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WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

WHS

Preparations & Highlights
(Update - December 2019)



When will the World Handicap System come into effect, in Portugal?

The World Handicap System will come into effect, in Portugal, between June and July 2020.

Both globally and in Europe, implementation will roll out in phases, with some countries implementing it early in the year, several doing transition throughout the year and some transitioning only by the end of 2020, or immediately after.

For Portugal, adopting mid-summer 2020 brings a balance between being in the forefront and providing the safety of doing implementation preparations, by allowing adequate time for players, clubs and stakeholders to learn about the new system.

What is the implementation plan in Portugal?

The various steps are summarized and scheduled in the following diagram:



These steps include:

- Finalizing software development and testing
- Scheduling training sessions for Clubs and Institutional Members and sending that information.
- Translation of the Rules of Handicapping and preparing complementary materials
- Conducting the training sessions
- Communicating and distributing materials and content
- Displaying the WHS scoring records to Handicap Committees, and then to players
- Putting in effect the Rules of Handicapping of the World Handicap System.

The Portuguese Golf Federation will continue the communication about the implementation plans.



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How to prepare before WHS comes into operation?

Players

Players can just continue to play, enjoy golf and submit scores. In addition, players are encouraged to submit handicap qualifying rounds, to have more scores available on their scoring record, that reflect their playing performance. Players should keep informed of the general principles of the new system, but don't need to know the details or make preparations regarding calculations.

Handicap Committees

Handicap Committees should keep well informed and in tune with the awareness campaign, attentive to future training schedules and the implementation plan. Also, available to support their players and other Club bodies and Committees regarding the change process. They need to ensure that all their players' qualifying rounds are accurately recorded, in a timely manner.

Committee in charge of the Competition

Technical Committees should keep well informed, in tune with the awareness campaign, and coordinated with the Handicap Committee. They should also be attentive to any possible need of changes to Terms of Competition, namely regarding terminology.

Golf Courses

Golf Courses should keep well informed, in tune with the awareness campaign and alert to the implementation plan. They will be receiving updated Handicap Tables, to be distributed during the first half of 2020. They should also consider terminology issues and be aware of the implementation schedule, when they are preparing to print scorecards.

How will the WHS training take place in Portugal?

Training initiatives will be gradual and essentially divided into two groups:

- Awareness Campaign: the campaign will continue with informative and generic videos on the main elements of the future Rules of Handicapping. Its purpose will be to make available the principles, concepts and terminology, in a simplified way.
- Training program: structured training will be aimed at handicap managers and sports agents.



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Materials to become available include:

- Simplified general informative materials;
- More technical educational materials for Handicap Committees;
- The edition for Portugal of the Rules of Handicapping, complemented by the Handicap Regulations for Portugal (Appendix P).

How will the transition take place?

The transition will be calculated on the FPG's Central Handicap System, based on the player's handicap record. The FPG is planning to make the handicap updated to WHS, available for analysis by the player's Handicap Committee, and then to the player, before the date of entry into force. The WHS scoring records will be available, in advance, through the Central Handicap System and myFPG.

Handicap acceptable scores will be recalculated as Score Differentials. For now, Handicap Committees and players can view, still in the EGA scoring record, the SGD values; although they are not exactly the same as Score Differentials, they are approximate and provide the general idea of the values that will be used to calculate the handicap.

All players affiliated in the FPG, in 2020, who have an assigned EGA Handicap, receive a Handicap Index under the World Handicap System.

What will the new WHS mean to the FPG players?

Keep Playing and Enjoying Golf

For FPG players, no major changes are necessary from the point of view of using a handicap. Players will continue to play, enjoy golf and submit scores. All other regulatory parameters, besides the calculation system, remain in force.

Playing Handicap Calculation

The playing handicap will be based on the choice of course, tees and format of play. This will also include any handicap allowances, based on the format of play and Terms of Competition, that have been set to promote fairness of play.



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Submit the Score

Each scorecard should be submitted as soon as possible, preferably until the end of the day, for inclusion in the daily calculations.

Handicap Calculations

The calculation of the handicap formula itself will be different, i.e., based on the average of the best, most recent scores, and supported by additional automated mechanisms. All calculations will be digitally run on the Portuguese Golf Federation's Central Handicap System. The structure of delegated handicapping authority to affiliated Clubs and monitoring by Handicap Committees is also maintained.

What are the main objectives and principles of the WHS?

The WHS will unify the six handicap systems currently used around the world, into one single handicap system.

The elements of the World Handicap System were developed to promote, in golf, the following guiding principles and for the system to be:

- Inclusive and Accessible: to welcome players from different backgrounds;
- Consistent and Portable: to be fair and robust, have the confidence of all, with clear concepts, and enabling consistency and portability of handicaps;
- Modern and Adaptable: to be suited to the conditions of modern society and adaptable to different golfing cultures and different player profiles.

What are the main features of WHS?

For those wanting to know more about WHS, some highlights, taking in consideration implementation in Portugal, are:

Calculation of Handicap

The main basis of calculating is the average of the best 8 of the last 20 eligible handicap rounds. In addition, the system also includes automated control mechanisms. These are the Caps (Soft Cap and Hard Cap), which break and stop excessive handicap increases, and the Exceptional Score adjustment, whereby a further handicap reduction is applied.



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The system aims for a balance between being responsive to the evolution of the player's performance, also keeping memory of previously demonstrated playing ability. Handicap categories will cease to exist for handicapping purposes.

Acceptable Scores for Handicapping

All the qualifying current formats of play will be available. Frequent submission of scores is promoted to provide evidence of demonstrated ability. Both competitive and casual rounds are included, as well as 9- and 18-hole rounds. Scores between 10 and 17 holes may be considered for handicapping purposes. All scores must still be certified by a marker, and casual rounds continue to have the pre-registration requirement.

Course Rating and Slope Rating

The Course Rating System will continue to be used to rate courses, as part of the WHS and, therefore, allowing for portability of the player's handicap index, from course to course. 9 and 18 hole Handicap Tables will be available, covering handicaps up to 54.0.

The Handicap Index (of the player) corresponds to a Course Handicap for each set of tees. In addition, a Handicap Allowance may be applied to the Course Handicap depending on the format of play and the Terms of Competition.

Playing Conditions

A statistical feature will continue to consider the impact of abnormal playing conditions, namely regarding course and weather conditions. This will be designated as PCC, calculated at the end of the day.

Daily Revisions

Handicaps are updated at the end of the day, therefore scores should be submitted by players and committees before the end of the day, so that they are included when the calculations are run.

Scoring Differential on the Scoring Record

For scoring record purposes, values are displayed as Score Differentials. For example, 6.2, 18.5 or 42.1. These values, calculated by the software system, represent the "handicap played to" by the player on that specific round, taking into consideration the difficulty of the tees played. Also, it continues to be adjusted, for handicapping purposes, to net double bogey as maximum score per hole (ie. the minimum number of strokes equivalent to "0" Stableford points).



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Obtaining a Handicap

For the system to be inclusive, the Handicap Committee will continue to be able to assign a handicap after the submission of a minimum of one acceptable score, with a maximum handicap of 54.0. For handicaps between 36.0 and 54.0, the simplified scheme, with no automatic increases, is also maintained.

Handicap Committee

The role of the Club's Handicap Committee regarding administration of the system, namely with the responsibilities of education and internal training about the Handicap System, monitoring and enforcing handicap regulations, and assigning, reviewing and adjusting handicaps, is identified.

The rights and responsibilities of the Technical Committee in charge of a Competition, under the Terms of Competition in what concerns handicaps, are also mentioned.

Where to get more information?

Check the [Handicaps](#) section of the FPG's portal for published information and videos.

Handicap and Course Rating Department

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