



The WHS in Great Britain & Ireland: Explaining Key Areas

Topic 4: The Conditions Were Tough Today... Why Wasn't There a Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) Adjustment?

Over 100 federations have successfully transitioned to the new World Handicap System (WHS) – a milestone achievement in creating a modern handicap system for all golfers everywhere.

Launched in January 2020, the WHS provides golfers with a unified and more inclusive handicapping system for the first time. Developed by The R&A and USGA in close coordination with existing handicapping authorities, the WHS provides all golfers with a consistent measure of playing ability.

The WHS continued its roll out to Great Britain and Ireland in November in 2020 and, so far, the system has been well received by both federations and golf club administrators, with players also seeing the benefits.

Feedback from across Great Britain and Ireland has identified five topics where golfers and clubs would benefit from further information and, over the course of five weeks, The R&A is offering further guidance on the below areas:

- No Returns and 0.1 Increases
- 20 Score Record
- Mixed/Multi Tee Events
- Playing Conditions Calculation
- 95% Handicap Allowance and Equity

Why is there rarely an adjustment for PCC on days when the playing conditions feel challenging?

- The PCC is designed to detect when the playing conditions are 'abnormal' and reflect any significant changes in scoring difficulty on the day, on a specific course
- The same calculation is carried out all around the world on a daily basis, and it happens automatically within the software. It is not an optional element of the WHS and it cannot be 'switched off'.
- The mechanism was deliberately designed to be conservative in nature - and to only trigger an adjustment when the scores returned on the day demonstrate that the playing conditions are truly 'abnormal'.

- The PCC will not be triggered due to the poor performance of a small number of players in the field.
- In order for the PCC to trigger an adjustment, a significant percentage of players must return scores which are higher or lower than their *expected* scoring range
- If significantly fewer players than anticipated submit a score within their expected scoring range, conditions are determined to be harder than normal
- If significantly more players than anticipated submit a score within their expected scoring range, conditions are determined to be easier than normal
- On days when the conditions are perceived to be difficult but there is no adjustment for PCC, this will be because a significant number of players have scored within their expected range
- It is not just weather that can cause scores to be higher or lower than expected, as course conditions and course set up also play a key role and can contribute to a PCC adjustment (or lack of it)
- Players are not expected to play to their handicap every time they go out, and this is reflected in the player's expected scoring range that is used for the PCC
- Taking all of the above into account, there may be more days without a PCC adjustment than some would expect – even when the conditions *feel* challenging
- As the WHS continues to settle in, the impact of PCC will be monitored around the world and, as part of a co-ordinated review process, it will be determined whether any changes are necessary in the future