



## Guidance Notes

# Hole Not played, Penalty Scores, Abandoned Competitions, FAQs

### Hole Not Played

A 'Hole Not Played' is only to be used in an unavoidable circumstance. It is not a 'choice' available for the player - a player may not just 'decide to walk in'. Circumstances where a 'Hole Not Played' may be justifiably used would be:

1. Hole(s) is closed by the Committee due to:
  - a. work on the hole(s),
  - b. hours of available light.
2. A player may have to discontinue play due to:
  - a. becoming ill, or injured,
  - b. being called off the course for an emergency.

In such circumstances, or similar, it is acceptable for a player to submit a "not started" for those holes still to be played (or missed out).

The returned scorecard should be processed using the actual scores achieved on the holes completed, but designating those not played as "not started". This process will correctly allocate the required score for handicapping. If the scorecard is not immediately available see below regarding the non-submission of scores.



## Penalty Scores

Penalty scores are applicable for two reasons:

1. A player has indicated their intention to return a score (by registering intent to submit a Competition or General Play score) and then commencing play; but then does not submit that score by whatever means the club prescribes.
2. A score is returned after commencing a round where:
  - a. No hole scores are entered, or the score is incomplete.
  - b. A player persistently fails to return an appropriate score.
  - c. Handicap manipulation is suspected.

The Committee then needs to determine whether the reason for the non-submission or incomplete round is valid – examples might be, but are not restricted to:

- i. Illness or injury to the player
- ii. Insufficient light
- iii. Emergency
- iv. Dangerous Weather Conditions (e.g. thunder & lightning), but see later section on Abandoned Competitions.

In valid reasons might be – as examples, but not restricted to:

- i. Inclement weather
- ii. Play too slow
- iii. Not playing well enough

Regardless of the validity of the situation, whenever a player indicates that they will return a score and commences play, a score must be submitted; regardless of whether the minimum number of holes have been commenced and completed (10 holes for an 18 hole round, or all 9 holes for a 9-hole round): i.e. all score



intents must be satisfied. In all situations given below, it is assumed that an 18 hole round is being considered.

Whenever a score is not submitted, or is incomplete, the Committee must make every effort to determine the score that the player had made by contacting the player, contacting the player's partners, reviewing the marker's score, etc., so that the validity of the "non-return" or incomplete round may be determined. Net double bogey is only applied for handicap purposes if the hole is started but not completed; or if the hole is scored as a zero in a Stableford format.

#### Valid Reason for Non-Submissions or Incomplete Card

If the score for the player can be determined, then this score should be submitted.

If the score cannot be determined, a "penalty score" must still be posted where the Gross Score is equal to the Course Rating + Course Handicap. However, the score should not be designated as a Penalty Score on entry.

#### Invalid Reason for Non-Submission or Incomplete Card

The following process is recommended:

- **For a first offence:** a warning to the player is appropriate indicating that this is not acceptable, and that future incidents will result in the posting of a Penalty Score. If the score is identifiable, it should be submitted; otherwise a Penalty Score as described below may be entered.
- **For a second offence:** the player should be contacted, and the reason identified. If the score can be identified, it should be entered. The Committee should then consider the application of a Penalty Score, which could be in addition to the 'real' score (see below as to what should be posted). If the score is not available, a Penalty Score must be added according to the table below.
- **For subsequent and persistent offenders:** in addition to the actions identified above under 'second offence', the Committee is recommended to consider disciplinary measures which could include (but are not restricted to) the withdrawal and/or adjustment of the Handicap Index for a period of



time, freezing a handicap index, and/or prevention of score submission in Competitions (and/or General Play) for a period of time. The suggested timeframe is 2-4 weeks.

### What to Post?

| Reason  | Post   |
|---|--|
| <b>Valid Reason</b>                           | The score should be entered, ensuring that any holes not started (in the situation where the round is incomplete) are identified as such. If the score cannot be determined, a "penalty score" equivalent to the current Handicap Index (i.e., Gross Score = Course Rating + Course Handicap) must be added to the player record but should not be designated as a Penalty Score on entry. |
| <b>Invalid reason</b>                         | A score equivalent to the current Handicap Index (i.e. Gross Score = Course Rating + Course Handicap) and identified as a Penalty Score on the WHS player record   |
| <b>Attempt to maintain low Handicap Index</b> | A Gross Score equal to the highest Gross Score in the last 20 scores, added as a Penalty Score. If this appears to be part of a pattern of handicap manipulation then consider the additional penalty actions as discussed above within "subsequent and persistent offenders".   |
| <b>Attempt to build a Handicap Index</b>      | A Gross Score equal to the lowest Gross Score in the last 20 scores, added as a Penalty Score. If this appears to be part of a pattern of handicap manipulation then consider the additional penalty actions as discussed above within "subsequent and persistent offenders".  |



## Abandoned Competitions

Abandoned rounds (competition or general play) usually occur when play is stopped for dangerous or extreme weather conditions, and it is not possible for play to resume. These rounds do not result in Penalty Scores because the reason for suspending play is valid.

Players who have completed their round will submit their score as usual. Players who have completed at least 10 holes will have their score scaled-up automatically to 18 holes by the WHS platform, provided that the 'not played' holes are correctly identified.

Any players who have completed less than 10 holes do not have a score. Under no circumstances should any holes not started be allocated a zero, which would result in a net double bogey for handicap.

Players may incur a Penalty Score if play is suspended but they fail to resume play when instructed to do so. This is an invalid reason for not completing the round, and should be dealt with according to the guidance above.

## FAQs: What score?

1. A player forgets to submit their card after a round.
  - a. If in a competition, the player is disqualified. If the score is identifiable, it should be entered. If no score can be found (and assuming this is not a persistent offender) a Penalty Score with a Gross Score equal to the Course Rating + Course Handicap should be submitted.
2. A player walks off the course after 9 holes due to slow play but submits their card.
  - a. If a competition round, the player is disqualified. As fewer than 10 holes have been commenced, the card is not acceptable for handicapping. The score will be identified as not acceptable for



- handicapping on their handicap record. Consider submitting a Penalty Score.
3. A player walks off the course due to bad weather, even though the course remains open, and submits their card.
    - a. If in a competition, the player is disqualified. Their score is entered ensuring the holes not played are identified as not started. See 'Invalid Reasons' above for non-submission or incomplete cards. If the player is a persistent offender, consider the posting of a Penalty Score (see options above).
  4. For the fourth time in a short period of time, a golfer with a 1.0 Handicap Index has failed to complete their round and submitted their score with a number of holes Not Started (more than 10 holes are complete).
    - a. The score as submitted should be left in the player's record. A Penalty Score with a Gross Score equal to their highest score of their last 20 submissions should also be posted. Also consider withdrawing the player's handicap for a period of time due to persistent failure to comply with Player Responsibilities.
  5. A player completes 14 holes and walks in due to slow play and/or not playing well.
    - a. Again, if this is a competition, the player is disqualified. Their score is entered ensuring the holes not played are identified as not started. See 'Invalid Reasons' above for non-submission or incomplete cards. If the player is a persistent offender, consider the posting of a Penalty Score (see options above).
  6. If a player plays 5 holes and has an NR on the 5th hole, and then walks in what do we do?
    - a. If a competition, the player is disqualified. If the player has submitted their scores to the computer, as there are fewer than 10 holes commenced, it is not an acceptable score. A Penalty Score of CR +CH should be entered.



7. Is it only permissible to enter a Not Started score after hole 10?
  - a. No, the score should be recorded accurately and reflect the actual outcome on each hole. If hole 3, for example, is closed, that hole should be entered as not started. Note: currently some ISVs do not fully support this, but will do so in the near future.
8. A player NRs on a hole, say the 13th, then shows NR for the rest of the round (as used to be the case) but we have no way of knowing if the player continued to play or not; what do we do? Do we, or the player, enter NR for each hole thereafter into the system?
  - a. Further investigation would be required if there is any doubt as to what happened. If the facts cannot be identified, and Committee are not satisfied that the score submitted is an accurate record of the round then a Penalty Score of CH+ CR should be entered. If this is a persistent offender and Committee suspect handicap building then consider a low Penalty Score.
9. We try and encourage players to continue playing after an NR on a hole, but it appears the marking of cards is inconsistent. I would like to know for certain what the rules and expectations are around marking a card. I know that if a player NRs they can sometimes just knock the ball around to the 18th, but may not hole out and therefore keep recording NR: I would like to know if we have the power to do anything about this?
  - a. When a player decides to 'pick up' on a hole, they must record a zero for that hole only, and continue to score for the remainder of the round. If this is a persistent offender, consider disciplinary procedures on the grounds that the player is effectively building a handicap by their actions. As the score is an NR in a regular stroke play (medal) round, the player is disqualified; but the Rules of Handicapping state players have a responsibility to make the best score possible at each hole and ensure all acceptable scores are submitted for handicap purposes. The player is clearly in breach of the Rules in this situation.

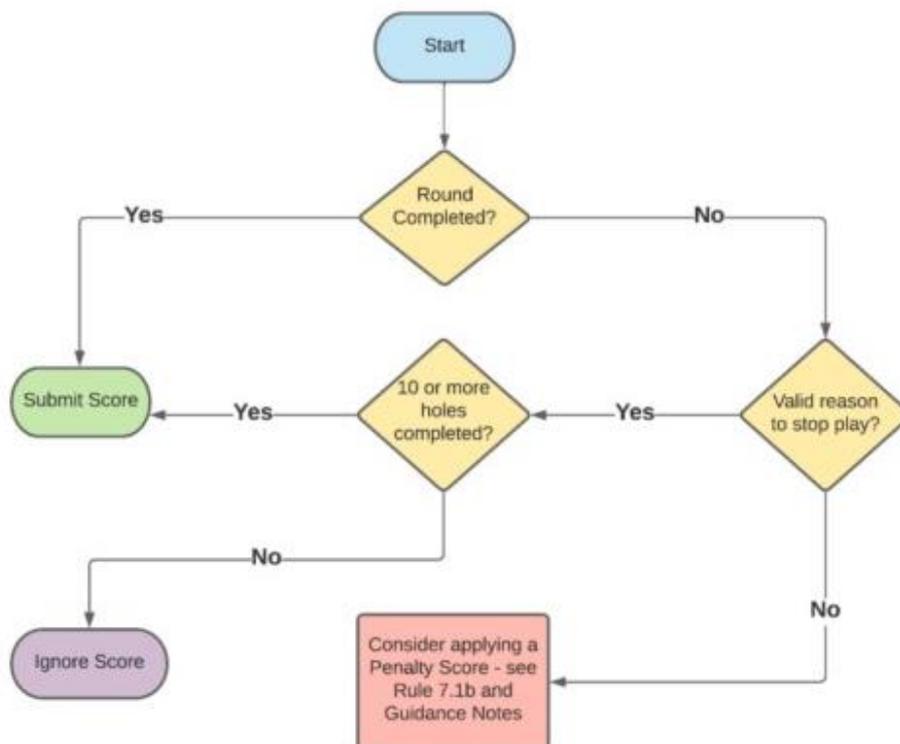
10. We had a player NR on the 13th on Saturday. We know he continued to play, and even apparently parred a few holes; but his card was marked on the system as NR for 13-18. Clearly this is a fabrication and could be seen as handicap manipulation. What is the process to deal with this?

- a. If the actual scores on the holes can be determined, those should be substituted in the return. If it is a persistent offender, consider a Penalty Score – The type of Penalty Score will depend on the payer’s previous history in this regard and if Committee suspects handicap manipulation. See table.

## Additional Support

### What to post?

To provide further guidance the following flowchart covers the process for returning both partial and completed rounds for handicapping purposes.





Valid reasons for a round not being completed include, but are not limited to, fading light or bad weather, emergency, dangerous weather conditions, injury or illness or a hole being declared out of play by the committee for maintenance.

Invalid reasons for a round not being completed include, but are not limited to, poor performance or slow play.