



WHS™ Player Update

2024

Detailing changes from 1 April 2024

Course Handicap™ – Change in Calculation:

Introduction of Course Rating™ Minus Par

There will be a change in the way we calculate Course Handicaps™ so that it will give golfers the number of strokes they need to play against Par (rather than the Course Rating™), making a golfer's target score to 'play to handicap' more intuitive.

Currently, your Course Handicap™ is calculated by multiplying your Handicap Index® by the Slope Rating™ of the set of tees you are playing from, divided by 113.

As of 1 April 2024, the difference between the Course Rating™ and the Par of the course you are playing will be added as well.

Course Handicap™ New Calculation

$$\text{(Handicap Index®} \times \text{Slope Rating™} / 113) + \text{(Course Rating™} - \text{Par)}$$

With the introduction of CR-Par, your target score to play to handicap will be the PAR of the course (or 36 points), and not the Course Rating figure.

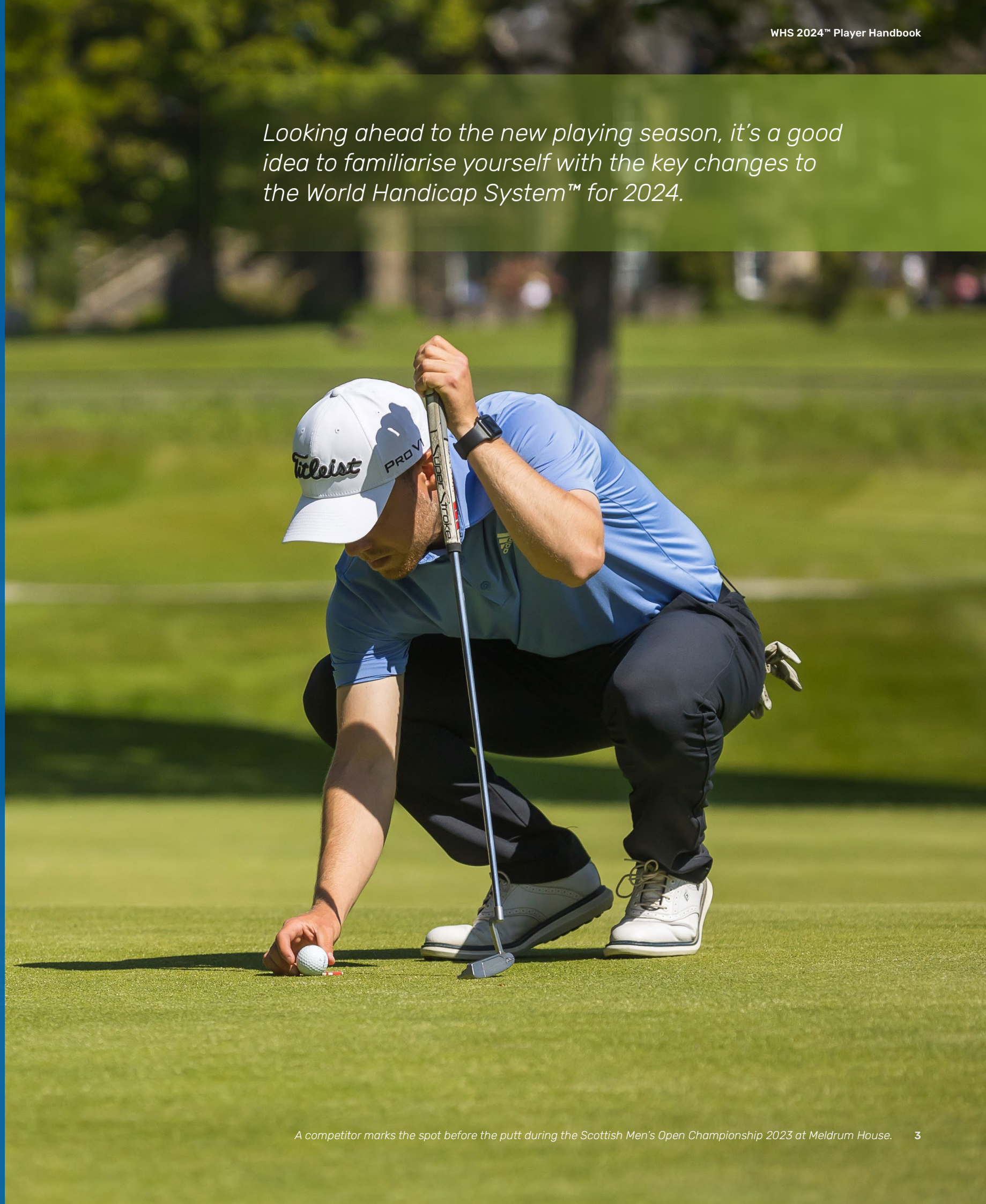
If the CR is higher than the Par, players will receive additional strokes, however if the CR is lower, they will lose strokes. This applies for all handicap indexes.

If you are worried about where to check your Course Handicap™, come the 1 April, you can easily check your Course Handicap™ via the Scottish Golf App.

Once logged into the Scottish Golf App, simply go to 'More' and click on the 'WHS™ Course Handicap™ Calculator' – from here, you can check out your Course Handicap™ at any golf course across the UK!

[Click this button to view a handy infographic](#)

Looking ahead to the new playing season, it's a good idea to familiarise yourself with the key changes to the World Handicap System™ for 2024.



Use of Expected Score for a Hole Not Played

There appears to be a general misunderstanding around what 'Expected Score' is and when it can be used if a hole is not played.

'Expected Score for a Hole Not Played' will be used when a player has not been able to complete their round (general play or competition), due to exceptional circumstances that are deemed to be valid only by the club's Handicap Committee. Valid reasons might include severe weather or injury/illness. It will also be used to scale up a nine-hole score for immediate use on your handicap record.

The minimum number of holes played for a score to be acceptable is not changing – it remains as it currently is – either 9 or 18 holes (minimum of 10 holes upwards with a valid reason only).

The expected score is calculated by the WHS™ platform and is not up to the golfer to decide, this calculation should not be confused with most likely score which is used in other jurisdictions but not authorised in GB & I.

[Click this button to view a handy infographic](#)

Improvements have been made to the method used to handle “holes not played,” which will now be based on a player’s expected score rather than a score of Net Par (as it currently is).

This new method will produce a 9-hole or 18-hole Score Differential™ that more accurately reflects the playing ability of the individual golfer.

There are only 2 situations when Expected Score can be used:

- i. An expected score will now be used to convert a 9-hole round into an 18-hole Score Differential™ for inclusion on your handicap record.
- ii. The expected score will also be used in the event where a player has not been able to complete an 18-hole round for a valid reason (and has played a minimum 10 holes).

Where a player has pre-registered their intent to return an 18-hole score for general play or competition purposes, there may be *unavoidable circumstances* where it is not possible to complete the round:

- Fading light or severe weather;
- Player injury or illness; or
- A hole being declared out of play by the Committee for maintenance or reconstruction purposes.

Provided the player has completed the minimum number of holes (10 holes) and the committee deem the player’s reason for not completing as valid, it is acceptable for a player to submit a “not started” for those holes not played (or missed out).

It is not a ‘choice’ available for the player - a player may not just ‘decide to walk in.’

As of 1 April, the incomplete round will be scaled up to an 18-hole Score Differential using a new and improved method, where an expected score differential for the holes not played, (based on your Handicap Index® and a course of standard difficulty) will be added to a score differential for the holes successfully completed.

The returned scorecard should be processed using the actual scores achieved on the holes completed but designating those not played as ‘not started’. This process will correctly allocate the correct Score Differential for the round.

If a player has not been able to complete their round, they must make their competition committee aware

Example: If only 16 holes were completed before severe weather ended play, your Score Differential would be calculated as follows:

**Score Differential for 16 Holes Played
+ Expected Score Differential for
Remaining 2 Holes**

of the situation to ensure the score is handled in the appropriate manner.

In summary, “Hole Not Played” and the application of “Expected Score”:

Can only be used when a player has not been able to complete their round (general play or competition), due to unavoidable circumstances that are deemed to be VALID only by the club’s Handicap Committee.

- The minimum number of holes completed for a score to be acceptable has been achieved; 9 holes for a pre-registered 9-hole score and 10 holes for a pre-registered 18-hole score.
- All Rules of Golf have been followed and met.
- This calculation should not be confused with “most likely score” which is used in other jurisdictions but not authorised in GB&I.
- The calculations used to calculate an expected score, includes course ratings of standard difficulty, and are not shared by the USGA.
- Any player found to be incorrectly using this rule or repeatedly not completing their round without a valid reason could be subject to a Penalty Score from their club Handicap Committee.



West Kilbride Golf Club during the PING Scottish Winter Open Series on 30 March, 2023.

Four Ball Better Ball scores now acceptable for Handicap purposes

(Important Note: this does not apply for match play).

Currently only scores from certain singles formats of play are returned to WHS™ for your Handicap Index® calculation within GB&I. As of 1 April 2024, scores from four ball (such as Strokeplay, Stableford and Par/Bogey) will be acceptable for handicap purposes in GB&I.

These additional and popular formats of play will allow more scores to be returned for handicap purposes based on some specified criteria.

How it works

Once the acceptable pairs/team score is returned to WHS™ through the local competition software, WHS™ will look for specific criteria, which is as follows:

One player of the pair must have scored on a minimum of 9 holes.

The total pair score must be at least 42 points or 6 under Par.

If these triggers are hit, then the golfer who has scored on the minimum 9 holes will have an upscaling value added for their un-played holes based upon their playing partners score and if the score equates to 36+ points/level par or better it will calculate a Score Differential™ and the score will be added to record for handicap purposes.

This score may or may not be one of their best 8 Score Differentials used to update/recalculate their Handicap Index®. For scores not hitting the specified trigger points, the score will still be added to records but not used in calculations, as it will be indicated so in the records.

[Click this button to view a handy infographic](#)

Team Match Play Allowance Application

The application of allowances in team match play events will change from 1 April so that the percentage is applied to the difference between the players' full Course Handicaps™, taken from the lowest player upwards.

The WHA (World Handicap Authority) have clarified that for match play when no computer software is being used, that the Course Handicaps™ should be rounded.

Therefore, from 1 April, only the rounded Course Handicap™ tables should be used.

For example, for Four-Ball Better-Ball match play, currently each player needs to calculate 90% of their own Course Handicap™ (and there is confusion as to whether to use the exact or rounded Course Handicap™).

From April the Playing Handicap™ is 100% of your full Course Handicap™ - and then 90% of the difference is taken from the low player.

Benefits

- Makes it much simpler and easier for players to work out their strokes on the first tee - from 1 April players should always use the rounded Course Handicap charts only.
- Brings in consistency. It will avoid any confusion that exists at the moment - for example, currently different clubs in a match play league could adopt a different method of rounding (from 1 April there will no longer be an option to choose between exact CH's or rounded CH's).



Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) Adjustments Made More Frequent

A common piece of feedback received since the introduction of WHS™, concerns the Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) and its conservative nature.

This has been relayed to the R&A and USGA.

The Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) within GB & I has already been modified to increase.

[Click this button to view a handy infographic](#)

Be prepared for the 2024 playing season



A competitor hits an iron on day one of the Helen Holm Scottish Women's Open at Troon Portland on 21 April 2023.

Cross Border Scores from secondary golf club

Are you a member of a club in Scotland with a secondary membership of a club elsewhere in Great Britain and Ireland?

The cross-border transfer of scores has been in operation now for over a year. This means, scores played at either club you are a member of can be automatically posted back to your CDH Handicap Record, without you having to manually report the score back.

To enable this, you will need to check with your Home Club that your CDH numbers from the two (or more) National Associations are linked. If not, we would recommend that your Secondary Club contacts their National Association for guidance on how to carry this out.

Submit your General Play Score from England, Wales, or Ireland through the Scottish Golf App

If you are travelling to play golf elsewhere within Great Britain and Ireland, you can now use the Scottish Golf App to return a General Play Score automatically back to your handicap record.

Need to familiarise yourself with the process before the start of the season?

[Click this button to watch our tutorial](#)

International score submission

Currently, it is not possible to return a score from a country outside of GB & I via the Scottish Golf App (this is also the case in England, Ireland and Wales).

However, you can still submit the score manually back to your Home Club for inclusion on your record.

Your golf club will require the following information:

- Course Name
- Tee Set
- WHS™ Course and Slope Rating™
- Par
- Adjusted Gross Score
- PCC Adjustment (if applicable)

It is important to note, should you wish to return a score from overseas, your golf club should be notified of your intent, prior to play.



Penalty Score – Rule 1.3

All golfers are reminded of their obligations under the Rules of Handicapping to make the best score possible at each hole and ensure all acceptable scores are submitted for handicap purposes. Where a golfer repeatedly is in breach of the Rules of Handicapping, the golf club handicap committee are within their right to consider the application of a Penalty Score depending on the premeditated nature of the breach.

Penalty scores are applicable for two reasons:

- Reason One – A player has indicated their intention to return a score (by registering intent to submit a Competition or General Play score) and then commencing play; but then does not submit that score by whatever means the club prescribes.
- Reason Two – A score is returned after commencing a round where:
 - » A) No hole scores are entered, or the score is incomplete
 - » B) The player persistently fails to return an appropriate score
 - » C) Handicap manipulation is suspected.
The Committee then needs to determine whether the reason for the non-submission or incomplete round is valid – examples may include, but are not restricted to:
 - » i. Illness or injury to the player
 - » ii. Insufficient light
 - » iii. Emergency
 - » iv. Dangerous weather conditions (e.g., thunder & lightning)

Invalid reasons (as examples) may include, but are not restricted to:

- » i. Inclement weather
- » ii. Play too slow
- » iii. Not playing well enough

Regardless of the validity of the situation, whenever a player indicates that they will return a score and commences play, a score must be submitted.

Whenever a score is not submitted, or is incomplete, the Committee must make every effort to determine the score that the player had made by contacting the player, contacting the player's partners, reviewing the marker's score, etc., so that the validity of the 'non-return' or incomplete round may be determined. Net double bogey is only applied for handicap purposes if the hole is started but not completed; or if the hole is scored as a zero in a Stableford format.

Two competitors at the 2023 Senior Scottish Men's Open at Stirling Golf Club.



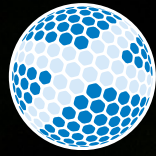
Rule 3.3 Explained – when a player starts a hole but does not hole out

When a player starts a hole but does not hole out for a valid reason, subject to other provisions set out within the Rules of Handicapping, the player must record their score as appropriate for the situation and depending on the format of play – e.g., Net Double Bogey or zero Stableford points.

Your competition software should also have the option to select 'hole not completed', which is the correct method of score entry in this scenario.

Remember, even if you do fail to complete a hole, it is important you keep playing and endeavour to return the best score possible for each hole.

The system will automatically calculate a Score Differential and there is every chance you can still return a Score Differential that will count towards one of your best eight scores!



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