Exceptional Tournament Play —
Evaluating a Player's Potential Ability

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Section 9-2b of the *USGA Handicap System* states, "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." With more than 5,000 SCGA members competing in an SCGA event each year, the competitions committee reviews the score files of any player who has an exceptional round during the qualifying or championship rounds.

The *USGA Handicap System* is designed to enable players of differing abilities to compete on an equitable basis. To that end, it is the responsibility of the SCGA, as the committee in charge of the competition, to make any Course Handicap adjustments for individuals who have excelled to the point where their Handicap Index is not reflecting their potential.

The USGA Handicap Research Team tells us a player is only expected to shoot to his or her Course Handicap once every four to five rounds, or about 25 percent of the time. This target score is determined by a net score equal to the Course Rating of the set of tees played.

To help us evaluate whether a player had an exceptional round or has played better than to his or her Course Handicap, we utilize the Exceptional Tournament Score Probability Table. The values in the table are the odds of shooting a net differential equal to or better than the number in the left column.

The net differential is the subtraction of a player's Handicap Index 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 Index.

As an example, a golfer with a Handicap Index of 16.3 shoots a 79 from a set of tees with a Course Rating of 71.3 and a Slope Rating of 127. The Handicap Differential is calculated at 6.9 (79-71.3) = 7.7 x 113 / 127). The net differential is now calculated at -9.4 (6.9-16.3). From the chart, the odds of this occurring are 3,577 to 1.

So when the golfer has played better than his or her Course Handicap, the SCGA committee will review the player's scoring record. This involves reviewing past tournament performances, the current scoring record and score file history. If the committee feels that an adjustment is necessary, it will determine the Course Handicap the golfer will play to and notify the individual as well as the handicap chair at the player's golf club. In exceptional cases, the committee may even modify a player's Course Handicap between rounds of a multi-round event.

The SCGA will never change the Handicap Index of a player. Only the handicap committee at the golf club where the player maintains a handicap has the authority to make an adjustment to the Handicap Index. In these cases, the modified Handicap Index would be identified with the letter M – i.e., 14.3M.

So whether you're competing in the Affiliate Team Championship, Amateur Net, Team Play or Four Ball Net, rest assured the SCGA is doing its best to level the playing field in its association events. I challenge each of our golf clubs to do the same and make those adjustments when it is appropriate. The committee in charge of the competition should work in conjunction with the handicap committee at the club to review a participant's performance. You will find it will lead to greater participation in your club events when you dare to make a difference!

Don't forget: If authorized by your club, you can now post your scores on the SCGA's new mobile site. See mobile.scga.org

NET DIFFERENTIALS	Handicap Index Range	0 - 5	6 - 12	13 - 21	22 - 30	Greater Than 30
	0	5:1	5:1	6:1	5:1	5:1
	-1	10:1	10:1	10:1	8:1	7:1
	-2	23:1	22:1	21:1	13:1	10:1
	-3	57:1	51:1	43:1	23:1	15:1
	-4	151:1	121:1	87:1	40:1	22:1
	-5	379:1	276:1	174:1	72:1	35:1
	-6	790:1	536:1	323:1	130:1	60:1
	-7	2,349:1	1,200:1	552:1	229:1	101:1
	-8	20,111:1	4,467:1	1,138:1	382:1	185:1
	-9	48,219:1	27,877:1	3,577:1	695:1	359:1
	-10	125,000:1	84,300:1	37,000:1	1,650:1	874:1