

Date: November 18, 2012

To: Penn National Handicap System Members

From: Penn National Handicap Committee

Our topic today concerns some “local rules” and our intention is simply to provide information to the members of the Penn National Handicap System.

Has your team ever been involved in a match of scorecards or lost by a single stroke? Most of us have been involved in these situations. This is very important to remember when maintaining your handicap. One stroke or one handicap hole can be the difference between 1st place and 4th place. Do you want to lose (or win) because a handicap is off by only one stroke?

That’s why it is so imperative that everyone follow the same rules and guidelines when recording their scores.

One specific situation that we have at Penn National concerns rules put into place by some of our organizations that do not adhere to the USGA rulebook. For example: the “leaf rule”, the “divot rule”, or playing the tall grass on Iron Forge as a lateral hazard are not valid under the USGA Rules of Golf. These rules do serve a purpose, are well-intended and in the spirit of fair play for the organizations that adopted the rules. But, if you invoke one of these rules on a particular hole, you are not playing the hole under the USGA Rules of Golf. Another example, if you use a mulligan on a hole, you did not play that hole under the Rules of Golf. What is the appropriate thing to do in these situations?

You can continue to play using these rules. But, the PN Handicap Committee is asking everyone to use the following guidelines anytime that you play a hole that does not follow the USGA rules of golf:

1. For your competition (tournament, event, play-of-the-day, etc), record the score that you received on the hole playing under the organization’s local rule just like you have been doing.
2. For your recorded score in the handicap system, the USGA requires us to record a par plus any handicap strokes you would have received on that hole. This is referred to as a “net par”. For example, on a par 4 where you get 2 strokes, it would require you to record a 6 for that hole when you post your score in the handicap system.

We are recommending that you note the hole on the scorecard by using an “X”. For example, if your score for the hole is a 5, but you did not follow the USGA rules of golf on that hole, record it on the scorecard as an X-5. At the end of the round and before recording your round into the handicap system, adjust the scores for the holes with an “X” by using net par (par plus your handicap strokes for that hole). This is very similar to how each of us is responsible for modifying any scores for holes that are higher than our Equitable Stroke Control (ESC) limit. ESC will be covered in detail in a future communication.

For the reasons described above, every round that each of us plays actually results in two scores. The first score is the score we normally think of, found by adding the numbers on the scorecard. The second score is our adjusted handicap score that gets recorded in our handicap system. This involves each of us checking our scorecards for holes that exceed our Equitable Stroke Control (ESC) or holes not played using the USGA Rules of Golf. For ESC, we only post the maximum that we can take on a given hole. For not following the rules of golf on a hole, we record a net par. This gives us the proper handicap score to be recorded into our system. Usually these two scores will be exactly the same. They will be different only if you need to invoke the Equitable Stroke Control limit on a hole or if you do not play a particular hole using the principles of the Rules of Golf, as described above.

If you have questions, you may contact any member of the Handicap Committee or send a response to this e-mail.

Penn National Handicap Committee:

Gene Gellman, Chairman

Fran Kasher

Dave Loveland

Ken Motter

Steve Willette

Dave Beegle, PGA Professional