

Signed and attested

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A lot of you have been there before. You're upset and outraged at your play. The course was there for the taking. You should have gone low but the putts just weren't falling. You know you won't qualify so you want to get out of there, beat traffic home and forget all about this round. You throw your scorecard onto the scoring table and head for the highway. Later that night you check the SCGA web site for the final results only to find your name listed as a DQ. You forgot to sign your card! Believe, me this happens more times than you can imagine.

Most players don't realize the importance of taking the time after the round to sit down at the scoring area and return their score card properly. It only takes a few minutes and it can save you from getting that severe penalty for signing an incorrect score or failing to sign your card. Many SCGA tournament players don't properly utilize the scoring area. The Committee sets up chairs and a scoring table that often times aren't used as players throw their cards in without stopping to doublecheck the signature or scores.

Rule 6-6, *Scoring in Stroke Play*, describes the procedures and penalties involved with score cards. The rule states that after completing the round, the marker must sign the score card and hand it to the competitor. If more than one marker records the scores, each must sign for the part for which he or she is responsible. The competitor should check the score for each hole and settle any doubtful points with the Committee. He must ensure that the marker signed the score card, sign the card himself and return it to the Committee as soon as possible.

The Committee should design-

nate a scoring area where competitors can return their score cards, ideally an area that is protected from outside interference or potential distractions. Avoid noisy restaurants and high traffic areas. Usually a scoring tent or roped off area works best, but at most courses the scoring area is often on a patio, in the golf shop or simply in front of the scoreboard. These areas are sufficient; however the Committee should clarify the boundaries of the scoring area.

Why is that so important? Because Rule 6-6c states that no alterations may be made on a score card after the competitor has

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returned it to the Committee. The score card is considered returned once the competitor has left the scoring area. Alterations can still be made on the score card if the competitor has handed the score card to a scoring official but not yet left the scoring area. Alterations can't be made if a competitor has left the scoring area.

Here is the recommended procedure for competitors to follow once they have completed their round. The competitors should sit down at the scoring area and exchange cards. Each competitor should check his scores hole by hole. The competitor should make sure that both he and his marker have signed the score card. The competitor should wait until the scoring official has checked and added the score card. Once the official has checked and verified the card the player can hit the highway or the 19th hole. This procedure only takes a couple of minutes but it can save you from the errors that occur when competitors rush through the score card return process.

The following situations are some scoring area myths that I'd

like to clarify:

■ **The player is responsible for the addition of the card.** FALSE. The player is not responsible for the addition of the scores. However, the player is responsible for the correctness of the hole-by-hole scores. The Committee is responsible for the addition of the scores and the application of the handicap recorded on the score card. Therefore a player can return a total score that is incorrect as long as the individual hole by hole scores are correct. It is also okay for a competitor to return a score card without the totals. The Committee should add up the totals and verify the score with the competitor.

■ **If a competitor returns the wrong score for a hole he is disqualified.** The answer depends on whether the score actually taken was higher or lower than the score returned on the card.

If a player returns a score for any hole lower than actually taken, he is disqualified. If he returns a score for any hole higher than actually taken, the score as returned stands.

■ **In team competitions both partners must sign the score card?** FALSE. Only one of the partners needs to sign and return the scorecard.

■ **The competitor and marker are penalized for signing the score card in the wrong place.** FALSE. There is no penalty if a marker signs the competitor's score card in the space provided for the competitor's signature, and the competitor then signs in the space provided for the marker's signature.

■ **Signatures, not initials, must be used in signing a scorecard.** FALSE. Decision 6-6b/2 states that the competitor has met the requirements of signing a score card with initials rather than a signature.

Returning the score card correctly under the rules is the player's responsibility. Hopefully each competitor will take that extra couple minutes at the scoring area to ensure that his score card is correct and has been verified by the Committee.