WORLD HANDICAPSYSTEM

## Rules of Handicapping



## Six Systems to one



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## Purpose of the World Handicap System

The WHS includes the Rules of Handicapping and the Course Rating System. Its purpose is to enable as many golfers as possible the opportunity to:

- Obtain and maintain a Handicap Index;
- Use their Handicap Index on any golf course around the world; and
- Compete, or play recreationally, with anyone else on a fair basis.



## How to Use the Rule Book

The "Rules of Handicapping" will consist of Definitions and seven Rules:
Rule 1 - Purpose and Authorization; Obtaining a Handicap Index
Rule 2 - Scores Acceptable for Handicap Purposes
Rule 3 - Adjustment of Hole Scores
Rule 4 - Submitting a Score
Rule 5 - Handicap Index Calculation
Rule 6 - Course Handicap and Playing Handicap Calculation
Rule 7 - Committee Actions
There will also be seven Appendices, which will contain further details and more information.


Refer to the "Rules of Handicapping" whenever a question arises about the World Handicap System.

Fundamentals of Handicapping

## Key Definitions

## LOW HANDICAP INDEX

## HARD AND SOFT CAP

## PLAYING CONDITIONS CALCULATION

## EXCEPTIONAL SCORE REDUCTION



## NET DOUBLE BOGEY



## NET PAR

The lowest Handicap Index achieved by a player within the last 12 months.

A reduction or limit on the increase of a player's Handicap Index over a rolling 12 -month period, measured against the player's Low Handicap Index within that period of time.

A procedure used to evaluate if course and/or weather conditions on the day of play deviate from normal playing conditions to the extent that they have a significant impact on players' performance.

A score differential which is at least 7.0 strokes better than the player's Handicap Index at the time the round was played (see Rule 5.9). The maximum score for a hole for handicap purposes, which is the sum of:

- The Par of the hole,
- Any handicap strokes applied on that hole, and
- An additional two strokes

Net Par is the new term for Par Plus used when a hole is not played.

## Home Club for Multi-Members

To ensure that a player has only one Handicap Index, and to easily identify the golf club or AGA with authority should issues arise, a player should have one Home Club.

A Home Club is determined by:

- the player;

- and is typically determined by where the player submits the most scores or demonstrates regularity of play.


## Course Handicap

A Course Handicap will be the number of strokes a player receives to play down to the Par of the tees being played. The formula is:

(Handicap Index x Slope Rating / 113 ) + (Course Rating - PAR)

## Comparison of Course Handicap - USGA \& WHS

Handicap Index 15.0

USGA

| Tee and Rating | Course <br> Hdcp | Target <br> Score | Course <br> Hdcp | Target <br> Score |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Black (72.0/115) Par 72 | 15 | 87 | 15 | 87 |
| White (69.0/114) Par 72 | 15 | 84 | 12 | 84 |
| Gold (67.0/113) Par 72 | 15 | 82 | 10 | 82 |

Note: The Target Score for Playing to Handicap remains the same under both systems.
Course Handicaps are different as USGA focuses on Course Rating and WHS focuses on Par.

## Playing Handicap

When handicap allowances are used in various formats of play, Course Handicaps are adjusted to make the competition equitable.

The adjusted Course Handicap will be referred to as a Playing Handicap.

## Playing Handicap $=$



Course Handicap x Handicap Allowance
If different tees are in use (by different genders), a player's Playing Handicap is adjusted by the difference in Par.

## Minimum Scores to Obtain a Handicap Index

- 54 holes made up of any combination of 9 - or 18 -hole rounds.
- No time limit on completing the submission of these scores.



## Maximum Handicap Index

The maximum Handicap Index that can be allocated to a golfer is 54.0.

This speaks to two key principles of the World Handicap System:

- To be as inclusive and accessible as possible;

- To make it as easy as possible for golfers to obtain and maintain a Handicap Index.


## Maximum Score for Handicap Purposes

| Net Double Bogey | A player's maximum hole score for handicap <br> purposes, ensuring bad holes don't impact a <br> player's handicap too severely. |
| :---: | :---: |



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## Maximum Score for Handicap Purposes



A player with a Course Handicap of 11 receives one stroke on the first 11 allocated stroke holes. On a par-4 with a stroke index of 6 , the player's net double bogey score is calculated as follows:


## Application of Net Double Bogey Adjustment

Sunnyside Golf Club

Bronze Tees Course Rating: $72.1 \quad$ Slope Rating: 122
Name of Player: Janet Smith
Course Handicap: 18

| $18$ |  |  |  | Playing ticap 15 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Hole | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | Out |
| Par | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 37 |
| S.I. | 7 | 13 | 3 | 9 | 15 | 1 | 11 | 5 | 17 |  |
| Score | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 46 |


| Hole | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | In | Total |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Par | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 36 | 73 |
| S.I. | 8 | 12 | 18 | 4 | 10 | 6 | 2 | 16 | 14 |  |  |
| Score | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 49 | 95 |

$7=$ Net double bogey adjustment of -1

## Help in Determining Net Double Bogey

## Post Hole-By-Hole Score

Advanced sta $\square$ OFF

All SCGA provided score posting tools will offer an OPTION to post hole by hole scores, which will calculate the maximum hole score/net double bogey

In this example for a player with a Course Handicap of 8, an adjusted gross score of 90 will become part of the scoring record.

| hole | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | out |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| YaRDS | 509 | 164 | 562 | 367 | 181 | 416 | 434 | 409 | 404 | 3446 |
| PAR | 5 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 36 |
| STROKE INDEX | 7 |  | 3 | 11 | 15 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 13 |  |
| SCORE | 5 |  | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 47 |
| ADJ. SCORE | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 45 |


| hole | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | IN | total |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| YARDS | 408 | 364 | 174 | 499 | 403 | 402 | 153 | 403 | 477 | 3283 | 6729 |
| PAR | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 36 | 72 |
| STROKE INDEX | 14 | 10 | 16 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 18 | 6 | 12 |  |  |
| SCORE | 5 | 6 | 5 | (4) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 45 | 人 |
| ADJ. SCORE | 5 | 6 | 5 | (4) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 45 | 90 |

## Guidelines for Most Likely Score

When a player starts, but does not complete a hole, the score recorded for handicap purposes is the Most Likely Score using the following guidelines:

| Position of the ball: | Strokes to be added: |
| :---: | :---: |
| On the putting green <br> within 5 feet of the hole | Add 1 additional stroke |
| Between 5 feet and 20 <br> yards from the hole | Add 2 or 3 additional strokes, depending on the position of the <br> ball, the difficulty of the green and the ability of the player |
| Beyond 20 yards <br> from the hole | Add 3 or 4 additional strokes, depending on the position of the <br> ball, the difficulty of the green and the ability of the player |

## Hole Not Played

When a player does not play a hole, the score recorded for handicap purposes is net par.

For example:
A player stops after hole 16 due to darkness; or

A hole being declared out of play by the Committee for maintenance or renovation purposes.


## Acceptability of Scores

- Scores from an authorized format of play which meets all the provisions set out within the Rules of Handicapping (see Rule 2).
- Scores in both match and stroke play; multi-ball or team competitions. This includes any time a player picks up before completing a hole.
- Scores on all courses with a current Course
 Rating and Slope Rating made during an active season, both at home and away.


## Acceptability of Scores

- Scores made under the Rules of Golf and The Modified Rules of Golf for Players With Disabilities.
- When accompanied by at least one other person.
- When a player follows a Model Local Rule even if the Committee has not adopted it.

- For example - Alternative option to stroke and distance or preferred lies.


## Unacceptable Scores

A score is not acceptable for handicap purposes and must not be posted if a player has been disqualified from a competition for a breach of the Rules of Golf that might have provided the player with a significant advantage; e.g. using a non-conforming club.


## Treatment of 9-Hole Scores - Combining

Combine two 9-hole scores to create an 18-hole score differential.

If a player plays $7-13$ holes, then the 9 -hole score will be posted and then combined with next 9 -hole score.


## Fewer than 9 Holes Played

- For a 9-hole score to be acceptable for handicap purposes, a minimum of 7 holes must be played.
- If a player plays 7 or 8 holes, a 9-hole score will be determined by adding a score of Net Par for the remaining hole(s).
- This 9-hole score will then be combined with another 9 -hole score to produce an 18-hole score differential.



## Handicap Formula

## Daily Revisions/Timeframe for Submitting a Score

- A Handicap Index will update daily.
- Players should submit their scores as soon as possible after the round is completed, and before midnight (local time).
- This is to ensure the score will be used for the Playing Conditions Calculation.
- A player's Handicap Index should be updated the day after a score is submitted.



## Handicap Index Calculation

There are five significant changes to the Handicap Index calculation coming in 2020:

1) The minimum number of scores required.
2) The number of differentials used.
3) A Playing

Conditions Calculation.

5) The addition of a Soft Cap and Hard Cap to limit upward movement.
4) An Exceptional Score Reduction that considers all scores.
$i$


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## Calculation of a Handicap Index

For 20 Scores:

- Average the lowest 8 of the most recent 20 Score Differentials;
- round to the nearest tenth.

> Your Handicap Index is based on:


## Calculation of a Score Differential

For an 18-hole Score, a Score Differential is calculated as follows:

Score Differential =
(Adjusted Gross Score - Course Rating - PCC) x (1 $13 /$ Slope Rating)
PCC = Playing Conditions Calculation

## Calculation of a Score Differential

A lower score may not always produce a Iower Score Differential:

$$
\begin{aligned}
& (95-71.5-0) \times 113 / 125=21.2 \\
& (97-73.8-0) \times 113 / 140=18.7 \\
& (90-66.1-0) \times 113 / 105=25.7
\end{aligned}
$$



## Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC)

When abnormal playing conditions cause scores to be unusually high or low on a given day, a Playing Conditions Calculation will adjust Score Differentials to better reflect the player's actual performance.

The 'PCC' will be simple and conservative in nature and will be
 adjusted in integer values.

$$
-1,+1,+2,+3
$$

## Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC)

- Is performed only once for a day.
- Considers acceptable scores submitted on a golf course, including all rated tees and both genders.
- Requires at least eight acceptable scores submitted by players with a Handicap Index of 36.0 or below.
- Is applied in the calculation of score differentials for all players.

- Includes both 9-hole and 18-hole acceptable scores.
- Regardless of when the score is posted, the PCC will impact the score differential.


## Exceptional Score Reduction (ESR)

ESR is a procedure for dealing with exceptional scores which may indicate the player's true ability. All scores are considered, rather than only Tournament scores.
How does it work?

1. Calculate Score Differential once score is posted and Playing

Conditions Calculation is applied (when appropriate).
2. If Score Differential is -7.0 strokes or better than the Handicap Index from when the round was played;
3. Apply ESR table reduction to newly calculated Handicap Index.

| Score Differential <br> Relative to Index | $7.0-9.9$ <br> strokes lower | 10.0 <br> or more |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ESR Adjustment | -1.0 | -2.0 |

$>$ This is in addition to any reduction caused by the score being used in the updated 8 of 20 calculation.

Peter Jensen
10.2 намогосар
SCORE C.R./SLOPE PCC

## A -2 Exceptional Score Reduction has been applied to this score differential.

* 

| H | $09 / 2020$ | 75 | $72.3 / 129$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| H | $09 / 2020$ | 86 | $70.4 / 125$ |
| H | $08 / 2020$ | 91 | $64.9 / 110$ |
| H | $07 / 2020$ | 92 | $64.9 / 110$ |
| H | $07 / 2020$ | 86 | $68.7 / 121$ |
| H | $07 / 2020$ | 87 | $68.7 / 121$ |
| A | $06 / 2020$ | 91 | $68.7 / 120$ |
| H | $01 / 2020$ | 88 | $68.7 / 121$ |
| H | $12 / 2019$ | 84 | $68.7 / 121$ |
| H | $11 / 2019$ | 94 | $70.8 / 123$ |
| H | $11 / 2019$ | 91 | $68.7 / 121$ |
| H | $10 / 2019$ | 83 | $68.7 / 121$ |

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## Cap Procedure

A Soft Cap and Hard Cap will be implemented to limit the extreme upward movement of a player's Handicap Index within a 12 -month period.

The Soft Cap will suppress upward movement by $50 \%$ after a 3.0 stroke increase over the Low Handicap Index has been reached.


The Hard Cap will restrict upward movement to 5.0 strokes over the Low Handicap Index.

The soft cap and hard cap procedures only start to take effect once Hara cap a player has at least 20 acceptable scores in their scoring record.

## Soft Cap Example

Player A has a Low H.I. of 10.0. His current 8 of 20 average is 15.2
Step 1: Add 3.0 to Low HI

$$
10.0+3.0=13.0
$$

Step 2: Determine difference between current 8 of 20 average and Step 1:

$$
15.2-13.0=2.2
$$

Step 3: Add 50\% of the resulting value to Step 1:

$$
13.0+1.1=14.1
$$



## Handicap Index: 14.1

## Club Handicap Committee Responsibilities

## Handicap Review

- It is strongly recommended that the Handicap Committee conducts handicap reviews regularly.
- Reports will be available to Handicap Committees to identify those players requiring a handicap review.
- A player can request a handicap review if they believe their Handicap Index no longer reflects their demonstrated ability.
- A player must be made aware of, and be involved in, the handicap review process and be able to appeal a decision.



## Adjusting a Handicap Index

When a handicap review has been completed, the Handicap Committee can adjust a player's Handicap Index to better reflect their demonstrated ability, based on the results of the analysis.

The adjustment must satisfy the following criteria:

- Be a minimum of 1 full stroke; and
- Except in exceptional circumstance, only increase a player's Handicap Index by up to 5.0 strokes above their Low Handicap Index.


There is no limit as to how far downward a Handicap Index can be adjusted.

## Competition Committee Responsibilities

## Competition Committee

The Committee in charge of a competition may set a maximum limit for play within their Terms of the Competition.

For example:

- A maximum Handicap Index for entry;
- A maximum Handicap Index a player is permitted to use;
- A maximum Course Handicap; and

- A maximum Playing Handicap.


## Handicap Allowances

Handicap Allowances are recommended to provide equity for various forms of competition.

## Allowance recommendations will be the same for men and women.

| MATCH PLAY |  |
| :--- | :---: |
| Format: | Allowance: |
| Head to Head | $100 \%$ |
| Four-ball | $90 \%$ |
| Total Score of 2 Match Play | $100 \%$ |
| Foursomes | $50 \%$ Combined |
| Selected Drive (Greensomes) | $60 \%$ Low $+40 \%$ High |
| Pinehurst/Chapman | $60 \%$ Low + 40\% High |


| STROKE PLAY |  |
| :--- | :---: |
| Format: | Allowance: |
| Singles Stroke Play/Stableford | $95 \%$ |
| Four-ball Stroke Play | $85 \%$ |
| Maximum Score Form of Stroke Play | $95 \%$ |
| Best 1 of 4 Stroke Play | $75 \%$ |
| Best 2 of 4 Stroke Play | $85 \%$ |
| Best 3 of 4 Stroke Play | $100 \%$ |
| All 4 of 4 Stroke Play | $100 \%$ |
| Total Score of 2 | $100 \%$ |
| Foursomes | $50 \%$ combined |
| Selected Drive (Greensomes) | $60 \%$ Low + 40\% High |
| Pinehurst/Chapman | $60 \%$ Low + 40\% High |
| Scramble (4 players) | $25 \% / 20 \% / 15 \% / 10 \%$ from |
| lowest to highest handicap |  |

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Education and Resources

## World Handicap System (WHS) Hub on SCGA.org



Beginning on Jan. 1, 2020, the USGA and the R\&A will implement major changes to the fabric of our handicap system. This revamped World Handicap System aims to bring the game of golf under a single set of handicapping rules and provide a more consistent
measure of players' ability between different regions of the world. The WHS Hub will serve as your one-stop shop for the key changes and what you need to know before this new system goes into place. Below you will find information on each of the major changes in digestible videos and printable PDF documents. Please share this WHS Hub with all of your fellow golfers!


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## Five Things You Need to Know about WHS +1

## 1. Formula Change to 8 of 20

## The Handicap Index calculation is changing



## Five Things You Need to Know about WHS +1

2. Course Handicap now incorporates Par; Playing Handicap incorporates allowances and men and women competing against each other.


## Five Things You Need to Know about WHS +1

3. Maximum Hole Scores for Handicap Purposes is Net Double Bogey. This is always based on your full Course Handicap.

## Net Double Bogey will replace ESC

The maximum hole score for handicap purposes will be limited to Net Double Bogey (Par $+2+$ any handicap strokes you receive.)


## Five Things You Need to Know about WHS +1

4. Handicaps will be updated the morning after a score is posted.

Important: Post the score day the round was played!!!!

> You will have more responsive Handicap
> Index updates


## Five Things You Need to Know about WHS +1

## 5. Automatic Safeguards incorporated: Playing Conditions Calculation, Exceptional Score Reduction and Caps.

```
Safeguards have been added to protect your
Handicap Index
```



## Five Things You Need to Know about WHS +1

+1. All handicap-related services will be off-line from January 1 until sometime January 6. No score posting, no handicap look-up.

No Handicap Index update on January 1; last USGA revision is December 15

All players will have a revised Handicap Index on January 6 using WHS formula and will be notified via email

Until sometime in the spring a player will need to seek out Handicap Index on: GHIN Mobile App; Course Computer (kiosk); or GHIN.com


