

## SCGA Recommended Handicap Adjustment Procedures

The following is a recommendation on how to handle a player who may be manipulating his Handicap Index. We understand each club may elect to handle this situation in its own way, but this document can be used as a guide when addressing the issue of an adjustment. The handicap committee is responsible for maintaining equity throughout the club, and ensuring a member's Handicap Index is reflective of their playing potential. Each member's Handicap Index should be reviewed on a case by case basis. The SCGA will hold the club responsible for failing to carry out the handicap procedures and could be subject to discontinuing the issuance of SCGA/USGA Handicap Indexes. With this said, the following is a recommended order of tools available to your handicap committee when dealing with issues requiring action to be taken.

### 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.

You may use this tool prior to issuing an adjustment to a player's Handicap Index. A penalty score allows the handicap committee to have a tool at their disposal that is easy to use and is equitable to all members. Some handicap committees will first issue a penalty or multiple penalties if a player does not observe the spirit of the game. What do we mean by the spirit of the game? Not following the Rules of Golf, always trying to circumvent the system, or manipulating his Handicap Index to maintain an unfair advantage.

A penalty score can be issued through the handicap software programs. To issue a penalty score through GHINClub.net, enter the date you want to issue the penalty, enter ppp (or hhh for a high penalty) in the score column and enter p in the game type column. Through the GHP handicap software (located at the golf course facility) select add a score, enter the date of the penalty and select Penalty for game type. Choose either the Low Penalty or High Penalty button and click on Save. The penalty score will display in the player's scoring file and will be played out under normal methods.

***The committee cannot post a par round (i.e., 72) for a player due to the non-equity of such a penalty.***

## Modifying a Handicap Index

Modifying a player's Handicap Index may be the next step in the handicap adjustment progression. Modifying a player's Handicap Index occurs when the handicap committee has identified a player whose Handicap Index is NOT reflective of that player's potential. What do we mean by a player's scoring potential? This is when a player has demonstrated a certain playing level but at the current time the Handicap Index does not accurately reflect that ability. An index modification does not always equate to lowering a player's Handicap Index. You may find yourself modifying a player's Handicap Index upward because of a medical condition.

Possible reasons for modification:

- Improving faster than the system can react.
- Numerous away scores change Handicap Index.
- Temporary disability.
- Failure to post.
- Player manipulates round.

This list is not all inclusive and the committee has the ultimate authority to adjust a player's Handicap Index under any circumstances it feels necessary to do so.

**If you elect to modify a player's Handicap Index you must notify the player of the modification prior to the next revision period and give the player the ability, either in writing or in front of the committee, to explain his justification surrounding the proposed modification.**

When modifying a player's Handicap Index the committee has the ability to modify the Handicap Index to any number the committee deems appropriate. There is no formula at your disposal to identify the amount of the modification; each golfer will have to be evaluated on a case by case basis. The modification can be accomplished through the GHINClub.net or GHP handicap software programs. Once the player has been selected the committee will establish what the modified number is and enter the expiration date. The modified Handicap Index will be listed with a capital "M" serving as the designation for the official Handicap Index; i.e. 10.5M. The modified index should be compared to the index calculated under normal computation methods at each revision. Once the modification is lifted, the Handicap Index will be based on the normal 10-2 calculation (low 10 of the last 20 handicap differentials).

## Withdrawal of a Player's Handicap Index

The last and final tool a handicap chair can use is to take away a player's SCGA Handicap Index. This is used in extreme cases where all efforts have been exhausted. By issuing a withdrawal, the player will no longer have a Handicap Index to participate in events with. **If you elect to withdraw a player's Handicap Index you must notify the player of the action prior to the next revision period and give the player the ability, either in writing or in front of the committee, to explain his justification surrounding the proposed withdrawn index.**

The withdrawn index can be accomplished through the GHP handicap software program or through the SCGA. Once the player has been selected the committee will select Withdraw Index and enter the expiration date. The Handicap Index will be listed as capital "WD" serving as the designation for the official withdrawn Handicap Index. The Handicap Index file should continue to be evaluated at each revision. After the index has been withdrawn it can only be reinstated under conditions set forth by the handicap committee. Once the withdrawn status is lifted, the Handicap Index will be based on the normal 10-2 calculation (low 10 of the last 20 handicap differentials).

In summary, the committee must make certain that a player's Handicap Index be reflective of their playing potential. If nothing is done then the committee has failed in their responsibilities and will lose all creditability with the membership. The committee must be fair, firm, and not afraid to take the necessary action required. The handicap committee has a large responsibility to the club membership and equity rests on the committee's shoulders.

Make a difference!