

## Excerpts from *THE USGA HANDICAP SYSTEM Reference Guide* Competing from Different Tees

A Course Handicap is determined by using a Course Handicap Table at the golf course where the round is to be played. In addition, a Course Handicap can be calculated by taking the Handicap Index, multiplied by the Slope Rating of the tees to be played, and divided by the standard Slope Rating of 113 with the answer rounded to the nearest whole number (.4 rounds down and .5 rounds up).

Example:  $10.4$  (Handicap Index)  $\times$   $125$  (Slope Rating)  $\div$   $113$  (Standard Slope Rating) =  $11.5$  =  $12$  (Course Handicap rounded)

See Sections 3-3 and 10-4 of “The USGA Handicap System” as an additional reference.

### **To Give or to Receive Strokes?**

The number of strokes a player gives or receives depends on the type of format played, whether it’s a match against one other player or play against three other players, or a stroke-play event. Each is different.

Check the scorecard to see where strokes are given or received. Each hole is assigned a handicap stroke allocation number. The hole allocated as handicap-stroke hole number (1) is the hole where a player is most likely to need a stroke; the hole allocated as handicap-stroke hole (18) is the hole where a player is least likely to need a stroke.

### **Competing from Different Tees**

The key to understanding the adjustment according to Section 3-5 and 9-3c of “The USGA Handicap System” is to understand the definitions of Handicap Index and Course Handicap.

A Handicap Index is based on a standard calculation for everyone who has one. Two players with the same Handicap

Index are of equal ability as one does not establish a Handicap Index from a specific set of tees. Next, the player converts a Handicap Index to a Course Handicap based solely on the Slope Rating of the tees to be played. Course Handicap adjusts a player to a whole number of strokes needed to play to that tee's USGA Course Rating. When a difference in USGA Course Rating exists among players, an adjustment must be made in order for the competition to be equitable.

### Section 3-5 Promoting Equitable Competition

#### Step 1: Calculate Course Handicap

Gary, Gold Tees	vs.	Bob, Blue Tees
10.4	Handicap Index	10.4
<u>x 130</u>	<u>x Slope Rating</u>	<u>x 140</u>
	113	
= 12	<b>Course Handicap</b>	= 13
<u>+71.1</u>	<u>+ USGA Course Rating</u>	<u>+73.2</u>
83	← = Target Score* →	86

\*Target Score is the score a player will strive for in order to play to that player's Course Handicap.

#### Step 2: Apply any handicap allowance per Section 9-4 (if applicable)

**Step 3: Add USGA Course Rating difference to higher-rated tee player(s)**

71.1	USGA Course Rating	73.2
		<u>-71.1</u>
	Rounds to 2	2.1
83	Gross Score	86
<u>-12</u>	Course Handicap	<u>-15</u>
	(13+2 (diff. in rating))	
<b>= 71</b>	<b>= Net Score</b>	<b>= 71</b>

**or Step 3: Subtract USGA Course Rating difference from lower-rated tee player(s) (Decision 3-5/1)**

83	Gross Score	86
<u>-10</u>	-Course Handicap	<u>-13</u>
	(12-2 (diff. in rating))	
<b>= 73</b>	<b>= Net Score</b>	<b>= 73</b>

Each player is now playing to the same Net Score.

Remember, Course Handicap only adjusts to that particular tee's USGA Course Rating rather than a standard USGA Course Rating. USGA Course Rating is not in the formula of Course Handicap, (Handicap Index (X) Slope Rating of tees played (÷) by 113 (standard Slope Rating) and rounded to nearest whole number).

Note: A Handicap Index is not established or developed from a particular set of tees (Section 10).

## EQUITABLE STROKE CONTROL — 18-HOLE

18-Hole Course Handicap	Maximum ESC Number on any Hole
9 or less	Double Bogey
10 through 19	7
20 through 29	8
30 through 39	9
40 or more	10

### Acceptable Scores for Handicap Purposes

The following are acceptable scores and must be posted for handicap posting purposes:

- Post scores from home or away golf courses
- Post scores when at least seven holes are played in accordance with the Rules of Golf (7-12 holes are posted as a 9-hole score; 13 or more are posted as an 18-hole score)
- Post scores made in an area observing an active season
- Post scores on all courses with a valid USGA Course Rating and Slope Rating
- Post scores when playing two nines, even if it is the same nine, or nines from different days. Simply combine the nines into an 18-hole score. Add each nine-hole USGA Course Rating and average the Slope Ratings of the two nines
- Post scores in all forms of competition: match play, stroke play, and team competitions where players play their own ball
- Post scores played under the Local Rule of “preferred lies”