

Handicap System Alert

Re: Posting of scores in groups that “don’t play by the rules”

It has become apparent that there are a number of members that are playing in groups that have implemented local rules that conflict with the rules of golf. Some examples of these local rules changes are:

- allow a drop for OB instead of stroke and distance penalty
- mulligans
- use of drop areas not specified or allowed in local rules

All rounds played where local rules may conflict with the official rules of golf or the principles of golf must be posted and are acceptable scores. The player must determine on a hole by hole basis if in fact he violated the rules of golf – and in the case where in the play of the hole he did break a rule --- the score posted for the hole should be net par. The USGA defines this situation the same as if the hole had not been played at all!

Section 4-2 of the handicap manual:

4-2. Holes Not Played or Not Played Under The Rules of Golf

If a player does not play a hole or plays it other than under "The Rules of Golf" (except for *preferred lies*), the score recorded for that hole for handicap purposes must be *par* plus any handicap strokes the player is entitled to receive on that hole. This hole score, when recorded, should be preceded by an "X."

Example: A player with a *Course Handicap* of 10 receives a handicap stroke on the first 10 allocated *handicap-stroke holes*. If the player does not play the sixth allocated *handicap-stroke hole*, which is a *par* 4, because of construction on the green, the player must record a score of *par* plus one for handicap purposes, or X-5.

Conceding putts is another area of confusion. In this situation the player has officially not completed the hole and must post a “most likely” score from the point where he stopped play on the hole. This is normally easy, as most conceded putts are done on an assumption of “you can make it!”. “Most likely” is defined by the USGA as the score the player will attain over 50 percent of the time. This can enter into match play when holes and strokes are conceded.

Lastly – most leagues here at FFG play some sort of “preferred lies” and the local rules spell out how the ball must be played. Scores made under preferred lies however defined by the local rules are acceptable scores and must be posted!

In summary—a tried and true adage in scores posting is that any time you are allowed by format to play your own ball you must post a score for that round.

Should you have any questions on any situations regarding the handicap system please contact a member of the handicap committee or a member of the professional staff here are our pro shops.

Fairfield Glade Golf Clubs
Handicap Committee

We hope these alerts will help alleviate confusion in the player community and continue to strengthen the credibility and accuracy of our handicap system and player handicaps here at FFG.