

Memo

To: Clubs & State Associations
c.c.: GA Board, GA Handicap Committee, GOLF *Link*, Tier 3 Providers
From: Simon Magdulski
Date: 26 August 2010
Subject: Procedures for:

- Handicapping of Incomplete Rounds
- Dealing with Regular NCR Offenders

Dear All,

This memo provides working guidelines for the use of club administrators in the following areas:

- The proper procedure for processing ANY incomplete round.
- Dealing with players who REGULARLY fail to return score cards.
- Option for Competition Committees in Dealing with the competition results (past & future) of players to have REGULARLY failed to return score cards.

Processing Incomplete Rounds for Handicapping Purposes

Feedback from clubs indicates there is widespread misunderstanding amongst club administrators of the correct procedures for processing incomplete rounds. GA has put together the attached reference document titled "*Common Handicapping Scenarios – Procedures for Pro Shops & Handicap Committees*" to assist clubs in making the correct determinations. (This reference document is also posted on the following page of the GA website – <http://admin.golfaustralia.org.au/site/content/document/00008015-source.pdf>)

Every handicap administrator (including Handicap Committee members) should at least familiarise themselves with the procedures for handling the following KEY Scenarios:

- Scenario 1 (there is no change here however it appears this has been widely misunderstood in the past; for example in the proper treatment of withdrawals due to poor weather).
- Scenario 2 (the procedure has been revised).
- Scenario 7 (the procedure has been revised).

Guidelines for Handicap Committees in Dealing with Players Who Regularly Fail to Return Scores

The new handicap system has led Clubs, States, and Golf Australia to identify the problem of players failing to return score cards as being far more widespread than had previously been realised. For a long time this has been causing a distortion of handicaps, however this distortion is more evident now.

Moving forward, the following points should be noted:

- There will NOT be a GOLF *Link* regulation that will automatically withdraw the handicaps of players if they exceed a certain number of NCRs.
- GA strongly encourages clubs to familiarise themselves with the attached reference document titled "*Common Handicapping Scenarios – Procedures for Pro Shops & Handicap Committees*". Otherwise, 'innocent' players are likely to be either targeted or have their handicaps unnecessarily distorted. (Some clubs may choose to distribute to their members either the complete table, or those Scenarios considered by the club to be of particular significance.)
- When next a club newsletter/communication is being distributed to members, we recommend the following (or something similar) be included:

"Members are reminded that one of their fundamental obligations is to return all eligible score cards to the [pro shop / golf shop / club Handicap Committee /

other]. Golf Australia has advised that players who fail to meet this requirement are effectively operating outside of the Australian Men's & Women's Handicap System. We ask that you assist the club by returning your score cards (including for incomplete rounds). Please ask the [pro shop / golf shop / club Handicap Committee / other] if you are unsure of what cards need to be returned."

- If (after providing this advice to members) a Handicap Committee identifies a player who:
 - is continuing not to return cards, AND;
 - has failed to return more than 5 (or 3 at the discretion of the Handicap Committee) of their most recent 20 scores,

the player should be provided the following additional advice:

"One of the fundamental obligations of each player is to return all eligible score cards. Golf Australia has advised that players who fail to meet this requirement are effectively operating outside of the Australian Men's & Women's Handicap System. We note from your recent handicap record that it indicates there have been more non-returned score cards than is reasonable. If this trend continues, GA has recommended to us that we strongly consider whether or not your handicap should be considered to remain valid.

GA has put this policy together with a view to achieving more accurate handicaps for all players. GA also believes that all players should meet the same obligations."

- If the trend DOES continue with a player who has been individually warned, it is recommended that the club Handicap Committee withdraw the player's handicap until the missing scores have been provided (note: these scores can be added into GOLF *Link* by the club at any time). Before withdrawing the handicap of a player, Handicap Committees should consider any unusual circumstances (and should seek comment from the player with a view to identifying any mitigating issues). GA and State Associations will provide written and verbal support to clubs who follow these guidelines.

Option for Competition Committees in Dealing with the Competition Results (PAST & Future) of Players to have REGULARLY Failed to Return Score Cards

- A committee in charge of **ANY** competition has full authority to consider **ANY** player (including visitors) to NOT have a valid handicap if they have regularly failed to return scores (ie more than 5 (or 3 at the discretion of the committee in charge of competition) of their most recent 20).
- This would not automatically mean the player's Australian Handicap has been withdrawn, it would simply mean the player has become ineligible to win a prize in a specific competition (even if GOLF *Link* indicated prior to the round that their handicap was valid). It should be remembered that the player has sole responsibility for putting themselves in such a position. (Note: The previous section covers the process of actually withdrawing a player's handicap.)
- There is no time limit on amending the results of such competitions or for retracting any prizes won. There is no requirement to provide any warning to a player before taking such action.
- This authority is provided in accordance with the Australian Men's & Women's Handicap System and the Rules of Golf.

Note: GA and GOLF *Link* are investigating ways in which clubs can be provided with reports detailing those players who are repeat NCR offenders.

Please contact me if you have any queries in relation to the above or if you would like any further details.

Kind regards,

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