

# The Golf Rules Review

An Intermittent Communique by the WWGA Golf Rules Maven

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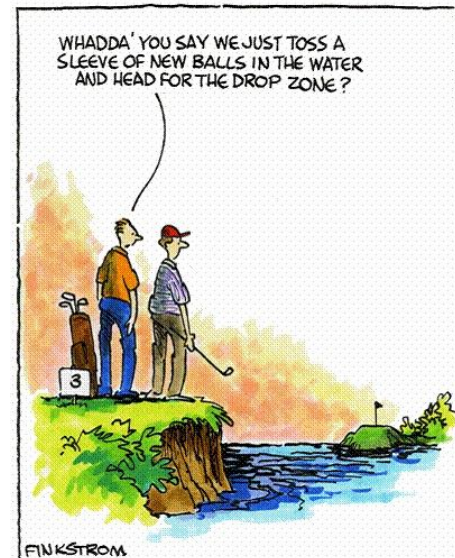
## Ask the Golf Rules Maven - Questions from our WWGA Members

### Using Par plus Handicap Stroke(s) vs. your Maximum Score in GHIN

*We were holding up the group behind us, so to keep ahead of them we just decided to skip MV hole #9. I wanted to take my maximum allowed score for the hole of 6 (double bogey plus my 1 handicap stroke). I was told I couldn't, that I had to record a 4 (par plus my handicap strokes) in GHIN. Why can't I use my maximum of 6?*

Simply put, because it is not fair. You are inflating your handicap and not following USGA rules.

- If you do not play a hole, you don't know what your score would have been. You may have gotten a hole in one, or you may have gotten a 3 or a 4. Since your handicap is a representation of how you should score on a hole, the only fair score to record is par plus your handicap stroke(s) for the hole.
- This is also true when you don't follow the rules of golf when you play a hole... to be fair, you can only use par plus your handicap stroke(s) for your GHIN score. For example:
  - The drop areas on holes MV#3 and #9 do not conform to USGA standards because they take the water hazard completely out of play and are significantly closer to the hole. Their sole purpose is to speed up play. They are "illegal", which is why their use is not allowed in our tournaments. If you use them, you are not playing according to USGA rules. Therefore, your actual score is invalid for GHIN. So the only score you can record in GHIN is par plus your handicap strokes.
  - If you want to use these drop areas and record in GHIN your maximum on the hole, you must reach your maximum before moving to the drop area. This means you probably have to put at least three or four balls in the water. At that point why even bother with the drop area since you are at your maximum. Just go to the next hole.



#### When can I take my maximum?

The only time you may record your maximum score in GHIN is when you have actually played the hole according to the USGA rules and your actual strokes plus penalties equal or exceeds your allowed maximum (double bogey plus your handicap strokes).

**So if I stop playing after 15 holes, I have to record in GHIN par plus my handicap strokes for the holes 16, 17, and 18?**

Yes, that is correct.

**What if I am playing in a Tournament and my team doesn't need my ball, so I pick-up before finishing?**

A team event is the only time you may record what you think you would have fairly scored... up to your maximum.

**What If I am playing on Tuesday with the WWGA and I use the drop area?**

Record your actual score on the card for the game, but when you enter your score into GHIN, reduce it to par plus your handicap strokes.

**Remember: You can't record your maximum in GHIN unless you actually played to that score under USGA rules.**