

2020 WHS Rules of Handicapping – Unfinished Holes and Proper Use of Maximum Hole Scores

The game of golf is based on the premise that a player will play as well as the player can play. Under the WHS Rules of Handicapping, each player is required to record a hole score for a hole not finished, holes not played and to reduce any hole score when it is higher than the maximum strokes allowed (Net Double Bogey)

3.1b Maximum Hole Score for Handicap Purposes

After a Handicap Index Has Been Established For a player with an established Handicap Index, the maximum score for each hole played is limited to a net double bogey, calculated as par for the hole plus 2 strokes plus any handicap stroke(s) that the player receives on that hole. There is no limit to the number of holes in a round where a net double bogey adjustment may be applied. If, in the Terms of the Competition (see Rule 7.2a) or the handicap allowances, there are any restrictions on the number of strokes received, this restricted Playing Handicap should only be used for the purpose of the competition, for example the Double Par Rule.

The player's full, unrestricted Course Handicap should be used for all applications of net double bogey adjustments. Adjusting a hole score to a net double bogey can be done either automatically, when hole-by-hole score entry is used, or by the player, when posting an adjusted gross score for the round Note: For a player submitting their first scores to obtain an initial Handicap Index, the maximum score for each hole played is limited to par plus 5 strokes (3.1a)

3.2 Holes Not Played - Updated in 2024 and is found on separate document

3-3. When a Hole is Started But Player Does Not Hole Out

There are various circumstances that might result in a player starting a hole but not holing out.

For example: The result of the hole has already been decided, a hole has been conceded in match play, a player's partner has already posted a better score in a Four-Ball format and the player picks up, or a player has already reached their net double bogey limit on a specific hole. When a player starts a hole but does not hole out for a valid reason, subject to other provisions set out within the Rules of Handicapping, the player must record their most likely score or net double bogey, whichever is lower, as appropriate for the situation and depending on the format of play.

The most likely score is: The number of strokes already taken to reach a position on a hole, plus the number of strokes the player would most likely require to complete the hole from that position, plus any penalty strokes incurred during play of the hole. Most likely scores should be determined on any hole in accordance with the following guidelines: If the ball lies on the putting green, and is no more than 5 feet from the hole add one additional stroke. If the ball lies

between 5 feet and 20 yards from the hole add 2 or 3 additional strokes, depending on the position of the ball, the difficulty of the green and the ability of the player. If the ball lies more than 20 yards from the hole add 3 or 4 additional strokes, depending on the position of the ball, the difficulty of the green and the ability of the player.

There is no limit to the number of most likely scores that can be recorded within a player's adjusted gross score, provided that the failure to hole out is for a valid reason and not for the purpose of gaining an unfair scoring advantage. For players with an established Handicap Index, the most likely score on any hole cannot exceed net double bogey for handicap purposes.

When a player is submitting scores for an initial Handicap Index, the most likely score on any hole cannot exceed par plus 5 strokes. In a Maximum Score format of stroke play (e.g. Double Par Rule), there may be situations where a player has not reached their net double bogey score before reaching the maximum score as determined by the Terms of the Competition. In such cases, the player should record either a most likely score or net double bogey, whichever is the lower score (see Rules of Golf, Rule 21.2).