

# Handicapping Policy

The purpose of the USGA Handicap System is to make the game of golf more enjoyable by enabling golfers of differing abilities to compete on an equitable basis. The System provides a fair Course Handicap for each player regardless of ability, and adjusts a player's USGA Handicap Index up or down as the player's game changes. At the same time, the System disregards high scores that bear little relation to the player's potential ability and promotes continuity by making a Handicap Index continuous from one playing season or year to the next. A USGA Handicap Index is useful for all forms of play, and is issued only to individuals who are members of a golf club.

Two basic premises underlie the USGA Handicap System, namely that each player will try to make the best score at every hole in every round, regardless of where the round is played, and that the player will post every acceptable round for peer review. The player and the player's Handicap Committee have joint responsibility for adhering to these premises." (Section 1-1. USGA Handicap System Manual. 2008-2011)

The following Handicapping and Score Posting Procedures are in effect beginning 2009 at Federated Lake Oswego Golfers (F.L.O.G.) for all members desiring to have an OGA/USGA Handicap Index. These procedures must be adhered to as part of "Requirements for Compliance" with USGA handicapping rules, and for Federated Lake Oswego Golfers (F.L.O.G.) to retain certified and licensed membership status in the Oregon Golf Association.

Our club firmly believes that **"A player must earn a USGA Handicap Index. No player has an inherent right to a USGA Handicap Index without providing full evidence of ability to the golf club's Handicap Committee."** (Section 8-4. USGA Handicap System Manual)

1. **A Handicap Committee of (number of individuals from men's and/or women's groups at the club) has been appointed to ensure that the full intent of the USGA Handicap System is followed.** (Section 8) Our club meets the USGA "Definition of a Golf Club", Les Modell (Handicap Chair) has been officially certified by the OGA through their Handicap Certification Program, and our club has been licensed by the USGA to issue Handicap Indexes. (Section 2, Section 8 Club Compliance Checklist).
2. **All rounds are to be played in accordance with the principles of the Rules of Golf.** Although Preferred Lies ("Winter Rules") are not endorsed by the USGA nor the OGA, a written policy has been adopted by this club accepting scores turned in under Preferred Lies and will be posted for clarification when the weather conditions are adverse enough to warrant such a declaration. **All rounds played under Preferred Lies still must be posted in active season.** (Section 5 ,7). The Handicap Committee has the authority to make the determination if course conditions are so poor that score posting should be suspended for a brief period. If score posting is suspended for an extended period, the golf club must obtain approval from the OGA.

3. **Member's scores are to be posted by the player on F.L.O.G.'s GHIN terminal, at an "away" course's GHIN terminal, or by way of the internet using GHIN.COM** Please note the Handicap Revision Schedule for the sixteen times per year that updated Handicap Indexes are issued for all clubs in the OGA region. Since the OGA is a seasonal association, there is an active handicapping period and an "off-season" in which local scores are not to be posted to your score history. Please take note of these dates. Handicap cards/stickers may be printed after revision days at the Lake Oswego Golf Course FLOG terminal. If you'd rather receive your updated Handicap Index via email, please let the Handicap Chair know, or sign up directly at [www.oga.org](http://www.oga.org).
  
4. **All eligible scores must be posted to your score history**, including all 9-hole rounds! See OGA score posting flyers for detailed clarification. Home scores are to be posted within 7 (seven) days of the round, and away scores within 21 (twenty-one) days (or you may simply post as a guest at the away courses). If the player fails to post an acceptable score within these guidelines the Committee will post the actual score (if we know what that is) or a **penalty score**. **Each golfer is responsible for adjusting their own scores for Equitable Stroke Control and for knowing how to adjust scores for not finishing either a hole or a round**; if you are confused about the proper adjustments, please consult the bulletin board or ask a Committee member. (see "Score Posting Responsibilities"). If you are traveling during the OGA off season to Sunbelt states, those rounds **MUST** be posted to your scoring history. Post when and where you play, if at all possible. It is imperative that you get your rounds in prior to the season start date, as the OGA updates Handicap Indexes on opening day as a courtesy to Sunbelt travelers. If you find you have made a mistake in posting at any time during the year, please enter it on the "Posting Errors" clipboard and the Handicap Committee will make the correction to your score history as soon as possible.  
(Section 4, 5, 8).
  
5. **Peer review is an essential part of the USGA Handicap System and will be in place at all times at this club!** Members' scores may freely be viewed by any other member at any time on the F.L.O.G. terminal at the L.O.G.C., or on the internet at <http://www.ghin.com>. The responsibility rests on all of us to keep each other honest! Please point out to your fellow players when they are not observing either the Rules of Golf or the Handicap System. If the player refuses to abide by the proper procedures, do not hesitate to contact the Handicap Committee. We are determined to keep our games fair and can only do so if everyone follows the same code.
  
6. **The Handicap Committee has the responsibility for making certain that a player has a USGA Handicap Index reflecting their potential ability.** Under the following circumstances, it will be necessary for the Handicap Committee to adjust the player's Handicap Index. However, the following list is not all-inclusive, and a **Handicap Committee has the ultimate authority to adjust a Handicap Index under any circumstance that it feels necessary to do so.**
  - a. Improving Faster Than the System Can React.
  - b. Numerous Away or Internet Scores Change Index.
  - c. Temporary Disability.
  - d. Failure to Post.

- e. Player Manipulates Round: posting erroneous scores, stopping play after 6 holes to avoid posting scores, repeatedly playing more than one ball to avoid posting scores, not adjusting hole scores under Section 4, deliberately reporting more or fewer strokes than actually scored, or deliberately taking extra strokes to inflate a score.
- f. Continued violations of Section 5-1f ("Unacceptable Scores").

If it is necessary to attach a **penalty score**, it will be denoted as a "P" score on a members' score history and the member will not be notified. If a **modification** (adjustment) is due, a letter will be sent to the member describing the infraction and what the adjustment to his Handicap Index will be. The member will be invited to respond to the Committee prior to the official adjustment. If a member persists to violate score posting procedures and thereby does not observe the spirit of the USGA Handicap System, the Handicap Committee is authorized and encouraged to consider withdrawal of the player's Handicap Index. *(Section 8)*

- 7. **A Tournament Committee has been appointed to administer club events.** (A committee may decide to attach a separate addendum dealing with issues of competition pertinent to the club. See Section 9 "Handicap Competitions" of the USGA Handicap System Manual for items to include.) Certain events listed on the club calendar shall be denoted as "tournaments" (check the calendar for which events will have this designation) and these rounds will be posted as a score type "T" to members' score histories by the Committee, not by the individual golfer. Tournament performance will be reviewed by the Handicap Committee, and if a golfer has had their Handicap Index reduced for exceptional tournament play the Committee may further reduce or override the reduction after careful evaluation (the player has a right to appeal to the committee if they wish), or continue to allow the reduction to run its normal course. Only the club's Handicap Committee can make an override decision; not the OGA or the USGA. *(Section 8-4 and 10-3)*
- 8. **For new members, the Handicap Committee will make every effort to obtain any previous scoring records** available, with corresponding USGA Course and Slope Ratings (through the player's previous golf club, authorized golf association, or computation service, or by communicating directly with the player) so that a continuous history can be maintained. If such a scoring history is unavailable, the new member must return at least five scores to establish a USGA Handicap Index at the next revision period. *(Section 8)*

If there are any questions regarding these procedures, please contact Les Modell (Handicap Chair) for clarification and assistance. Please check the handicap bulletin board for pertinent information from our club, USGA and the OGA throughout the year.

**We ask that you assist us in providing equitable and accurate handicaps at our club by complying with all of these policies. Your role is essential in helping to make the game of golf at F.L.O.G, the Federated Lake Oswego Golfers, both fair and enjoyable.**

*Thank You !*