

Alfie Payne, the General Manager, recently contacted me with a request to join the “Handicap Committee” – after a short explanation to my wife, she remarked “it’s probably due to the fact that you don’t have any friends anyway”. Robin Black and Jill Wilson have also agreed to join.

Below is a brief summary of what the members can expect from the Committee.

The SAGA Handicap System is a computer based national handicapping system whose aim is to allow golfers of differing abilities to compete against one another. The System encourages every club to have a handicap committee, which is responsible for the maintenance and revision of all handicaps at the club and to make adjustments outside of the standard calculations. The committee will work under the guidance of Pierre van Vuuren - the Golf Manager, and they will have the authority to arbitrarily adjust a members’ handicap if he does not observe the spirit of the System.

All members are encouraged to read the Handicap Manual (available on the SAGA website)

The responsibility of the Committee is to ensure that:

1. All scores are captured.
2. All penalty scores are entered.
3. Repeated good scores reflect appropriately.
4. A prolonged period of exceptional performance has a corresponding reduction in handicap.
5. In Better-Ball competitions, any player achieving 3 Stableford points (or equivalent) on more than four holes, may have his score reviewed.
6. All particularly high (or low) scores in non-competition rounds or rounds played away from the home club may be reviewed.

Although one has 72 hrs to enter a score, this extended period should not be used to gain any advantage. Players are encouraged to register rounds before playing. There are two reasons for this:

1. Players do not enter good rounds.
2. Players enter scores without playing a round.

Controls are incorporated in the System as checks and balances to offset abnormal scoring, and there are two further approaches adopted by the System to cater for a member whose handicap does not reflect his scoring ability:

1. The computer system marks a score as exceptional when the differential is at least 3 lower than his handicap – after the second exceptional entry it does an immediate recalculation.
2. The Committee may make changes through the administration interface when a member is deemed to be playing off an incorrect handicap or he frequently wins Better-Ball competitions, yet posts net scores that don’t affect his handicap.

These manual changes are covered in section 12.4.2 of the SAGA Handicap Manual – the total number of Pars, Birdies and Eagles is applied to a formula which may change his Better-Ball gross. This Revised Gross is then entered into the System. Any adjustment to a handicap using this formula will be communicated to the member and allow him a reasonable opportunity to explain the reason for his scores.

The System is based on the assumption that every player will endeavour to make the best score they can at each hole and requires **peer review** to ensure all scores are entered and accurate.

The Committee can also be approached to cater for unusual situations e.g. a handicap increase due to a temporary disability.

Please contact Pierre if you have any queries or concerns and he will bring them to our attention when we meet bi-monthly.

Regards,  
Steve Harrington