

Handicapping and the New Rules

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Now that a stroke-and-distance penalty for a ball out of bounds is in effect, the USGA Handicap Committee has been confronted with one aspect of the old question of waiving by local rule the stroke portion of the penalty.

My attitude is that there is only one path to follow, and that is to insist that scores used for handicap purposes shall be based on full observance of the Rules of Golf in force at the time the scores are made.

Any departure from the Rules would tend to make handicap results less uniform, especially if some few clubs should use a distance-only penalty for a ball out of bounds.

The extra stroke penalty now required by the Rules is bound to have some effect on scores, particularly those of the poorer players. The upward trend caused by this extra stroke penalty would mean that players of a club using an "illegal" dis-

tance-only penalty eventually would find themselves at a disadvantage handicap-wise when competing against players of equal ability whose scores for handicaps were made under the Rules of Golf.

It might be thought that there is one possible inequality in the stroke-and-distance penalty; namely, that handicaps of players at a course having many holes bordered by boundaries will be higher than handicaps of players of equal ability at a course having no out of bounds at all. This is theory only, and if the USGA GOLF HANDICAP SYSTEM is followed closely, this seeming inequality will be removed by correcting the rating of the course having the many out of bounds.

In other words, if the present rating of a course includes fractional additions for the proximity of out-of-bounds markers on certain holes, said fractional additions should be increased to take into consideration the more severe out-of-bounds penalty now in effect.

USGA COMPETITIONS FOR 1953

Walker Cup Match—September 4 and 5 at the Kittansett Club, Marion, Mass. Men's amateur teams, Great Britain vs. United States.

(Dates entries close mean last dates for applications to reach USGA office, except in the case of the Amateur Public Links Championship. For possible exceptions in dates of Sectional Qualifying Rounds, see entry forms.)

<u>Championship</u>	<u>Entries Close</u>	<u>Sectional Qualifying Rounds</u>	<u>Championship Dates</u>	<u>Venue</u>
Open	May 18	June 1	June 11-12-13	Oakmont C. C., Oakmont, Pa.
Amateur Public Links	*June 8	**June 21-27	Team: July 11 Indiv.: July 13-18	W. Seattle G. C., Seattle, Wash.
Junior Amateur	July 6	July 21	July 29-Aug. 1	Southern Hills C. C., Tulsa, Okla.
Girls' Junior	August 7	none	August 17-21	to be determined
Women's Amateur	August 10	none	August 24-29	Rhode Island C. C., W. Barrington, R. I.
Amateur	August 17	Sept. 1	Sept. 14-19	Oklahoma City G.&C.C. Okla. City, Okla.

* Entries close with Sectional Qualifying Chairmen.

** Exact date in each section to be fixed by Sectional Chairmen.