

HRGS - HANDICAP RE-CALCULATION CHANGES

New worldwide handicap re-calculation rules for 2020.

In 2020 a new method for re-calculating handicaps after a round is being introduced jointly by the R&A and USGA. These new handicapping rules will eventually supersede all current six country or regional authorised handicapping re-calculation systems being used today around the world. For us in Spain the most common authorised system for actual handicap calculations currently is the European Golf Association (EGA) method which will be replaced. In the UK and Ireland it will be the current CONGU calculations which will be replaced. Note that these changes are specifically devised for the re-calculation of handicap revisions after a competition is completed and in no way will alter the method of calculating results and placings within a particular competition itself.

In its simplest terms, the new 2020 handicap re-calculations will be based entirely on historical scorecards data. Revised handicaps will be calculated as an AVERAGE of a players best eight rounds out of their last twenty rounds submitted to the system, eliminating the current calculation method of revisions using the latest scorecard only. Accurate historical scorecard data capture is key to these new calculations. The current handicap elements of Categories and associated handicap reduction factors, some Buffer zones, '0.1' back on handicaps and all the current handicap calculation elements that were based on the latest single scorecard are to be eliminated.

Each individual scorecard for a round submitted will generate a base handicap index (i.e. gross scores less course and tee slopes etc) which equates to the golfer's actual handicap performance in that particular round submitted. It is this base handicap index for that round that will be used to determine the golfer's best rounds. It is all based purely on an adjusted total gross score with players stableford points score eliminated entirely from the handicap calculations. Stableford rounds are converted to adjusted gross scores for this purpose. Clearly, submitting rounds from different courses with different slope and tee difficulty indexes will generate a different base handicap index for a round even though the actual gross score may well be identical in its total strokes.

With the technique of averaging the best eight handicap indexes out of twenty rounds, it is attempting to help lesson any severe upward or downward movement from one or two particularly good or bad rounds and aims to provide a more accurate and continuously measured handicap reference relating more directly to a player's current and ongoing golfing ability and potential over a longer period of time.

There are 'safety net' boundaries also contained in the calculations to limit the amount of handicap change possible, upwards or downwards within a time period.

Once our Handicap Master software provider makes available the 2020 upgrade version to HRGS (currently planned for Nov 2020) we will review the upgrade and implications of it on our HRGS software test system and determine a planned way forward for a live implementation when appropriate. We expect that this version will initially contain the capability for a 'local' handicap re-calculation process within HRGS software only.

Note: The other R&A / USGA initiative for a single Worldwide Handicap has been delegated to the official Golf Associations in each country or regional body to determine how this technical element would operate. As yet, the Spanish Golf Federation, who are responsible for official handicaps for players in Spain, have not issued any guidance on this. This concept of a single World Handicap, maintained and supported by linkages and updates from every country in the world would involve many technical computer interfaces and complex administrative aspects to be considered. The RFEG in Spain will need to determine how these interfaces could possibly occur, who would be deemed eligible to participate in this and within what timescale. We await any official information.