



MALTA GOLF ASSOCIATION **INFORMATION BULLETIN**

WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

R&A **USGA**

9th October 2019

Dear Members

2020 will start to see the implementation of the World Handicap System throughout the golfing globe. Software developers are making an effort to have their programs in place whilst golf clubs are working hard to have their course rated in time for this implementation according to the time scales being provided. Without such a course rating a golf club would be unable to implement the WHS and, in effect, this would mean that its members cannot have a handicap attached to their name.

On a local level, we took the initiative to have the RMGC Course rated some years back and it is understood that this rating can be used now so that Malta can also implement the WHS in time with other countries with a revision of the rating exercise taking place as soon as the development plan for the course is completed.

This transition to the WHS has also meant that Malta moves away from having CONGU as its regional governing body for handicapping. Instead we are now under the umbrella of the EUROPEAN GOLF ASSOCIATION.

Indeed, CONGU have already informed us that Malta's affiliation with them will expire at the end of this year albeit we can continue using their system until we make the transition to the WHS. Our ability to use the WHS is also already linked through the European Golf Association and, like other European countries, this is recognized by the World Handicapping Authority which falls under the administration of The R&A and The USGA.

As we move from CONGU to the WHS, your current CONGU Handicap will become a HANDICAP INDEX which can be translated to a playing handicap according to the particular set of tees of the course you intend to play on. We will cover this in more detail nearer the date of the transition.

What is important to know – especially for those who do not have enough score returns in place – is that the system works best when a sufficient number of score returns are linked to the player. Indeed, the WHS will start to calculate your Handicap Index using an average of the best 8 out of the last 20 scores.



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We understand that this type of calculation is also going to be used to change your current CONGU Handicap to a WHS HANDICAP INDEX. The exact formula is still to be provided by CONGU and/or the EGA but essentially the calculation will consider your last best 8 out of 20 scores under the CONGU system and translate them to a Handicap Index. It is envisaged that this calculation could see a change to what you know as your current handicap but that this change will be capped to 1 stroke either way. Unfortunately, we cannot elaborate much more because, as I said, we still await final directions.

At this stage, the most important thing for a new player to the game or one who does not return enough qualifying cards is to address the “problem” by returning some more cards between now and the end of the current RMGC season.

Finally, below we provide you with various educational links for your perusal. Ctrl+click on the titles should lead you to the respective video.

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| <u>VIDEO 1 Coming Together</u> | > introduces the WHS. |
| <u>VIMEO A Player Journey</u> | > what will the WHS mean to you? |
| <u>VIMEO B Inclusive System</u> | > focuses on Inclusivity. |
| <u>VIDEO 2 Inclusive System</u> | > a handicap system for everyone. |
| <u>VIDEO 3 Average of best 8 scores</u> | > explains the calculation of the best 8 out of 20. |
| <u>VIDEO 4 Scoring Record</u> | > explains different available possibilities to record scores. |
| <u>VIMEO C Course and Slope Rating</u> | > focuses on Course and Slope Rating. |
| <u>VIDEO 5 Course Rating</u> | > outlines the Course Rating methodology. |
| <u>VIDEO 6 Playing Handicap</u> | > explains how a course playing handicap is obtained. |
| <u>VIMEO D Handicap Formula</u> | > focuses on the Handicap Formula. |
| <u>VIDEO 7 Net Double Bogey</u> | > explains how the WHS calculates bad scores. |
| <u>VIDEO 8 Playing Conditions</u> | > explains the reasoning behind this calculation. |

Enjoy the game.

William Beck *obo The MGA Executive Council*