



## GOLF HANDICAPPING COLUMN - Spring 2002

### **"Can I really post over the Internet?"**

by Mark Conradt

The big news in handicapping this year is that the USGA has approved posting scores via the Internet for handicapping purposes. This new policy has been greeted with both excitement and, in some cases, reluctance. The USGA has definitely shown an eagerness to keep up with technology, especially the increasingly ubiquitous Internet, which is a good thing. However, some people think that it is just one more way for someone to manipulate their handicap. My opinion is that it is generally a good thing, however only if the club's handicap committee is prepared to keep a close eye on its use. I would be very reluctant to recommend it to a club where the handicap committee is not very active.

The intent of Internet Score Posting (ISP) is to give the golfer one more way to post a score that for one reason or another was not posted where he or she played right after play. A major note must be made here: ISP IS NOT MEANT TO BE THE WAY MOST SCORES ARE POSTED! It is meant only for occasional instances where it was not possible or convenient to post the score at the club. The decision on whether or not to allow ISP rests solely on the Club, itself. Perhaps the best way to further explain this new feature, is to quote the USGA Handicap System Manual:

*Section 5-2a - "Posting scores in person immediately following the round at the course where the round is played is the preferred way to expose scores to peer review..."; "The Handicap Committee may adopt a policy to occasionally accept scores returned by mail, facsimile, e-mail or the Internet. Scores may not be returned verbally by the telephone."; "If a club adopts a policy to accept scores via the Internet, the club must also provide the ability to review all scores for all members via the Internet."*

*Decision 5-2a/6 - "Due to the ease of use of the Internet, the USGA believes that successful golf clubs and Handicap Committees can implement a positive Internet score posting component. According to guidelines in Section 5-2, this method of posting is an option offering convenience for the player, but should not routinely replace the preferred method of posting immediately following the round at the course where the round is played. Adopting Internet score posting requires that the golf club display scoring records of all members over the Internet as well. This should improve an aspect of peer review by giving members better ability to view other members' scores at any time. These features will continue to enhance the*

*foundation of the golf club and the USGA Handicap System."*

If any club administrators have any questions regarding this new policy, please don't hesitate to contact me.

I hope this has been helpful.

