

# World Handicapping System

## Part 4 – Course & Playing Handicaps

**The World Handicapping System (WHS) will come into effect on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020**

OK, so in our previous edition we saw how a player obtains his initial handicap index. In this edition we will look at how a player uses that handicap index to determine how many shots they receive.

The number of shots received is dependent upon the course/set of tees being played and the format of golf (singles, 4BBB, matchplay etc) that will be played.

So, the first element of this is the Course Handicap, lets revisit the definition...

***Course Handicap - The number of strokes a player will receive for a specific set of tees on the golf course being played***

So basically, what we are doing is converting our Handicap Index, which you will remember is based on a “standard golf course”, to a handicap that is relevant to the course we are about to play.

The underlying calculation is quite simple...

Course Handicap = Handicap Index / 113 \* Slope Rating of the set of Tees you are about to play from

So, if I had a Handicap Index of 14 and were about to play off the White Tees at Brett Vale my Course Handicap would be  $14 / 113 * 124 = 15.4$  which would be rounded to 15.

If I were playing at Ipswich, where the slope rating is 138, my course handicap would work out to be  $14 / 113 * 138 = 17.1$  which would be rounded to 17.

Course Handicap is always expressed as a whole number and that whole number is used in the calculation of Playing Handicap.

So you can see that the number of strokes you will get when playing a round is dependent upon the slope rating of the set of tees you are about to play from.

Now...you are all sat there reading this thinking this is utter madness and that you will never be able to work out what 124/113ths of your Index is going to be...luckily you don't have to. Every course will have a set of “look up tables” at prominent positions (noticeboards, close by the first tee) where you can just identify the set of tees you are playing from, read across from your handicap index and determine how many shots you get for that course.

Indeed, many of you who play regularly on the continent may already be familiar with such tables (they are often on scorecards) even if you might not have used them.

In cases where a player uses a Player Entry Terminal to pre-register for their round of golf, the Player Entry Terminal will also calculate their Course Handicap and Playing Handicap. (We don't currently have this facility at Brett Vale but are investigating the various options for installing one).

Additionally, there is talk of a mobile phone app being developed that will allow a player to access his handicapping records and undertake such Course Handicap calculations...whether such an app materialises before November the 2<sup>nd</sup> is another matter altogether!!!

An example of a Course Handicap Table for Brett Vale's White tees is shown below...



## Course Handicap Table



England Golf

Brett Vale Golf Club (1002478) - Brett Vale

Men's - White

Course Rating™: 68.7 - Slope Rating®: 124

Handicap Index®	Course Handicap™	Handicap Index®	Course Handicap™
+5.0 to +4.2	+5	24.2 to 25.0	27
+4.1 to +3.2	+4	25.1 to 25.9	28
+3.1 to +2.3	+3	26.0 to 26.8	29
+2.2 to +1.4	+2	26.9 to 27.7	30
+1.3 to +0.5	+1	27.8 to 28.7	31
+0.4 to 0.4	0	28.8 to 29.6	32
0.5 to 1.3	1	29.7 to 30.5	33
1.4 to 2.2	2	30.6 to 31.4	34
2.3 to 3.1	3	31.5 to 32.3	35
3.2 to 4.1	4	32.4 to 33.2	36
4.2 to 5.0	5	33.3 to 34.1	37
5.1 to 5.9	6	34.2 to 35.0	38
6.0 to 6.8	7	35.1 to 35.9	39
6.9 to 7.7	8	36.0 to 36.9	40
7.8 to 8.6	9	37.0 to 37.8	41
8.7 to 9.5	10	37.9 to 38.7	42
9.6 to 10.4	11	38.8 to 39.6	43
10.5 to 11.3	12	39.7 to 40.5	44
11.4 to 12.3	13	40.6 to 41.4	45
12.4 to 13.2	14	41.5 to 42.3	46
13.3 to 14.1	15	42.4 to 43.2	47
14.2 to 15.0	16	43.3 to 44.1	48
15.1 to 15.9	17	44.2 to 45.1	49
16.0 to 16.8	18	45.2 to 46.0	50
16.9 to 17.7	19	46.1 to 46.9	51
17.8 to 18.6	20	47.0 to 47.8	52
18.7 to 19.5	21	47.9 to 48.7	53
19.6 to 20.5	22	48.8 to 49.6	54
20.6 to 21.4	23	49.7 to 50.5	55
21.5 to 22.3	24	50.6 to 51.4	56
22.4 to 23.2	25	51.5 to 52.3	57
23.3 to 24.1	26	52.4 to 53.3	58
		53.4 to 54.0	59

### INSTRUCTIONS

\* When using the table, find the range containing your Handicap Index® in the left column. Play with the Course Handicap™ which corresponds with it in the right column.

\* Please make sure that the tees from which you are playing correspond with the tees for which this table applies.

The three tables for our tees will be combined into onto a sign that will be located either somewhere close to the first tee or in a prominent public place around the clubhouse.

One final point....despite what the instructions on the table above say, the Course Handicap is not necessarily how many strokes you will actually receive when you are playing.

Just as today under the CONGU system, different formats of golf have different handicap allowances, so the Course Handicap is your start point for determining how many shots you actually get during play. The number of shots you get is known as your Playing Handicap.

Revisiting our definitions...

**Playing Handicap** - Represents the number of strokes a player receives when playing with or against other players in a competition round

So, the main purpose of Playing Handicap is to provide equity between golfers when playing in a competition. It is only relevant for competition results purposes. The Playing Handicap calculation is quite simple...

Playing Handicap = Course Handicap \* Handicap Allowance for the format you are playing.

Let's have a look at the allowances in the table below...

<b>Format of Play</b>	<b>Type of Round</b>	<b>Recommended Handicap Allowance</b>
Stroke play	Individual	95%
	Individual Stableford	95%
	Individual Par/Bogey	95%
	Individual Maximum Score	95%
	Four-Ball	85%
	Four-Ball Stableford	85%
	Four-Ball Par/Bogey	90%
Match Play	Individual	100%
	Four-Ball	90%
Other	Foursomes	50% of combined team handicap
	Greensomes	60% low handicap + 40% high handicap
	Pinehurst/Chapman	60% low handicap + 40% high handicap
	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%
	Scramble (4 players)	25%/20%/15%/10% from lowest to highest handicap
	Scramble (2 players)	35% low/15% high
	Total score of 2 match play	100%
	Best 1 of 4 Par/Bogey	75%
	Best 2 of 4 Par/Bogey	80%
	Best 3 of 4 Par/Bogey	90%
	4 of 4 Par/Bogey	100%

OK....so there are a few formats there that we may or may not be familiar with and interestingly allowances have been specified for 2 and 4 ball scrambles...but not a three ball!!!!

Most allowances are unchanged....full handicap for singles matchplay, 90% for 4BBB matchplay, 50% of combined for Foursomes, 60/40 for Greensomes, as examples.

We have a slight change when it comes to 4 ball better ball strokeplay (either medal or stableford) where the allowance has changed from 90% to 85%.

However, many of you will have immediately noticed the proverbial elephant in the room at the very top of the table. The allowance for singles strokeplay events (medal and stableford) has changed from Full Handicap to 95%. I know the table (taken directly from the WHS manual) indicates that the allowances are “recommended” but it is currently understood that these allowances will be mandatory in the England Golf region.

Players are going to have to get used to the fact now that they will need to do a Playing Handicap calculation when they play in a “normal” Medal or Stableford....they can't just use the Course Handicap and go out and play.

With this 4<sup>th</sup> edition, golfers should pretty much have all the information at their disposal as to how their Handicap Indexes are calculated and how they use them to determine how many shots they get when playing a particular format of golf.

Obviously, there is a bit more underlying detail than what has been presented but a lot of it is really only the concern of the Handicapping Committee and players don't really need to know much more than what has been presented so far.

However, there will be a couple of more “editions” of these guides. In the next one we will take you through a handicap progression and see how new scores contribute to a player's scoring record and how they have an effect on the Handicap Index.

We will also highlight some of the mechanisms that the system uses to ensure that players' handicaps don't rise too quickly and how “exceptional scores” are handled...along with a few other “titbits” of information which, whilst not essential, may be useful to be aware of.

Members who wish to ask questions about the WHS or anything they read here or elsewhere, may do so by submitting them to the following e-mail address: [whtquestions@btinternet.com](mailto:whtquestions@btinternet.com)

We are all learning, and nobody has yet seen a full copy of the finalised Handicapping Rule book, so we may not be able to answer some questions at this moment in time. As soon as we can do so, we will answer all outstanding questions.