

HANDICAP COMPUTATIONS¹

Updated 1/1/2015

A. Competitive Equity:

1. The USGA system is designed to ensure competitive equity. The ideal would mean that if 100 amateurs, perfectly using this system, played 100 rounds, each player would “win” only one time.
2. However, to encourage players to continually improve their golf game, a “***Bonus for Excellence***” of 96% is used to factor downward the Index of all players. As a player's Index improves (gets lower), ***this Bonus for Excellence gives the player a slightly better chance of placing high or winning a handicap event.***
3. The Equitable Stroke Control adjustments that are required for posting scores help ensure that the scores of all players more accurately reflect their scoring potential (ability).

B. The scoring reality:

1. The Handicap ***Index measures scoring potential, not scoring likelihood.*** The reality is that ***players only meet or better their course handicap 20% to 25% of the time.***
2. “***Meeting a course handicap***” means making a score of a course handicap plus the course rating from a given set of tees. For example, ***a course rating of 69.4 plus a 15 course handicap would be a score of 69+15=84.***

D. Computing a Course Handicap:

1. A course handicap is computed by multiplying the Handicap Index by the course slope for a set of tees and then dividing by 113 (slope of standard course difficulty). For example, 12.5 Index X 124 Course Slope of Men's White Tees = 1550 divided by 113 = 13.7 rounded up to a 14 Course HCP.
2. Course HCP conversion tables are posted at all SCGA member golf facilities, usually near the posting terminal. The posting terminal can also be used to convert an Index to a Course HCP.

E. Computing a Handicap Index:

1. The Index is produced by averaging a number of the “lowest” handicap differentials and then multiplying that differential average by .96 (Bonus for Excellence).

Adjusted Gross Score – USGA Course Rating: $95 - 71.5 = 23.5$
Difference x Standard Slope Rating²: $23.5 \times 113 = 2655.5$
Result divided by Course Slope Rating: $2655.5 / 125 = 21.24$
Handicap Differential (rounded): 21.2

The lowest 1 to 10 differentials are averaged and then multiplied by .96. The result is truncated to the tenths decimal place to form the Handicap Index for the player.

F. Players in the same round competing from different tees:

1. The difference in the course ratings (e.g. 71.5 from Blue Tees and 69.4 from White Tees), rounded up, determines the number of additional strokes to give to the player that plays from the higher-rated tees (in this case, two additional strokes to the “Blue Tee player”).
2. The same procedure is used to allow for course tee ratings differences when men and women compete in the same round.

NOTE: QUESTIONS for changing scores, addresses, SCGA information, adjustments must be directed to the WVMC Handicap Chairperson and NOT the SCGA office.

G. Index Adjustments by the Handicap Chairman:

1. *A golfer, and specifically a member of a USGA-licensed association (e.g., SCGA), facility (e.g. Woods Valley Golf Club), or affiliate club has no inherent right to a specific handicap. The handicap must be earned in accordance with USGA/SCGA standards and procedures.*
2. The Handicap Chairman and/or Handicap Committee may decide that a member-player's Index or course handicap should be adjusted downward or upward.
3. The Handicap Chairman and/or Handicap committee has sole discretion to make adjustments and will do so only for the purpose of maintaining competitive equity.
4. Some examples of adjustments include:
 - Entering a score that was not posted in a reasonable time frame after an event. Due to the ease of access to posting terminals at golf courses, Woods Valley Men's Club members are expected to post scores immediately after an event, the same day as an event. Internet posting is available for same day posting in case posting can not be done on the course terminal.
 - Adjusting an Index or course handicap upward due to short-period physical impairment.
 - Entering "penalty rounds (PEN)" for repeated failure to post rounds and/or post in a timely fashion.
 - Entering "penalty rounds" for repeated failure to post accurately and post using ESC adjustments.

H. Tournament Rounds:

1. The SCGA computer system automatically adjusts a player's index in the case of multiple tournament rounds that are significantly below the player's index.
2. A round should NOT be posted as a Tournament Round (type-T) unless directed to do so BEFORE an event.
3. Tournament scores are typically higher for players due to competitive pressures. However, this will not occur if players don't know that the round they just played was a tournament round, thus potentially incorrectly impacting their index for up to 12 months.
4. The Woods Valley Golf Club (WVMC) will schedule several "Tournament" events each year. They will be announced in advance and will have a format designed to encourage a large number of participants.

1-All material contained in this document is taken verbatim or near-verbatim from the USGA Handicap System Manual (2008-20011) and the SCGA Handicap Certification course materials.