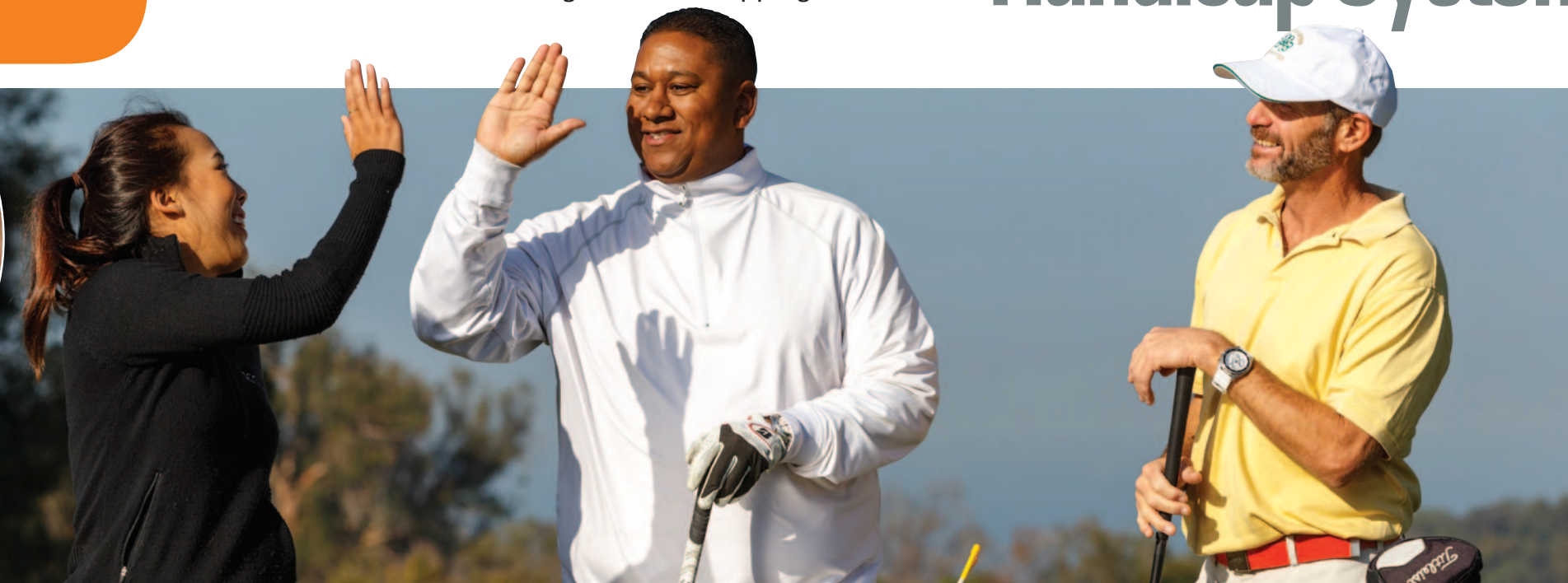


# 18

## Things to Like about

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PAR LEFT: USGA/CHRIS KEANE; LEFT: USGA/DARREN CARROLL

**1 Global reach** – The WHS is...well...worldwide. By year's end, wherever you go, wherever you play, Course and Slope Ratings will greet you. And, you will be able to return those scores.

**2 Daily Updates** – Play today... post today... receive a new Handicap Index (HI) tomorrow morning. Talk about a "current" handicap!

**3 my NCGA App** – For the first time ever, more NCGA scores were submitted by app in 2019 than via the posting kiosks at golf courses. Capture your new HI in the morning...determine your Course Handicap (CH)...play...post before midnight. Rinse, repeat.

**4 Ghin.com** – Check out the features. My favorite? The ability to "follow" a golfer(s). Look up your 10 golfing buddies once. Designate you wish to "follow" each. Click the "Following" tab thereafter to view their current handicaps.

**5 Best 8 of 20 calculation** – The new math for determining your handicap is more responsive to the entry of a good score... less responsive to a poor one. Reducing the number from 10 to eight of 20 also rewards consistency.

**6 Fewer scores to acquire a HI** – Brand-new golfers are issued a handicap faster. You only need to post scores for 54 holes... in either 9 and/or 18-hole increments.

**7 Maximum HI of 54.0** – Let's face it, there are many golfers with games that fall in the high 40's/low 50's HI range, which rendered the old limits of 36.4 (men) and 40.4 (women) inaccurate and a source of discouragement. With a goal of greater inclusiveness, the WHS gives such golfers a meaningful number that they can track.

**8 Par is important** – Par held very little significance within the USGA Handicap System (single-digit handicappers limited to a max hole score of double-bogey, "par, plus any handicap strokes" applied to unplayed holes). Under the WHS, no change to the un-played holes policy. Par impacts the net-double-bogey procedure. And par is a factor in the computation of a course handicap (CH).



USGA/DARREN CARROLL

## the New World Handicap System (WHS)

WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

**12 Limit on upward movement of a HI** – Caps are in place to prevent wild upswings in your HI. A soft cap starts pumping the brakes once you stray 3.0 strokes above your Low Index of the past twelve months. Without club intervention (for injury, illness, etc.), a hard cap prevents an increase of more than 5.0 strokes.

**13 Exceptional scores** – Submit any score 7.0 – 9.9 strokes below your HI and you will be assessed an automatic 1.0 stroke reduction. 10.0 below and more, a 2.0 stroke reduction.

**14 The USGA Course Rating System** – One of the wisest decisions made in devising the WHS was to adopt the former USGA Course Rating System. No need to re-rate all courses, current ratings will do just fine, thank you.

**15 Section 3-5...gone!** – Section 3-5 was the adjustment for golfers competing from different tees. It awarded the difference in Course Ratings between tees to the golfers playing the set with the higher value. No more.

With CH now calibrated to par, no adjustment required if the pars of the multiple tees are identical. If different, those playing the tees with the higher par receive additional strokes equal to the difference in par...and pars do not have decimal points!

**16 New Handicap Allowances** – New and improved handicap allowance recommendations for popular formats of play have been developed. Everything from an individual gross/net competition (95% allowance for fields of 30 and above), to scrambles. Check out Appendix C of the Rules of Handicapping.

**17 New Stroke Index Allocation** – The recommendation for the ranking of stroke holes is now based on a raw difficulty standpoint (difficulty versus par) and not from the match play perspective that prevailed for decades. As these stroke play derived rankings will likewise be used for match play, it is recommended that certain accommodations be made to spread out the strokes, to avoid back-to-back high rankings, etc. See Appendix E of the Rules of Handicapping.

**18 New CH Tables** – The USGA has developed better, cleaner CH tables that we hope to distribute soon. CH can also be determined via app, kiosk and ghin.com. 🍌

**9 Net Double Bogey** – Easily the source of the greatest confusion surrounding the WHS. I like the maximum-hole score procedure because it is tried and true (been used worldwide for years) and is favored by the mathematicians to generate superior results...and it's not rocket science!

Imagine mapping out your entire CH over 18 holes according to the Stroke Index rankings. A 25, for example, receives two pops on the 1-7 ranked holes; one stroke on the remaining. Gross double bogey plus these handicap strokes represent your max hole score for posting purposes.

**10 Course Rating minus par** – Prior to 2020, a CH represented the number of strokes you needed to play to the Course Rating of the tees you were playing (i.e., achieve a net score equal to the Course Rating). Now a CH represents the number of strokes you need to play to par. This is achieved by factoring the difference between the Course Rating and par directly into the CH.

Where once your CH varied little between tees, now you will find you receive more strokes from highly rated tees/fewer strokes from tees that carry a low Course Rating.

**11 Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC)** – A score of 80 at Poppy Hills on a day the wind is howling is a better performance than an 80 on a dead calm day... that's common sense. The old system could not detect this; the WHS can.

The PCC is an automatic scores-driven calculation performed each evening that determines if conditions on that day of play (weather and/or course conditions, course set-up, etc.) at that golf course differed from "normal" enough to significantly skew scores up or down. If so, those scores/performances will be adjusted down or up.