores* is calculated with each score entered and may vary based on a number of factors. These factors may include the following:

- Additional tournament scores;
- Expiration of *eligible tournament scores*;
- Variation in 10-2 calculation;
- Fluctuation of 10-2 calculation in relation to the two lowest T-Scores.

■ **e. Handicap Committee Review of Reduction**

The *Handicap Committee* must review all reductions. As a result of review, the *Handicap Committee* may:

- Continue to allow the reduction to run its normal course, as described in Section 10-3d, or

- Further reduce the *Handicap Factor*. For example, the committee may conclude that the player's performance continues to be better than the potential ability indicated by the 10-3 reduction. In that case, the committee replaces the reduced *Handicap Factor* with an even lower reduced *Handicap Factor*, or
- Override the reduction. For example, the committee may cancel the reduction to a *Handicap Factor* for a player who has been injured, and whose reduction was based on early tournament scores prior to the injury. In that case, the reduction was inconsistent with the player's *scoring record*. The committee replaces the reduced *Handicap Factor* with the *Handicap Factor* calculated under 10-2 and ceases designating it with an R. The committee will have the option to continue to *override*, for as long as at least two exceptional tournament scores continue to trigger a 10-3 reduction.

■ f. Reporting Requirement

Authorized provincial golf associations and handicap computation services must report any *Handicap Factor* reductions under this procedure (Section 10-3b) to the *golf club* and, if computational reports are provided to the *authorized provincial golf association*, the handicap computation service must also report any *Handicap Factor* reductions to the *authorized provincial golf association*. When a *Handicap Factor* is reduced under this section, it must be identified with the letter R (e.g., 12.3R).

10-4. Course Handicap

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 3-3.) The resulting figure is rounded off to the nearest whole number (.5 or more is rounded upward).

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 *RCGA 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.

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 *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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 Number on Any Hole
0 or plus	1 over par
1 through 9	2 over par
10 through 18	3 over par
19 and over	4 over par

Example: A player with a nine-hole *Course Handicap* of 12 must adjust to a maximum score of 3 over par for any hole.

■ d. Maximum Nine-Hole Handicap

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 golf courses 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 letter “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, the RCGA recommends that it be reduced to the maximum *Handicap Factor* (N) specified above.

Section 10 RCGA HANDICAP FORMULA

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. 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.

10-3/4. 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. (REVISED)

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?

A: Scores made in events which do not conform to The Rules of Golf generally

may not be designated as tournament scores. Other than that, none of the stated factors by themselves would prevent the committee from designating scores in these competitions as tournament scores. 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. The club committee is best qualified to make the decision because it knows its traditions, schedules, formats, and members. However, events such as women's or men's 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.

10-3/6. Designation of Tournament Score When Fewer Than 13 Holes Are Played

Q: In a match play tournament, a match ends on the eleventh hole. May this score be posted as a tournament score?

A: No. A tournament score must have at least 13 holes played under tournament conditions for it to be designated as a tournament score.

CHECKS AND BALANCES

Section 11 HANDICAP CONTROLS

Definitions

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

Handicap controls, a series of checks and balances, ensure that a *Handicap Factor* will accurately measure a player's potential ability. These handicap controls prevent scores that are not representative of a player's potential ability from distorting the player's *Handicap Factor*. The following handicap controls are incorporated into the *RCGA Handicap System* to produce a reliable and equitable *Handicap Factor*.

11-1. Golf Club Handicap Committee

An essential element of the *RCGA Handicap System* is the *Handicap Committee*. Each *golf club* utilizing the *RCGA Handicap System* must have a *Handicap Committee* to ensure the integrity of the *RCGA Handicap System*.

(See Section 8.)

The *Handicap Committee* sees that scores are posted, all elements of the *RCGA Handicap System* are followed, and the integrity of each *Handicap Factor* issued is maintained.

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 *RCGA Handicap System* improves as the number of acceptable scores approaches 20. A handicap 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 *RCGA 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.)

11-8. Penalty Score

See definition of *penalty score*. (See Section 8-4b.)

11-9. Ratings Issued by Authorized Provincial Golf Association

All courses must be rated in accordance with RCGA approved procedures by a course rating team representing an *authorized provincial golf association*. Each *Handicap Factor* is determined on the same basis if every *RCGA Course Rating* is uniform.

11-10. Meeting Certification Requirements

Only a *golf club* or *authorized provincial golf association* that issues and maintains each *Handicap Factor* in full accordance with the *RCGA Handicap System*, as described in *The RCGA Handicap Manual*, and is licensed by the RCGA for this purpose, may use the term *Handicap Factor* and identify it as such on handicap cards or elsewhere. A *golf club* and *golf association* must obtain written authorization from the RCGA in order to use the RCGA's marks and to issue a *Handicap Factor*.

11-11. RCGA Handicap Department

The RCGA Handicap Department may be contacted at:

Royal Canadian Golf Association
1333 Dorval Dr, Suite 1
Oakville, ON, L6M 4X7
Phone: 905-849-9700 ext. 209 or 1-800-263-0009 ext. 209
Fax: 905-845-7040
E-mail: handicap@rcga.org
Website: www.rcga.org

PART III THE GOLF COURSE

Section 12 MEASUREMENTS

Definitions

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

12-1. Starting Point: Permanent Markers

Accurate permanent marker placement is imperative in the rating process. Permanent markers are to reflect an average placement of the movable tee markers over time. Incorrectly placed markers will make it difficult for the golf course staff to set up the course each day, keeping the effective course difficulty constant and in line with the ratings issued.

Permanent marker placement is more likely to have a greater impact on ratings than green speed, height of rough and other course maintenance practices. Courses and clubs should pay special attention to this issue and are encouraged to consult the *authorized provincial golf associations* in the area for assistance in determining accurate placement.

When a single tee pad is designated for one set of tees, placement of the permanent marker at a point opposite the middle of the teeing area is appropriate. This maximizes the ability of the golf course to use the entire teeing area and gives the best chance of reflecting an average of movable marker placement over time.

When more than one set of tees uses a single tee pad, consider the percentage of a club's existing or anticipated play from each set of tees when determining permanent marker placement. Allocate the percentage of play to the teeing area and place each permanent marker at a point opposite the mid-point of each of the allocated areas. As an example, a forty-yard teeing area is to be shared by three sets of tees. The club determines that 25% of play will be from the forward tees, 50% from the middle tees, and 25% from the back tees. Allocation would then have the first ten yards of the teeing area dedicated to the forward tees, the middle twenty yards to the middle tees and the final ten yards to the back tee. The permanent marker placement would be at the mid-point of each of these three areas.

On a nine-hole course, if separate tees or tee markers are used for each nine of an 18-hole round, separate measurements and permanent yardage markers must be established for each nine. The yardage markers (and their respective tee markers) for each nine may be uniquely identifiable.

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 teeing area on the golf course to the center of the green. Any trained individual may perform course measurement, subject to review by the *authorized provincial golf association* that issues the *RCGA Course Rating* to the *golf club*. Yardages on the scorecard should accurately reflect this measurement. Accurate hole measurements to the nearest yard are very important.

A hole with a dogleg must be measured on a straight line from the tee to the center of the fairway at the bend. If the pivot point is not easily discernible, select a pivot point that is approximately 250 (men) or 210 (women) yards from the set of tees played by the majority of golfers. 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 movable tee markers used to designate the teeing ground (see *The Rules of Golf, Definitions*) need to be consistent in color or design from one hole to the next and clearly distinguishable from the tee markers for other teeing grounds on the course. 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), scorecards, and signage where scores are posted should use the same terminology in referring to the name, color, or design of the various tees and include the *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* for each set of markers 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 *RCGA 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.

Ratings for combinations of nine holes from each set of tee markers should be posted to assist players returning 18-hole scores made by combining nine-hole scores.

MEASURING TECHNIQUE

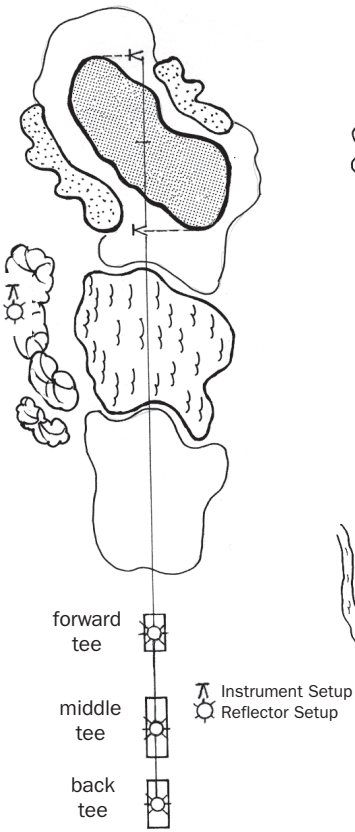


Fig. 1 – Example: Measuring setup for a par-3 hole.

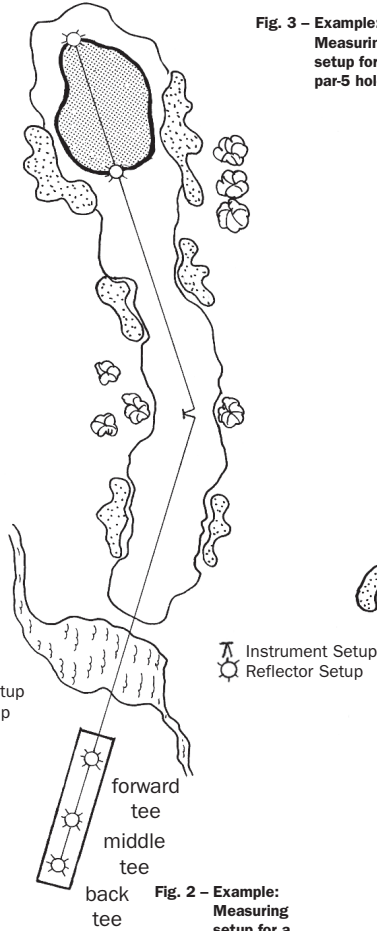
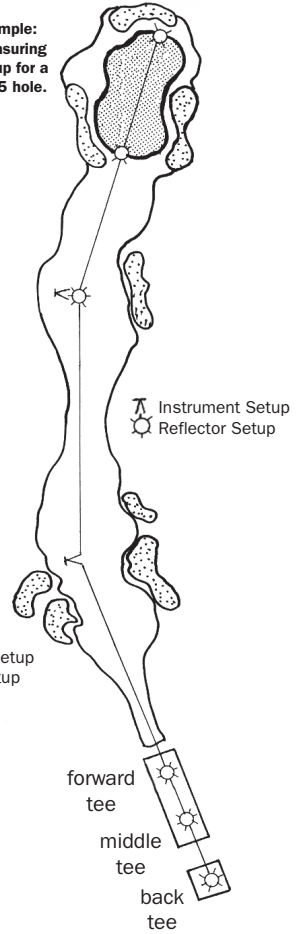


Fig. 2 – Example: Measuring setup for a par-4 hole.

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



RCGA Course Rating and Slope Rating				
Tees	Men's RCGA Course Rating	Men's Slope Rating	Women's RCGA 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 RCGA COURSE RATING

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 unusual 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 *RCGA Course Rating*.

■ e. RCGA Course Rating

See definition of *RCGA Course Rating*.

Courses are rated by *authorized provincial golf associations*, not by individual clubs. (See Section 14.)

Note: Yardage rating and *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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

An *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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 RCGA policy. (See Section 7.)

13-3. Course Rating Procedures

■ a. Components

An *authorized provincial golf association*, through the following components, determines the *RCGA 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.) Yardage must be measured accurately. An error of only 22 yards in overall length will change the *RCGA Course Rating* by 0.1 of a stroke for men. An error of only 18 yards will change the *RCGA Course Rating* by 0.1 of a stroke for women.
- (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) *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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

Unirrigated, thin fairways and downhill landing areas result in the ball rolling farther than the normal 20 yards. Irrigated, lush fairways and uphill landing areas result in the ball rolling less than 20 yards.

(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 evaluates ten obstacle factors on a scale of 0 through 10, after considering separately their effect on the play of the *scratch golfer* and *bogey golfer* on each hole. When the evaluation process has been completed, the numbers for each factor are totaled and multiplied by a relative weight factor. The total weighted obstacle values are applied to scratch and bogey formulas, and then are

converted to strokes. These strokes, which may be positive or negative, are added to the yardage ratings to produce the *RCGA 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: (Bogey Effective Playing Length of Course / 160) + 50.7

(iii) Scratch Yardage Rating for Women

Scratch Yardage Rating: (Scratch Effective Playing Length of Course / 180) + 40.1

(iv) Bogey Yardage Rating for Women

Bogey Yardage Rating: (Bogey Effective Playing Length of Course / 120) + 51.3

■ e. Course Rating Formulas

(i) RCGA Course Rating for Men and Women

RCGA Course Rating: Scratch Yardage Rating + Scratch Obstacle Stroke Value

(ii) Bogey Rating for Men and Women

Bogey Rating: Bogey Yardage Rating + Bogey Obstacle Stroke Value

■ f. Slope Rating Formulas

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

(i) Men

Slope Rating: 5.381 x (*Bogey Rating* - *RCGA Course Rating*)

(ii) Women

Slope Rating: 4.24 x (*Bogey Rating* - *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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*.

Section 14 INSTALLING COURSE RATINGS IN A REGION

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 RCGA 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.

Uniform ratings are required to make sure that each *Handicap Factor* is determined on the same basis.

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 should be re-rated every three years for a period of nine years. A 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 *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* if its ratings are more than ten years old. The course must contact an *authorized provincial golf association* in its area to be re-rated.

14-3. Personnel of Course Rating Team

A course rating team should be composed of at least three trained and experienced individuals. A rating 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 scratch golfers. Keeping the members of the team as permanent as possible helps to keep the ratings consistent.

One member of the team must be designated by the *authorized provincial golf association* as the team leader. The team leader must have attended a course rating seminar conducted by the RCGA. 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. If an agreement is not reached, the opinion of the team leader should prevail. While rating a course, team members may hit shots to assist them in evaluating obstacles.

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 *RCGA 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 *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* for each course in its jurisdiction that has been rated. The committee must periodically review this list for accuracy.

An alphabetical listing of each *RCGA Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* of all courses, issued by an *authorized provincial golf association*, in an area should be sent to each club for posting. This listing should help members post their scores made on area courses. A copy must be submitted to the RCGA Handicap Department annually.

14-5. Modification of Courses

■ a. Temporary Changes

When temporary tees and/or greens are used, the *Handicap Committee* should notify the *authorized provincial golf association*. The *authorized provincial golf association* will decide whether or not scores made under those conditions are to be accepted for handicap purposes, and whether the *RCGA 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 *RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap Department for assistance. A *golf club* cannot use The *RCGA Handicap System* until it has been issued a *RCGA 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

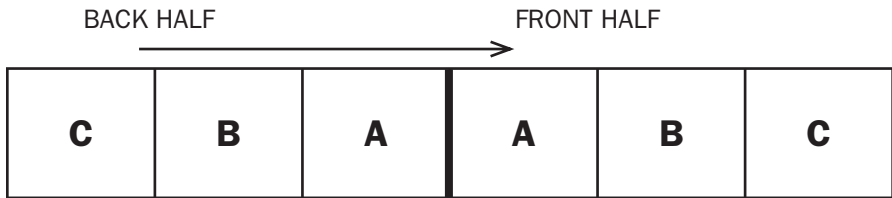
A golf course is rated on its effective playing length and its playing difficulty under normal conditions. Each hole may be evaluated in determining the course setup from a distance standpoint in order to provide a fair test and to require a player to use most or all clubs during a round. If the length 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 *RCGA 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 from day to day. 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. In view of this definition, 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 99, 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. For example, when the course is hard and fast, place front-half markers in A and 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. Do not be tricky in selecting hole locations.

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. For example, avoid too many left positions with the resulting premium on drawn or hooked shots.
- (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

In determining the location of the tee markers, both the length and the various obstacles of each hole are taken into consideration in order to provide a consistent and fair test, which accurately reflects the *RCGA 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.

There are many factors involved in preparing the course that are outlined in detail in “How To Conduct a Competition.”

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 *RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA guidelines. May clubs using the RCGA Handicap System establish par outside the guidelines?

A: No. If notified in writing, the RCGA will request the authorized provincial golf association in the area contact the club about changing par. If the golf association is unable to persuade the club to change par on the hole, the RCGA 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 following procedure is recommended for allocating handicap strokes. The procedure is not mandatory because it has minimal effect on handicaps. Good judgment is of prime importance because no formula can cover conditions on every golf course. The *Handicap Committee* should review the course hole by hole, bearing in mind that the basic principle is to equalize the abilities of players at different handicap levels. Men's and women's stroke allocations will usually be different because their needs to equalize holes will come on different holes. Common sense will dictate how closely the recommendations may be followed. A handicap stroke should be an equalizer and should be available on a hole where it most likely will be needed by the higher-handicapped player to obtain a half in singles or four-ball match play. Difficulty in making par on a hole is not an effective indicator of the need for a stroke.

In allocating the order of handicap strokes to the 18 holes of a golf course, consideration should be given to the likelihood of the strokes being equalizers rather than winning strokes. To accomplish this objective, the following guidelines are recommended:

■ a. Basis of Allocation

Allocate strokes based on play of the course from the tee markers used most often by the majority of club members.

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**

The RCGA recommends 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, as nearly as possible, the distribution of handicap strokes over the entire 18 holes, and makes matches more equitable. In a case where the second nine is decidedly 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. In such matches, the first handicap stroke will be of the greatest importance as an equalizer to the player receiving the stroke.

In allocating the second handicap stroke, matches between players having a slightly greater difference in *Course Handicap* should be given the most consideration, such as matches 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

A mathematical method for allocating strokes, based on the principle that a handicap stroke should be an equalizer when an average or high-handicapped

player plays a low-handicapped player, follows. This procedure may be applied separately with men's scores and women's scores.

Note: When using all score methods, 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 with the hole having the highest average score difference first, and so on. The hole ranked number 1 is the hole on which the higher-handicapped player most needs a stroke. Continue the rankings through 18.
- (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 a large number N (at least 400 (more is better) hole-by-hole scores from the same tee and gender.

Step 2: For each 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 of 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 the sum of these values = S4

5) Compute the difference factor (DF)

$$DF = (N \times S4) - (S1 \times S2) \text{ divided by } (N \times S3) - (S1^2)$$

Step 3: Rank all holes based on this DF value. The greater the DF the greater the expected score difference between a low and a high handicapped golfer (i.e., the hole with the largest DF is handicap-stroke hole number one).

Step 4: Assign the final allocation of handicap strokes based on Committee’s discretion.

17-3. Nine-Hole Courses

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

17-4. 27-Hole Courses

On a 27-hole course, 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 fall on the nine holes considered the first nine, and the even stroke-hole allocations should fall on the second nine. The example below shows the stroke-hole allocation for two nines combined for a competition.

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

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

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

It may be appropriate to 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 such forms of play, *golf clubs* often have found 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;
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.

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

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).						

PART IV APPENDICES

Appendix A Short Course Handicap Computation Procedure

A Short Course Handicap is the RCGA'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 RCGA Handicap System are allowed to issue a Short Course Handicap under the following conditions:

- (i) Members of the golf club must play at a golf course that is less than 3,000 yards in length for 18 holes or 1,500 yards for nine holes;
- (ii) The golf club must be rated by an authorized provincial golf association using the guidelines set forth in Section 18 of the "The RCGA Course Rating System" (RCGA Short Course Rating Procedure);
- (iii) A Short Course Handicap is not portable to any golf course other than the one where the Short Course Handicap was produced;
- (iv) 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 RCGA Course Rating and Slope Rating. 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. RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA Short Course Rating of 51.2.

Adjusted gross score:	64
RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA Short Course Rating of 51.2.

Adjusted gross score:	50
RCGA 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 (see page 110).

Date	RCGA Adjusted Score	RCGA 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

[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 RCGA Handicap Manual. Your Handicap Factor will become [e.g. 8.4M]. 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 RCGA Handicap System™.

Sincerely,

Handicap Chairman

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 measured 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 tees.

The RCGA Handicap System™ is set up so each player converts a Handicap Factor® to a Course Handicap™ and plays with the Course Handicap as calculated. However, if players are competing against each other and a difference in RCGA Course Rating™ 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap System 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.

Sincerely,

The Handicap Committee

Appendix E Exceptional Tournament Score Probability Table

HANDICAP FACTOR RANGES

Net Differential	0-5	6-12	13-21	22-30	Greater than 30
0	5	5	6	5	5
-1	10	10	10	8	7
-2	23	22	21	13	10
-3	57	51	43	23	15
-4	151	121	87	40	22
-5	379	276	174	72	35
-6	790	536	323	130	60
-7	2349	1200	552	229	101
-8	20111	4467	1138	382	185
-9	48219	27877	3577	695	359
-10	125000	84300	37000	1650	874

The values in the table are the odds of shooting a net differential* EQUAL TO OR BETTER THAN the number in the left column.

*A net differential is the subtraction of a player's Handicap Factor from the Handicap Differential for a particular tournament score. This becomes a negative value when the player scores much better than the player's Handicap Factor.

Example: A player with a Handicap Factor of 10.5 shoots a 74 from a set of tees with a RCGA Course Rating of 71.2 and a Slope Rating of 126.

$$(74 - 71.2) = 2.8 \times 113 / 126 = 2.5 \text{ Handicap Differential}$$

$$2.5 - 10.5 = -8.0 \text{ Net Differential}$$

From the chart, the odds are 4,467 to 1 of this occurring.

Appendix F RCGA Handicap System Licensing Program for Clubs

Any group desiring to be an RCGA Member golf club must contact an authorized provincial golf association in its area to begin the licensing process. (See the RCGA Web site at www.rcga.org for a listing of authorized provincial golf associations or call the RCGA Handicap Department at 1-800-263-0009 ext. 209. The authorized provincial golf association must review the licensing application, and confirm that the golf club is following all principles of the RCGA 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 RCGA Handicap System (see Club Compliance Checklist, Section 8-2m and Decision 2/7). A golf club must be licensed by the RCGA to utilize the RCGA Handicap System. A club can obtain a license through its membership in an authorized provincial golf association that is already licensed by the RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 the RCGA 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

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

Any licensed golf club that is reported to the RCGA 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, the RCGA 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.RCGA.org, including losing its ability to utilize the RCGA Handicap System.

Enforcement Procedure

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

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

Appeal Process

If a golf club is dissatisfied with the initial decision, it may appeal to the RCGA Handicap Committee by sending written notice to the RCGA within 30 days after being notified of the loss of its ability to utilize the RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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, the RCGA will

provide a list of requirements that need to be satisfied in order for the application to be considered. Upon the golf club satisfying the RCGA that these requirements have been met, the RCGA 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 RCGA 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 RCGA 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 Handicap Factor:	22.6
Ending Handicap Factor:	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 the RCGA 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.

Appendix I RCGA Membership Card



www.rcga.org

RCGA
Royal Canadian Golf Association | Association Royale de Golf du Canada

2008 MEMBER

XXXXXXXXXX

Name:

Club:

RCGA Certified Handicap Factor®

Date	HCP Factor	Certified by	Title of Certifier

Amateur golfer in good standing. VALIDITY: This handicap factor is valid for 15 days only from the date of last revision. This card valid until March 31, 2009.

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SUPPORT THE RCGA

Development and maintenance of the RCGA Handicap System is only one of the many services of the Royal Canadian Golf Association (RCGA).

The RCGA also

- The RCGA oversees Canada's national junior golf development program CN Future Links in partnership with the Canadian PGA and provincial golf associations. CN Future Links offers multi-level instruction, clinics, camps and support materials to raise awareness of junior golf and address issues of accessibility and affordability.
- The RCGA conducts several amateur and professional championships across Canada.
- Has a comprehensive high performance player development program designed to identify players at a young age and provide world-class training and international competitive opportunities to assist them in attaining excellence in performance. The RCGA operates a men's and women's National Team program that provides Canada's top amateur players with coaching and sport science support on a year round basis.
- The RCGA conducts several initiatives dedicated to increasing the profile and participation amongst females in golf.
- Conducts the only PGA Tour and LPGA Tour events in Canada- the RBC Canadian Open and the CN Canadian Women's Open.
- Works with the international golf community to develop and oversee the rules of golf and amateur status, handicapping and course rating in Canada.
- Protects the environment by providing member clubs with information on the latest technologies and techniques of turf management, and funds the Canadian Turfgrass Research Foundation.
- Celebrates the rich history and traditions of golf by operating the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame and Museum and its associated archives in the Leonard E. Shore Building at Glen Abbey.
- Invests in the future of golf by helping Canadian youth complete their education through the RCGA Foundation and numerous other scholarships.

The RCGA performs these and other services for the good of the game.

For information on how you can support the RCGA call 1-800-263-0009 or visit us online at www.rcga.org

THE RCGA WEB SITE

For more information on the RCGA Handicap System and the RCGA, please visit our Web site at: www.rcga.org

Information on the following topics is available:

- The RCGA Foundation
- The RCGA Handicap System
- The RCGA Network
- The Rules of Golf and Amateur Status
- National Championships
- Canadian Golf Hall of Fame and Museum
- CN Future Links
- The Green Section
- Golf Industry Research
- Golf Canada Magazine
- Membership
- Player Development
- Provincial Golf Associations
- RCGA Press Releases

ADDITIONAL HANDICAP RESOURCES AVAILABLE

RCGA Network - Canada's national, centralized web-enabled handicap and communication network service for RCGA member clubs with internet access. Although calculating Handicap Factors and generating scoring records is an important function of the system, golfers, golf clubs, and golf associations have the ability to communicate through messaging, event scheduling, and database management tools.

RCGA Handicap System: All You Need To Know - This brochure summarizes all of the key information a player requires regarding the RCGA Handicap and Course Rating systems, including calculating an RCGA Handicap Factor, what scores to post, adjusting for ESC, allocating handicap strokes, understanding Slope, etc...

The Handicap Committee: Duties & Responsibilities - A handy brochure that outlines role, duties and responsibilities of the club Handicap Committee.

Handicap Poster: Before You Post - A poster that addresses the most commonly asked questions relating to the RCGA Handicap System in a fun, user-friendly manner.

Other RCGA Publications Available:

- Golf Participation in Canada Survey Report
- Canadian Golf Course Operations Survey
- Golf Canada Magazine
- Rules of Golf & Amateur Status
- Decisions on the Rules of Golf
- RCGA Easy Guide to the Etiquette and Rules of Golf
- RCGA Yearbook & Annual Report
- CN Future Links Student Guidebooks, and Instructor's Manual
- CN Future Links program resource materials

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