

WOWGG-September 2023 Rule of the Month



TO POST OR NOT TO POST: IS THAT A QUESTION?

The success of the math calculation in the World Handicap System™ is only as good as the data entered.

Short and Sweet: the vast majority of scores are acceptable — there aren't very many good excuses for not entering a score into your record.

The SCGA offers various tools for posting acceptable scores: at the course computer, using the GHIN mobile app on your smartphone, going to ghin.com, etc.

A key tenet of the World Handicap System is that it is believed that a golfer will try to make the best score at every hole in every round. Play 18 holes under the [The Rules of Golf](#) — absolutely an acceptable score. Actually, if you play at least 14 holes, you still have an acceptable 18-hole score. For the holes you haven't played, you post net par for the hole, (par plus any handicap strokes that you are entitled to—a player with a Course Handicap of 18 gets 1 stroke a hole, so that player would post bogey for each hole not played). If someone plays between seven and 13 holes, this results in an acceptable nine-hole score for handicap purposes. So far, so good.

Scores on All Courses

Both a Course Rating and Slope Rating are required for a score to be posted. What scenario would result in one or both not being available?

A course that is less than 3,000 yards for 18 holes or less than 1,500 yards for nine holes don't receive a Slope Rating. This is because it is extremely difficult to determine how a player overcomes distance when playing such a course and translating that capability to a longer course.

SCORES IN ALL FORMS OF COMPETITION

Scores in match play and stroke play must be posted for handicap purposes. You might ask how to address a stroke conceded in a match. We've discussed the concept of "most likely score" in previous editions of Handicap Hints. This same concept applies in a four-ball (often called best ball) when a player picks up on a hole because he or she is unable to better the score of the partner.

PREFERRED LIES

Scores made when playing preferred lies or winter rules result in acceptable score for handicap purposes.

BAD ROUND

Please don't think that a "bad" score should not be entered, as such a score might knock another score out of your scoring record and impact the calculation of the Handicap Index. The most current data is the best data. Plus, if your round was derailed by one or two "blow-up" holes, you likely won't be posting without adjusting your score according to your Maximum Hole Score/Net Double Bogey (Double Bogey plus any handicap strokes that you are entitled to - a player with a Course Handicap of 18 gets 1 stroke a hole, so that player would have a maximum hole score for handicap purposes of triple bogey on any hole.

CALCULATING NET DOUBLE BOGEY

$$\text{Par of the hole} + 2 \text{ strokes} + \text{Any handicap stroke(s) that the player receives on that hole}^*$$

There are only a few situations when a score is unacceptable for handicap purposes:

- When score can't be verified by another person
- While being coached on the course
- When a player uses non-conforming clubs, non-conforming balls, or non-conforming tees;
- Not playing the required number of holes
- While not playing your own ball — think scramble or shamble or foursomes (alternate shot.)

Didn't play a full 18? Kicked the round off with a breakfast ball? Here are some interesting situations that might come up next time you're on the course and how you should handle them for score posting purposes:

I live near a golf course which allows me squeeze in some holes after work. If I play by myself, can I post? What if my buddy joins me? What if I only play 6 holes?

Do not post if you play alone. Since 2016, the USGA Handicap System determined that solo rounds are unacceptable for posting. If you are joined by another player or caddie, post a 9-hole round using net par (par + handicap stroke(s)) for the last two holes if you play 7 holes. You must play seven holes to post a 9-hole score. Where the minimum number of holes has been completed and the reason for a player not playing a hole is valid, the player must use the following table to produce either a 9-hole or 18-hole score:

Number of holes played	Scaling up	What score(s) to record for holes not played
At least 7 holes	Scale up to 9-hole score	Add <i>net par</i> (or equivalent Stableford points).
At least 14 holes	Scale up to 18-hole score	Add <i>net par</i> (or equivalent Stableford points).

On Saturdays, I have a standing tee time and match with my neighbor. On hot days, we often bail before we finish all 18 holes. Should we post since we give more putts than we make? How many holes do we have to play to post an 18-hole score before we go in for a beer and a brat?

Scores made during match play are acceptable rounds for posting if 14 holes are played. Players should use their best judgment to determine their “most likely” score when a stroke or a putt is conceded and there is a guideline indicating that any putt less than five feet that is conceded is considered holed.

On weekends, we have a standing agreement that on the 1st hole, we can use a mulligan for our tee shot. Do we add 1 stroke or how do we score the first hole if we use a mulligan?

Mulligans are not allowed under the Rules of Golf. Record net par for your score for the first hole.

What if I have a really bad day and make an 8 on a par three and a 10 on a par 4? My Course Handicap is 15? My neighbor’s Course Handicap is 22.

Use your maximum hole score/net double bogey to adjust your bad holes. As a 15 Course Handicap, your maximum hole score is triple bogey on the holes where you receive a handicap stroke (those designated in the Hdcp or SI column on the card with numbers between 1 and 15). Your neighbor’s maximum score is quadruple bogey

(double bogey plus 2) on the holes denoted 1-4 (22-18 =4 holes where you receive 2 handicap strokes) in the Hdcp or SI column on the card and triple bogey (double bogey plus 1) on all other holes where only receiving one handicap stroke. This mandatory procedure reduces high scores for handicap purposes to make your handicap more reflective of your playing ability.

What if we skip a couple of holes during our round because of slow play?

Post net par for the holes that you skipped. if you play at least 14 holes, post an 18-hole score.

What if I borrow my friend's new driver during our round and decide to play the ball I striped down the middle of the fairway for just one hole?

Your round is acceptable for posting but use net par for your hole score.

What if it is a rainy day and our club has adopted "preferred lies" where we are allowed bump the ball (lift, clean and place)?

Rounds posted when the club has adopted the use of 'preferred lies' due to wet conditions are acceptable for posting and are to be posted.