

## **BGA Handicap Policy – Appendix**

### **The integration of the IBGA Handicap System (IBGAS) and the World Handicap System (WHS)**

**REVISED: AUGUST 2022 (WITH EFFECT FROM 1 OCTOBER 2022)**

#### Overview

The WHS system will become the default handicap system for determining players' playing handicaps for IBGA-sponsored events. This will come into full effect once the IBGA is satisfied that all countries have successfully launched WHS and all WHS scores are accessible for worldwide peer review.

From that time players who have access to WHS (either through a golf club or their national blind golf association), and have captured all appropriate scores, will use their WHS index to determine their playing handicap (under the RandA/USGA rules for the WHS – see link below). Players who do not have access to WHS will use an IBGAS handicap index to determine their playing handicap.

The first steps towards this goal will take place from 1 October 2022 (referred to below as the “implementation date”). From that date:

1. The IBGAS will be adapted to produce a handicap index, which will be a simplified version of the WHS index (as outlined below).  
(Thus, all players will have a handicap index, either through WHS or the IBGA.)
2. Where players have access to WHS (and hence have both a WHS index and an IBGA index) they will use the lower of their WHS index and IBGAS index to determine their playing handicap for all IBGA-sponsored events.  
(This condition is an interim measure, to be removed when a player has an appropriate WHS index (as outlined in the point below), and will help to reduce anomalies which may arise initially between players with and without access to WHS.)
3. When a player has a WHS index comprising of the full 20 rounds and including all blind golf events and other admissible rounds played in that time – confirmed with the IBGA handicap committee by the handicap secretary of the player's home national blind golf association – then the WHS index alone is used.

#### WHS handicap indexes

Players may have access to a WHS index through a golf club or through their national blind golf association.

The following should be adhered to:

1. A player's WHS index must be based in the country of their home national blind golf association.
2. Players may only have one WHS handicap index within a handicapping jurisdiction (e.g. throughout the USA). Where a player has more than one WHS index, for example through an overseas club membership, they must use their lowest index unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed with the IBGA handicap committee.
3. Where a blind golf association provides access to a WHS handicap index for its members it should capture all acceptable scores on that system and not just those pertaining to blind golf events.
4. Players with access to the WHS must submit all IBGA and pan-disability scores to the WHS.

All players' qualifying rounds (from blind golf and pan-disability events catering for blind golfers) should continue to be submitted to the IBGA.

Associations should, where possible, show their member's WHS indexes on their websites until a worldwide peer review has been set up by the R&A/USGA Or by the IBGA.

#### Adjustments to the current IBGA Handicap System

1. The IBGAS will be converted to calculating a Handicap Index (as opposed to calculating course handicaps as it does at present). These Handicap Indexes will be applied in the same way as the WHS Handicap Indexes for competition play. To achieve this:
  - (a) Scores currently held on the IBGAS will be adjusted to make an approximate allowance for Slope Ratings.
  - (b) This will be done by treating all rounds captured before the implementation date as having been played on a course with a slope rating of 125.
2. For all rounds played after the implementation date:
  - (a) Actual slope ratings will be used to determine differentials.
  - (b) Where Course Rating or Slope is not available for future scores on a particular course, the following will be assumed:
    - Course Rating shall be taken as the Course Par; and
    - Slope shall be taken as 125.
3. Course ratings and differentials will be displayed to one decimal place on the IBGA handicaps website.

4. There will be no PCC adjustment or caps on handicap increases built into the IBGAS, but may be imposed on an ad hoc basis at the discretion of the IBGA Handicap Committee.
5. The IBGAS will continue to be based only on IBGA qualifying rounds.

### Restrictions and limits

Whilst no restrictions can be made for general play, for IBGA-sponsored events there will be a minimum Course Rating of 68 and a minimum Slope of 120 for medal Strokeplay. For Stableford events lower Course Ratings or Slopes will be permitted. Variations to the restrictions for medal events need to be pre-approved by the IBGA Board of Directors.

For IBGA-sponsored events the maximum handicap indexes for Strokeplay medal competitions (for both men and women) are as follows:

B1: 48      B2: 40      B3: 32

Competitors with indexes above these limits should play in a Stableford event.

### Handicap Allowances

As indicated in the WHS rules, Handicap allowances are designed to provide equity for players of all levels of ability in each format of play. Handicap Allowances are applied to the Course Handicap as the final step in calculating a player's Playing Handicap.

The following table sets out the recommended handicap allowances based on medium-sized field net events. These should be used in IBGA-sponsored events.

Some countries may, however, operate slightly differing allowances, for example in Australia a 93% allowance is applied for individual Strokeplay. In such circumstances the host of an IBGA-sponsored event may opt to use their country's standard allowances.

Format of Play	Type of Round	Recommended Handicap Allowance
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%	

### Eligibility to participate in blind golf events

Eligibility to participate in World Championships or Vision Cup events will still require players to have played at least 7 qualifying blind golf rounds in the preceding two years.

### Links

R&A / USGA, Rules of golf.

<https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/rules/rules-2019/rules-of-golf/rules-and-interpretations.html#!ruletype=pe&section=rule&rulenum=1>

R&A / USGA, Rules of WHS.

<https://www.usga.org/handicapping/roh/2020-rules-of-handicapping.html>

R&A / USGA, Worldwide course rating

<https://ncrdb.usga.org/>