3.2 When a Hole is Not Played

There are various circumstances that may result in a round not being completed and some holes not being played. For example, due to:

- Fading light or bad weather,
- Player injury or illness,
- A match finishing before the final hole, or
- A hole being declared out of play by the Committee for maintenance or reconstruction purposes.

A score may only be used for handicap purposes if, among other things, the round has been played over at least the minimum number of holes required for either a 9-hole or an 18-hole score to be acceptable (see Rules 2.1 Acceptability of Scores and 2.2 Minimum Number of Holes Played for Score to be Acceptable).

Where the minimum number of holes has been completed and the reason for a player not playing a hole is valid, the player must use the following table to produce either a 9-hole or 18-hole score:

Number of holes played	Scaling up	What score(s) to record for holes not played
At least 7 holes	Scale up to 9-hole score	Add *net par* (or equivalent Stableford points).
At least 14 holes	Scale up to 18-hole score	Add *net par* (or equivalent Stableford points).

If the reason for a player not playing a hole, or holes, is considered invalid, the *Handicap Committee* may consider applying a *penalty score* (see Rule 7.1 Handicap Committee).

Notes:

1. The player's full, unrestricted *Course Handicap* should be used for all applications of *net par*. For this procedure, the *Course Handicap* is rounded to the nearest whole number (see Rule 6.1 Course Handicap Calculation).

2. Unless otherwise specified by the Committee, when a player with a plus *Playing Handicap* is required to give strokes back to the *golf course*, this commences at the hole with *stroke index* 18 and works backwards. Therefore, a player with a +3 *Playing Handicap* will give strokes back to the *golf course* at holes with *stroke index* 18, 17 and 16.

The *net par* hole score is calculated by subtracting the stroke given back to the course from the *par* of the hole. For example:

Par of the Hole		Stroke Given Back to the Course		*Net Par* Hole Score
4	–	1	=	3

If the outcome of a competition has been decided before all holes have been completed and the player decides to play any of the remaining holes, the actual scores for those remaining holes must be recorded.

Rule 3.2 Interpretations:

3.2/1 – Invalid Reasons For Not Playing a Hole

Rule 3.2 describes what score to return for a hole that has not been played for a valid reason in order for an *acceptable score* to be submitted for handicap purposes.

If it is determined that a player has not played a hole or holes for an invalid reason, the score will not be acceptable for handicap purposes. Invalid reasons include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Not playing a particular hole on a *golf course* because the player knows it usually causes them difficulty and they are likely to return a high hole score.
- Not playing the final holes on a *golf course* in order to avoid submitting a high or low score.

In either case, the *Handicap Committee* could add a *penalty score* to the player's *scoring record*, if it is determined that the player's actions were for the purpose of gaining an unfair scoring advantage (see Rule 7.1b Applying a Penalty Score).

3.2/2 – Designation of Score for Holes Not Played

The player must add a designation against any score returned that includes holes not played (see Appendix B: Player's Scoring Record, Note 5). This is to ensure that all of the procedures set out within the *Rules of Handicapping* can be carried out properly, for example the calculation of a *Score Differential* for a 9-hole score (see Rule 5.1b For a 9-hole Score) and the calculation of any adjustment for abnormal playing conditions (see Rule 5.6 Playing Conditions Calculation).

Where hole-by-hole scores are required, the player should add a designation against each hole not played.