

Chicago Leads Drive to Adopt Stroke Control

"HOW do I adjust my handicap?" is a question echoing around clubs and sections now adopting the Equitable Stroke Control plan developed by Thomas G. McMahon and perfected in the Southern California Golf Association.

Leading the campaign for national adoption of ESC is the Chicago District Golf Assn. where 22,000 members began adjusting scores in April. The plan operates simply and will curb extraordinary scores on any one hole whether created by misfortune, temper or carelessness. Stroke control also will equalize competition among clubs with many out-of-bounds holes as opposed to courses with few or no out-of-bounds holes.

The plan predicated on a "limits" basis follows:

Handicap	Limit
Plus or Scratch	Limit of one over par on any one hole.
1 to 18 incl.	Limit of 2 over par on no. of holes equal to handicap. Limit of one over par on balance of holes.
19 to 36 incl.	Limit of 3 over par on as many holes as the handicap is increased over 18. Limit 2 over par on balance.

Tom McMahon, former pres. of the CDGA, originated his handicap system in 1938 after years of study and the application of various mathematical processes to 100,000 scores. This system was adopted by the USGA in 1953 and is the nationally recognized current ability system now in use throughout the U. S. and many foreign countries.

Boom Creates Need

McMahon recently stated: "With increased golf play in the year-around areas, a lengthening of the season in other parts of the country, and a travel boom send-



Figure filberts behind Equitable Stroke Control, Charles N. Eckstein (1) and Thomas G. McMahon, originator of the system, check handicap cards of 22,000 members of Chicago District Golf Assn.

ing golfers from one course to another, a need for further control to equalize handicaps for more and more players is evident. After more research involving thousands of scores, the over-par limit on a sliding scale determined by the player's handicap proved most equitable."

Here is an example of how ESC works:

A 12-handicap player is allowed two over par on 12 holes and one over par on 6 holes. **He may never have a triple bogey.** When his score is more than two over par on any one hole, he adjusts the score for that hole deducting the actual number of strokes that exceed his limit. If, for example, he has a 7 on a par 4, he subtracts 1 stroke for handicapping purposes. However, he must use the 7, his actual score, in any match or event of the day.

It is unlikely that a 12 player would ever score the maximum allowed him as this would produce a score around 103. Therefore, stroke control will affect the majority only when they occasionally encounter trouble and exceed the one, two or three over par limit permitted.

If a 12 handicap player has two triple bogies, 1 double bogey, 4 bogies and 11 pars, he would have an adjustment of two strokes, one for each triple bogey, and his card might read as follows:

Foss Enlarges Classroom By Selling Group Lesson Program



Chet Foss, pro at Kern County Public GC, Bakersfield, Calif., who is described by brother pros as an up and coming enterpriser, regularly conducts some of the largest group lessons seen in his section. It isn't unusual at all for Chet to have as many as 100 golfers, such as he has here, out sharpening up their games by going through the various swing routines that Foss prescribes. The Bakersfield pro's success hasn't been of the overnight variety since it has taken him three or four years to sell local golfers on the idea of turning out in large numbers to attend group instruction sessions.

PAR	SCORE		
4	7Tb*	4	4
4	7Tb*	5	5
4	4	3	3
3	3	5	7db
5	6b	4	5b
3	3	4	5b
4	4	4	4
4	5b	3	3
5	5	4	4
36	44	36	40

84 Actual Score

* 2 Excess Strokes (Adjustments)

82 Adjusted Score

The scorer can keep track of the excess strokes either by marking a small dot in each square where an adjustment must be and then totalling the dots at the end of the round and subtracting them from the actual score, or by using a special score card with a column for excess strokes.

A 25-handicap player follows the same procedure as the 12-player. He is allowed five triple bogies, one each for as many holes as the handicap is increased over 18, and 13 double bogies. If he has an 8 on a par 4, he subtracts 1 stroke for handicapping purposes. However, he must use the 8, his actual score, in any match or event of the day.

Plan Explained

The ESC plan was described to handicapping chmn. of member clubs by Charles N. Eckstein, vp of Chicago District at three meetings in January. Eckstein stated: "Handicapping utopia will be reached

when four players from four different parts of the world can meet and play with equitable handicaps on any golf course. Handicap committees of all international golf associations are striving toward this end in the same way they have been seeking unification of the golf rules. We believe stroke control is a big step toward unification of golf handicap systems."

All member clubs have expressed approval of the stroke control modification in the CDGA system.

To help clubs and associations adopt ESC, Sidney T. Jessop and Jim Miller also of Chicago District and Eckstein have designed special score sheets and score cards which accommodate stroke control. Copies and brochures explaining it are available free of charge at CDGA, Room 241, LaSalle Hotel, Chicago 2.

Members of the Chicago District have received their 1957 handicap cards in a black and gold plastic, weather proof, bag tag. It is possible that golfers throughout the country soon will carry their handicap cards, currently validated and up to date, attached to their golf bags. By doing so a player's handicap will always be visible with his golf clubs and the first tee con men will be out of business.

Ordering Merchandise?

Check Your Needs Against

List on Page 109