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WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

WHS

Preparations & Highlights
(Update - June 2020)



What is the updated forecast for the World Handicap System to come into effect in Portugal?

The World Handicap System is still expected to come into effect, in Portugal, during the Summer 2020.

During the last months, the preparation work has continued in full development. The official entry into force is currently predicted for the **second half of August**.

Some readjustments were needed to the phases and the way of putting into operation the transition planning, which steps include:

- Finalizing software development and testing
- Translation of the Rules of Handicapping and publication of the Procedures on the Rules of Handicapping in Portugal – Appendix P
- Preparation of complementary digital materials
- Scheduling of training sessions for Clubs and Institutional Members and conducting the digital training sessions
- Communicating and distributing materials and content
- Displaying the WHS scoring records to Handicap Committees and to players
- Concurrent software testing and clarification of questions
- Distribution of Handicap Tables to Golf Courses
- Putting in effect the Rules of Handicapping of the World Handicap System

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

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 new Club's Area and myFPG.

Handicap acceptable scores will be recalculated as Score Differentials. All players affiliated in the FPG, in 2020, who have an assigned EGA Handicap, receive a Handicap Index under the World Handicap System. For a more complete transition, including the control mechanisms of the World Handicap



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System, the transition will include recalculations of the Handicap Index, as from 2018, and with scores that, in the case of some players, can go up to 2010.

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.

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 features of WHS?

Taking in consideration the implementation in Portugal, some highlights 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. Identification of automatic handicap status based on the number of scores within a time period, will also no longer exist.

Acceptable Scores for Handicapping

Acceptable scores for handicapping purposes comprise of **individual stroke play formats**, in **organised competition and general play**, including Stableford, Par/Bogey and maximum score.

9- and 18-hole rounds are included. Scores between 10 and 17 holes may be considered for handicapping purposes.

Frequent submission of scores is promoted to provide evidence of demonstrated ability. All scores must still be certified by a marker, and general play continues 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** (100%) 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. For example, the handicap allowance recommended by the Rules of Handicap for individual Stableford competitions is 95%. This recommendation applies to medium-size field net events, with 30 or more players.

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.

Generally, a player will have the same handicap throughout the day. The scores submitted on the day, from competitions or played in general play, are posted and calculated at the end of the day. Handicap Committees may apply any particular corrections during the day or on the following days.



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For competitions played on several rounds, on consecutive days, it will be more common for the Handicap Index to remain unchanged throughout the duration of the competition. This is to facilitate the competition administration and also because the calculations of the Handicap Index follow the evolution of the demonstrated ability of the player from the last 20 scores. The Technical Committees can, also here and through the Competition Terms, establish specific conditions.

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).

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.

Cooperation between entities and Committees is promoted to ensure the various elements of the Worldwide Handicap System operate effectively.

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.

The responsibilities of the World Handicap System for Golf Courses under the Course Rating System are clarified.

In addition, the Handicap and CR Committee of the FPG also safeguards the monitoring of players with very low handicaps.



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What happens to players who are also affiliated in another country?

The transition will be calculated by the central handicap system of the FPG for all players.

After the World Handicap System comes into effect, players who are affiliated in the FPG, but are also affiliated in a different jurisdiction, will also be required to return their acceptable scores to Portugal. Players may do so by continuing to submit a foreign scoring record to their Home Club in Portugal. The Handicap Committee will scrutinize and update the Portuguese scoring record, integrating the scores in a condensed method.

The Handicap Index of the World Handicap System, recorded in the central handicap system of the FPG and updated with acceptable scores and applicable adjustments, will be the one used in Portugal.

This way, the scoring records include all information about the player's demonstrated ability. Also, the Handicap Committee of the Home Club in Portugal maintains control and monitoring of the Handicap Index and compliance with other national regulations is safeguarded.

What are the main objectives and principles of the WHS?

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.

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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