

ESTABLISHING a HANDICAP

WHY, WHAT and WHEN do I NEED a Handicap and HOW do I get a HANDICAP

CWGI Members do not require a HANDICAP unless they choose to

A HANDICAP is required for those who play COMPETITIVE GOLF

WHY is there a HANDICAP SYSTEM

The Handicap System makes the game of golf more enjoyable by enabling golfers of differing abilities to **compete** on an equitable basis. The Handicap System gives you the opportunity to **compete** fairly with any golfer on any course.

The actual figure that you establish is a Handicap Index and having this Index is essential if you are playing in various golf competitions. Many members of private clubs establish a Handicap Index because they compete regularly. The handicap system attempts to level the playing field for golfers of differing abilities, so that those golfers can compete equally. It also allows a golfer to play at courses that require one and helps a golfer to monitor improvements in her score. When you play at a course your Handicap Index is used to determine your Handicap for your game at this course. The highest handicap for a female is 40, which is a score of about 112 (par plus 40).

As an example, imagine someone whose average score is 102 trying to compete against someone whose average score is 92. Without a handicapping system, it cannot be done fairly. With a handicapping system, the weaker player is given strokes on certain holes on a golf course. That is, on a hole the weaker player may be allowed to "take a stroke" - deduct a stroke - from her score for that hole. At the end of the round, the two players of differing abilities can figure their "net score" - their gross scores minus the strokes they were allowed to take on certain holes.

WHAT is a HANDICAP

A player actually establishes a Handicap Index which is calculated mathematically using data associated with the golf course(s) played and data associated with the golfer. When they play at golf courses they declare their Index from which a Course Handicap is determined. When you play with a handicap and compete with other such members you **PLAY BY OFFICIAL RULES** and there is no grey area – adhering to the rules is compulsory in order to have fairness for all players.

DATA associated with the GOLF COURSE

The **COURSE RATING** is a number close to the par of the course and is expressed with a single decimal digit. Eg: Par for a course is 72 the Rating might be 71.4. Ratings go up with the difficulty of the course. There are multiple Ratings for each course depending on the gender of the golfer and the tees from which they play.

The **COURSE SLOPE** is a measure of its difficulty for bogey **golfers**. The term comes from the fact that when playing on more difficult **courses**, players' scores will rise more quickly than their handicaps would predict. The **SLOPE** is a measure of how much difference a course's difficulty is for the average bogey golfer compared to the scratch golfer. This number ranges from 55(easy course) to 155(very difficult) with the **STANDARD SLOPE RATING being 113**. Once again there are multiple Slopes for each course depending on the gender of the golfer and the tees from which they play.

DATA associated with the GOLFER

HANDICAP INDEX: A measurement of a player's potential ability on a course of standard playing difficulty. It is expressed as a number taken to one decimal (e.g., 16.8) and is used for conversion to a Course Handicap. A Handicap Index goes with you from course to course to determine a golfer's Course Handicap. To determine your Handicap Index you need minimum last five scores and the above Golf Course Information – Rating and Slope. There are a number of sites on which you can have the Index Calculated.

COURSE HANDICAP: The number of handicap strokes a player receives from a specific set of tees at a course. This represents the number of strokes needed to play to the level of a scratch golfer(0 Handicap). A Course Handicap is a whole number and is determined by applying the golfer's Handicap Index to the slope of the tees being played. There is usually a Table at the Golf Course and with you Handicap Index and knowing the tees from which you are playing you can see your Course Handicap from this table. With this information you can determine your Net Score at that course but must apply the following **Equitable Stroke Control Chart**.

Course Handicap	Maximum Score
0-9	Double Bogey
10-19	7
20-29	8
30-39	9
40+	10

WHEN is a HANDICAP INDEX NECESSARY

There are many competitions that require an official Handicap Index. These are held at golf clubs in the area and usually are attended by individuals that are members at one club and have used the Course system on a regular basis to enter their scores and have their Index calculated. Some exclusive courses (not in our area) require a Handicap to ensure the skill level of the golfer. Before you enter a Tournament, you may want to check to see if they require an official Handicap Index.

HOW do I GET A HANDICAP INDEX

As a member of many private golf courses you have access to a computer system into which you enter all of your scores from your golf games. Having all necessary data, the system then calculates your Handicap Index.

As a golfer that plays a variety of courses you can access. How do we as members establish an official Handicap Index. There are two ways

Those of you who would like to pursue this could do so as an individual and sign up on line at either Golf Canada or Golf Ontario – approx \$30.00 per year

There is a method whereby a Group of Golfers (group being 15 or more) can apply. The cost for this is about the same per member.

HOW COMPETITIVE DO YOU WANT TO BE?

This is probably the most important question you want to ask yourselves. With competitive golf come strict and specific rules to which you must comply. Just knowing and understanding the rules is in itself quite an undertaking. This is essential if you want to compete in tournaments of this nature. Establishing an official Golf Canada Handicap Index is required to participate in these. If a tournament was held with members from clubs this would be essential.

It is possible to be competitive with other CWGI Members by just playing by the same rules and keeping your gross score. Strict competition is not the general culture of CWGI – although certainly not discouraged – but it should be recognized that you must all play by the same rules should you participate in such a game.