

Handicap Secretary's Report 2025

Dear Members and Fellow Golfing Adventurers,

As the final putts of 2025 drop and the last umbrellas finally dry out, it's my pleasure as Handicap Secretary of Balbriggan Golf Club to present our end-of-year report. It has been a season of fine golf, a few heroic recoveries, and, as ever, plenty of debate about how the World Handicap System (WHS) and Golf Ireland manage to keep up with us all.

This year, Balbriggan golfers were out in force — and the stats tell the story:

- 12,211 qualifying competition rounds were played,
- Along with 819 general play rounds submitted through the Golf Ireland app.

That's over 13,000 rounds officially recorded — an incredible level of participation that shows the enthusiasm, commitment, and occasional stubbornness of our members. Whether it was sunshine, showers, or sideways rain, Balbriggan golfers were out there keeping the fairways busy.

Under the World Handicap System, the balancing act of maintaining fair handicaps continues to keep me both entertained and mildly cross-eyed.

The famous formula — *best eight of your last twenty scores* — remains the cornerstone of the system. It rewards consistency, punishes the odd meltdown, and, for reasons beyond mortal understanding, always seems to drop your index the week before Captain's Prize. A few players met the joy of soft and hard caps this year — the WHS's polite way of saying, "Let's not get carried away with that 45-point round."

The Annual Handicap Review, in line with Golf Ireland guidance, will be completed over the next few weeks. This process combines data analysis with a healthy dose of common sense (and sometimes a strong cup of tea).

Any players affected by the review will be notified in due course once adjustments, if any, are confirmed. Please remember that these reviews are intended to ensure fairness and accuracy across the club, keeping everyone's handicap representative of current playing ability.

A friendly reminder that under Golf Ireland and the WHS, every player has an important role to play in keeping the handicap system fair and accurate.

Your responsibilities include:

- Submitting all qualifying and general play scores promptly after your round — no matter how well (or how badly) you played.
- Verifying your playing partner's card and ensuring both signatures are in place (yes, both — it's not optional).
- Using the Golf Ireland app or the club's competition software to return scores before leaving the course.
- Ensuring scores are recorded from the correct tees and that the round meets the conditions of a qualifying score.

Every round counts towards the integrity of the handicap system. Failing to return a score without a valid reason can result in a penalty score being applied by the Handicap Committee — and while I'm always reluctant to play the villain, I can assure you I know how to use that feature.

Remember: the WHS only works if everyone plays their part. Honest and timely score returns protect not just your own index, but the fairness of competition for all members. And besides — if you've had a rough round, the best therapy is submitting it and forgetting about it before the bar staff find out.

As we reflect on another great year, it's clear that Balbriggan Golf Club continues to thrive thanks to the spirit, humour, and sportsmanship of its members. The WHS and Golf Ireland framework keep the game fair — but it's your passion that keeps it fun.

My sincere thanks to the Handicap Committee, Competition Committee, our Pro Shop staff, and everyone who helped keep the system running smoothly — even those who occasionally declared, "The computer's wrong!" You make the job entertaining, if not always easy.

Here's to a brilliant 2026: may your drives be long, your putts be true, and your Handicap Index behave itself — at least until next spring.

With warm regards (and several spreadsheets),

Peter Sullivan

Handicap Secretary

Balbriggan Golf Club