

## Overview

Special Olympics North Carolina (SONC) is an affiliate club of the Carolina Golf Association (CGA). Find out more information about the CGA [here](#). As an affiliate club, SONC athletes competing in golf at levels 4 and 5 are registered members of the CGA which provides them with an official handicap along with other [CGA membership benefits](#). Currently, SONC assumes the cost for the annual club membership, as well as the individual member dues.

### What are Handicaps and GHIN?

GHIN is the software used by US-based golf associations and clubs to capture and maintain a golf club's handicap index. It is simply the tool to collect, calculate and store the handicap for a golfer. A golf handicap is the measure of a golfer's current ability over an entire round of golf, signified by a number. The lower the number, the better the golfer is. Since golf courses vary in difficulty, terrain and par, handicaps are a way to establish ability level.

### How SONC Uses Golf Handicaps

SONC uses an athlete's handicap to division athletes in level 4 and 5 for state-level event competition and local invitationals. Therefore, it is important for athletes and coaches to enter all rounds played, regardless of the score.

## World Handicapping System (WHS)

The WHS is meant to align golf associations across the world with one handicapping set of rules and format. Think of it like this; WHS provides the sport rules that everyone needs to follow and GHIN is like GMS that manages sport information to be used for competitions.

## General Changes that affect SONC Golfers

- The new WHS does not recognize the 10x rule when calculating handicaps, and instead will only allow a maximum score based on the [net double bogey rule](#) to be entered for any hole. **Net double bogey = Par + 2 strokes + handicap strokes received.**
  - A raw score will be calculated when the round is entered, and an adjusted score will be calculated by GHIN to be used for the handicapping purposes. There is no required action on the athlete/coach except to enter the scorecard as played. Keep the physical scorecard for reference for SONC competitions.
- Most athletes' handicaps have changed due to the rule changes in the new WHS. See more about the WHS rule changes in the resources below.
- The maximum allowable handicap for both males and females is now 54.
- Handicaps will now be calculated using the eight best scores out of 20. Best scores are based on the course rating and slope and the athlete's handicap. Don't worry about doing the math, GHIN will calculate all of this for you!
- Each athlete must have a unique email address associated with his/her GHIN account. This measure prevents multiple entries into GHIN and will be used to log into the athletes' GHIN account in the near future.
  - To update/change an email address, send the athlete's name, local program and new email address to [sports@sonc.net](mailto:sports@sonc.net).
  - Email addresses may belong to a parent/guardian as long as that email is not already used for another athlete in GHIN.

- With updates to the new WHS, GHIN will now only display an 18-hole index. To find a 9-hole handicap for a level 4 athlete, simply divide the 18-hole handicap shown by two.
  - Ex: Bill Smith has a handicap index of 12 according to GHIN: To find his 9-hole handicap,  $12 \div 2 = 6$
- Scores for a 9-hole round of golf will still be accepted, but remember that the handicap will not be updated until another 9-hole score is entered to make a total of 18 holes played. The 9-hole score will sit in the GHIN queue until combined with another 9-hole score to update the athlete's handicap.
- Handicaps are now updated nightly! After a round is played and entered, that round will be reflected in the athlete's handicap the next day.

## Additional Resources

- Learn more about the change to the World Handicapping System [here](#)
- [World Handicapping System 5 Things to Know](#)
- For a printable copy of the changes view this [informational guide](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#) about the WHS
- Learn all about golf handicapping directly from the [USGA](#)

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do I need to enter all rounds played (scores) into GHIN, even if I played the round outside of the SONC golf season?
  - a. Yes, all scores must be entered into GHIN, regardless of the time of year played. This will provide a more accurate handicap which provides better information for divisioning purposes.
2. I am a new level 4 or 5 golfer; how do I get a handicap?
  - a. If you are a new golfer, contact your golf coach to request a handicap. A coach must request a new handicap for their golfers by emailing [sports@sonc.net](mailto:sports@sonc.net). SONC will set up the athlete's GHIN account and provide that information to the coach.
3. I holed the ball in 10 strokes, but when I enter the score into GHIN it adjusts my stroke total for that hole. What do I do?
  - a. GHIN and the new WHS do not recognize the SOI/SONC 10x rule. You will enter your actual score into GHIN and if you holed the ball in 10 strokes, enter 10 just like before. GHIN will automatically adjust your score to the maximum strokes you were allowed on that hole according to your handicap. Keep your physical scorecard for further reference if needed.
4. I entered an incorrect score into GHIN what should I do?
  - a. It is important that all scores an athlete receives are entered into GHIN. Whether it is a practice round or a competition round, they should all be entered. Contact [sports@sonc.net](mailto:sports@sonc.net) if you enter an incorrect score. The sports staff and golf sport development team will be able to make the adjustment to your GHIN account.
5. If I have questions about these updates who should I contact?
  - a. Send questions to [sports@sonc.net](mailto:sports@sonc.net) and a member of the sports staff or golf sport development team will get back with you.