“Why Do I Have An 'R' After My Handicap Index?”

Invariably, every month on the first and the fifteen, WSCGA receives one or more emails or phone calls that begin with that question.

What follows is the basic response and explanation regarding Section 10-3 in the USGA Handicap System Manual: Reduction of Handicap Index Based on Exceptional Tournament Scores.

Dear Golfer (your name):

Your index was Reduced due to the Section 10-3 adjustment for exceptional tournament scores.

You have two T scores that are each more than three strokes less than your current calculated index.

Your current calculated index (your index without the reduction) for March 1 revision is 22.2.

Your two “exceptional” scores are both home games (can be away T scores), one on 5/10/11 that was a 91 (15.0 differential) and one on 7/7/11 that was a 93 for a 16.7 differential.

The difference between those two differentials and your current calculated index of 22.2 is 7.2 and 5.5 which averaged is 6.4. (7.2 + 5.5 = 12.7/6.35 rounded to 6.4)

The amount of the reduction is also affected by the number of T scores you have in your 12 month file. You are fortunate and play a lot of tournaments and have 15 tournament scores. So if you think about the percentage of 2 T scores out of 15, which is not a very high percentage which tells you that your reduction will not be very much. For instance, if you only had 5 T scores in your file, the reduction would be almost two strokes instead of just one!

The amount of your index reduction is determined by the chart on page 81 in the USGA Handicap System Manual. Based on the average of 6.4 and the number of T scores, the chart indicates that your reduction for THIS revision should be 1.0 so that is why you are a 21.2R.

Sincerely,

WSCGA Handicap
A Few More Words of Explanation:

This calculation is automatically done by the GHIN program each revision. Whether you will be reduced again depends on how you are playing (if your index goes down so that one of the two T scores is within 3 strokes of your index; OR one of the two T scores falls off because it becomes more than a year old; OR you play more tournaments, which can either dilute the reduction or eliminate it all together).

Remember the “R” does not mean “restricted” or “frozen”! Your reduced index is only your index for the revision period it was issued. It usually pops up after you have forgotten about the “exceptional” tournament rounds (and the great prize that you won!) and when you are not playing at the same level (meaning your index is going up!)

If you have any questions, contact your Handicap Chair as she should be able to identify the offending Tournament rounds and explain the adjustment to you. This information is also available when you look up your index and scoring history on Handicap Look-up, either through the WSCGA website or GHIN.com.

Written March 15, 2012 by Deb Long, WSCGA Handicap Administrator