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Get Into A Routine Of Lowering Your Handicap

By Jeff O'Brien

Certainly there is no shortage of advice and tips when it comes to subject of improving your golf game. I alone am constantly being asked on how to improve on the various parts of someone's golf game.

Tips and advice, although a good place to start, aren't the panacea for all that ails one's golf game. All the advice in the world is only as good as the person's desire to practice and implement the advice.

Practice is essential. Just playing more and more isn't practicing. If you're serious about improving your game you have to practice on a regular basis.

Think about it for a moment. If you bemoan your sand play, but the only 'practice' you get is when you are on the course playing, how much practice and attention is your sand game receiving? Not much. During the course of an actual round of golf how many sand shots will you be required to execute? Even with a bad day on the beach not many at all. If this is you, don't be frustrated when you blade your sand shots way over the greens and triple bogey holes.

Practice not only improves your ability to make shots... the added bonus is that it also improves your overall confidence in your game. Golf is like anything else, what you get out of it is directly related to how much you put into your game. Even if you don't have the time for prolonged practice sessions, try to take advantage of any free time just to grab a club and work on your swing. The road to improvement isn't how long you can practice at any given time; rather it is how often you can practice if even for a short time.

Next, if you gotten yourself into the habit of regularly practicing; then when you do play your rounds of golf then take them seriously. Learn to control your emotions and focus on each shot. Every stroke counts and they all add up one at a time, so take your game seriously. This doesn't all mean you take the fun out of the game, you just increase your focus and purpose.

Since you are now practicing regularly (even if only for a short time) and playing with more focus and purpose, your game is beginning to improve. If you haven't by now you should look at upgrading your

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golf clubs. I'm suggesting that you break the bank on your next set of clubs, but if you've never been fitted properly for a set of clubs you will, at some point, limit your improvement progression. Also, since your practicing more and playing better, your swing will be settling into a more consistent routine. As a result, getting some properly fitted clubs will be a better investment, than if your swing was about to dramatically change.

As your game continues to improve, the areas of your golf game that need attention and improvement won't be so glaringly obvious. So, the next level of improvement will take a bit of analysis. I always encourage people at this stage of their development to keep stats on their game. When you do this you are able to pinpoint trends and weaknesses in your game that you may not be so readily able to determine just by trying to evaluate on a round by round basis. So start keeping track of your fairways hit, greens in regulation, 3 putts, putts that you miss inside of 6 feet, sand saves, up and downs from around the green.

By now you are well on your way to playing significantly better golf. I know that the short time span of this article isn't directly related to the time you'll need to spend to improve your game, but if you persist with your practicing you'll prevail. So, by now you've come full circle and now need to continually evaluate your golf game and improve on those trouble spots and weaknesses.

Aside from the obvious benefits of improving your golf game which is lowering your handicap, is now you'll really begin to appreciate the beauty, the challenges, and the uniqueness of each and every course you play. Each course will take on it's own personality for you. Because, let's face it, all the courses look about the same from the rough or the trees.

Jeff O'Brien offers instruction and insight on golf that will get your golf swing and golf game on track or off to a good start by establishing a good foundation on which you will build your golf swing and game. Please visit (

<http://www.golf-ology.com>

) for more of Jeff's golf tips, articles and online golf lessons.

Golf Handicap Systems Help Even Out Scorecards For Competitive Golf Play

By George Gabriel

The golf handicap system is implemented at golf courses, for golf tournament play. Trophies and prizes are awarded at the end of golf tournaments, based on golf scores. In order to make the golf game fair play, the handicap system is based on the ten lowest differentials of the last twenty games on an eighteen-hole course in one season. Some golf associations will accept fewer golf games. It can also be used for fair play outside of golf tournaments. The following is a short guide on how the golf handicap system works.

Handicap numbers are recorded for golf players numbered one through thirty-six, the number one

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being the lowest handicap, and the number thirty–six being the highest handicap. A scratch golfer has no handicap, better known as a scratch player.

Now lets take a look at how these numbers come into affect. If a player's handicap is ten, and another player's handicap are twenty. The difference between the two players is ten golf strokes. Therefore, to even up the match, the player with the lower handicap, which this case is the ten–handicap golf player, has to give out ten golf strokes to his opponent on eighteen holes, to make the golf game fair play. How do you identify on which golf holes they are going to be given out?

Typically on most, if not all golf scorecards, you will find numbers 1 through 18 near the bottom of the scorecard beside Men's HCP and Ladies HCP. The numbers 1 through 18, you will also find out of order. The reason for the disorder of numbers is, the number 1 being the hardest golf hole, and the number 18 being the easiest golf hole. The golf course, or architect of the golf course, determines the order of numbers on any given golf hole, by the yardage and slope rating, and or other difficulty of the golf hole.

Now that we have determined how many golf strokes are to be given out, and where they are to be taken. The higher handicap in this case, which is the twenty handicap golf player, gets ten golf strokes for eighteen holes, on holes numbered 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, and 10. This should make the match a lot closer, if both players are playing within their game. It typically works out to one golf stroke on every other golf hole in this example, depending on how the golf course is laid out. Another example would be a scratch player and a thirty–six–handicap player, the scratch player having to give out two golf strokes on every hole.

Keeping track of your handicap, and using a handicap system, will help make the game fair play in a lot of golf matches, when playing against other opponents.

Check with your local golf pro, or golf association, on an official guide for the golf handicap system, and for maintaining a legitimate handicap. If you belong to a golf course, they should have a system in place to use for tournament play, which is recognized by most golf courses and golf associations. You can also find golf handicap software on keeping track of a golf handicap.

Learned to play golf as a caddie. Now running a tee time site at

<http://www.golfanchor.net>

and a golf

site at

<http://www.golfanchor.com>

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