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 **NEW WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM PREPARES FOR IMPLEMENTATION BEGINNING 2020**

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. and ST. ANDREWS, SCOTLAND (April 30, 2019) – Golf’s new World Handicap System, which is designed to bring the game of golf under a single set of Rules for handicapping and provide a more consistent measure of players’ ability between different regions of the world, remains on track for implementation starting in 2020.

Education has begun with events being held in Singapore, South Africa, Great Britain and Ireland, Japan, Argentina, Brazil, Continental Europe, Canada, the Caribbean and the USA.

A secure resource portal, accessible via [whs.com](http://www.whs.com), has also been launched to provide national associations with a library of materials that they can use to help support their own education efforts.

Coinciding with this release, the USGA and The R&A are launching a social media video campaign today to remind golfers of the eight key features of the new Rules of Handicapping and to reveal more details. These features include:

* Minimum number of scores to establish a Handicap Index and maximum Handicap Index of 54.0
* Basis of calculation of Handicap Index
* Acceptability of scores for handicap purposes
* Course Rating and Slope Rating
* Calculation of a Playing Handicap
* Maximum hole score for handicap purposes
* Adjustments for abnormal playing conditions
* Frequency of updating a Handicap Index

Significant progress has been made in preparation for the rollout of the new system, which includes building a library of education materials, finalizing the new Rules of Handicapping, release of the technical specifications and the continuation of testing. Many national associations around the world are busy ensuring that their golf courses are rated in accordance with the Course Rating System and working to update local software platforms so that they are ready to apply the new Rules of Handicapping.

While many countries will be ready to transition to the WHS early in 2020, given both the magnitude of the change for some jurisdictions and varying seasonality throughout the world, it is anticipated that some will need more time.

“The World Handicap System is the latest example of our work to make the game more welcoming,” said Mike Davis, CEO of the USGA. “Golfers throughout the world will be able to play equitably, measure their success and more fully enjoy and engage with the game. After working with national associations across the world on Course Rating throughout the past 30 years and now the World Handicap System, this monumental collaborative effort will benefit everyone in golf.”

Martin Slumbers, chief executive of The R&A, said, “There are many ways in which it is important for golf to modernize and become more appealing for people thinking of taking up the sport and handicapping is clearly one of them. The World Handicap System is a major new initiative for the sport which will establish a clearer and more consistent handicapping process for golfers throughout the world.

“We are working closely with national associations, as we do across all our core activities, to ensure they are fully prepared for the introduction of the new system as soon as possible after it becomes available for implementation.”

Since its conception, the development of the WHS has focused on three key goals: to encourage as many golfers as possible to obtain and maintain a Handicap Index; to enable golfers of differing abilities, genders and nationalities to transport their Handicap Index to any course around the world and compete on a fair basis; and to indicate with sufficient accuracy the score a golfer is reasonably capable of achieving on any course around the world, playing under normal conditions.

The system has been devised following extensive consultation with the six existing handicapping authorities: Golf Australia, the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU) in Great Britain and Ireland, the European Golf Association (EGA), the South African Golf Association (SAGA), the Argentine Golf Association (AAG) and the USGA. The Japan Golf Association and Golf Canada have also been closely involved in developing the new system.

Widespread support for the WHS was expressed in an international survey of 52,000 golfers with 76% in favor of the new system and a further 22% saying they were willing to consider its benefits. Focus groups were also held in different regions of the world to elicit detailed feedback on the features of the new system, which have contributed to the finalized Rules of Handicapping.

The World Handicap System will unite the golf world under one single set of handicapping rules and will be governed by the USGA and The R&A, with support from the existing six handicap authorities.

As an extension of their support of the Rules of Golf worldwide, Rolex has made a commitment to support The R&A’s and the USGA’s efforts to implement the World Handicap System.

**About the USGA**

The USGA conducts the U.S. Open, U.S. Women’s Open, U.S. Senior Open and the U.S. Senior Women’s Open, as well as 10 amateur championships and international matches, attracting players and fans around the world. Together with The R&A, the USGA governs the game worldwide, jointly administering the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status, equipment standards and World Amateur Golf Rankings, with a working jurisdiction in the United States, its territories and Mexico.

The USGA is one of the world’s foremost authorities on research, development and support of sustainable golf course management practices. It serves as a primary steward for the game’s history and invests in the development of the game through the delivery of its services and the work of the USGA Foundation. Additionally, the USGA’s Course Rating and Handicap systems are used on six continents. For more information, visit [www.usga.org](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftracking.randa.org%2Ftracking%2Fclick%3Fd%3D0ibrRFdwlVJyljrt3uqCj3N6SR3k0pq1HblgsizY5W29GAqIkM2Z8lOa0ulv9svqi9gjrkQTUUVIaBOa2HceXVAZX0VwW54_fH_SJjg56xiUmh4MTMw9Bo_gIZ92gO0LeF5mjoV27rubC5m5VJ5C143VAKZFmmDsEPgcI60Az12QdpQowdY8WGI7rLVygYZ76WuRwsmCVmd_bjUHNC3FUcUisSPlQ-WwJP_dDhC4uhIFY47n3MtvvyNByDpMj1xFn8gezzLjfOHNJKJ-chNMG8Y-JDiuSdq9DcX_wDvYOlqkCcBwd9tRUltpEyI_Y5w4tyzrLT3TBRfM_GLaMbG_jTm7w0C0FrObcbv7AqGuDzDBZr0qrEvmwZjsTHw9Y5mLQEdFwy34s5FimEtZOv5EbWwocnd-QCpjPCIiCXt8grNFi6aRQT2N9dmRbqTGxTku429DtZAw1CYudREaDM2SmXUV2024hLUqJcNFXC9kRfTifz1UkpLpBvkQK74GTaleOKmKYSgJXV3S-efAzMCpsbMjdU8U_C2cBuFLfPafnLmmqro0__pTXxnyROSSKIm7_F9g1tTcvsT6s-6PgyvXZ0ookT65VKabE_YTbX8kxnor7glFRpa-nmAie1EL1rDwlCBIaEws5lXjyRVJw_Gu-nBQ1bUXTIYRYK1OpQhx--iVM70olwlCOGNyA2IJXPuyYJQ5Ud0djPIG6ZbaYh_kJQ1HRtlndl49Rk1L9JbPdJT_oybk9MUC074TM7aOUeR4CFVJxMfM0jL0Sfg0T2nxGnEYOJteEsaJtVlk1keTb-DBdgdSt-MSVrSlXWtBo6BXCx1e8nN0edF8KWBX6qjEXIRTunyco9GFg8MSB890Yh1V1VpDnwlGA3ZF4QrlSZ30_xc3yMis_5Afj-9LJG8jW_koXGP_OU6emnkbTTAL0cCK0Z3c4pKrQpSEBcghu9YflZYQgJJMD25xytZ7X0HPkj1R38hyQdoZRT2IfkRJZzSNIS6o3drsqg2zsm41SOXpMjsmQYEUCWb7F57QOilpQE7-K-GQWNw5iFbOq5mf7nYlPu-ljMxFgNZm7hq7fixzGiDX1ukcmxrvlc579b7WkQSPcK3NztBsomkEhL6OV9nxOG1ztwu1kV8gJ78-KBTUW2mHvMnHuTGTQyUwwFlRTMh1nvqWD5JuzUXG5jJfYH8bz8o1nA-_7-7HuNqJky32P8iMCezBrUeC3ACaYT9HRefjZcI11HryDGZq4OHdzmzCbBmqeczXJ9EGNYLUieyk5Y8DC8XFcfkgzq5OYVgWXLXutwhrwxong1t35D0yhpNoXUDmiVEVOmxpwzxWV-XFQ_7MtoJJgmjOgWW6xftlngM1&data=02%7C01%7Cmikewoodcock%40randa.org%7Cfaf3115577ea4dc314b108d69284cf72%7C93ca5df0d6e647abafeae396686cc7fe%7C0%7C0%7C636857496448905315&sdata=z4lQiICBb9nLX%2B7TRPbvxRiXCGv272mBgcMkZr%2FyupM%3D&reserved=0).

**About The R&A**

Based in St Andrews, The R&A runs The Open, elite amateur events, international matches and rankings. Together The R&A and the USGA govern the sport of golf worldwide, operating in separate jurisdictions but sharing a commitment to a single code for the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status and Equipment Standards. The R&A, through R&A Rules Ltd, governs the sport worldwide, outside of the United States and Mexico, on behalf of over 36 million golfers in 143 countries and with the consent of 156 organisations from amateur and professional golf.

The R&A is committed to working for golf and supports the growth of the sport internationally and the development and management of sustainable golf facilities. For more information, visit [www.randa.org](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftracking.randa.org%2Ftracking%2Fclick%3Fd%3DfFw57zGVqmdkBcInijY7CP6lM6S-eESvBU8v3iiXNyBuS1l8in23Sgdd4YSISUaZsmEkIwnBGzhqL3yymU6Yo-Uy6MPUWa_ZNF_BHO4SqPoKY0NUAIMv7xmxqEfdBC8GR7hKJ2zXg0kdlM4bIkQhcMC2iTVDJTJdazeyPrhOhYjBt8OLhY42IgeRtzPE41VDDG4PyYPrAKVpRxe23GrrbufGH31aN735nEGZzKbK36QLHRI-3C0FCspB3SWUbc9VJCa9zDXQBV7nCaPXYWerwOH27rvSu0bTVteqqkJVu6z7IhObhPQnm-EdqyWXlpzzotEsWCckbrMggE82V9A_f6RE_LO2Mv6SqlVAk2QdH1oX9JR2GYYik3v3ozDK7VWLacS4CUydNulsLnVGTh2g2MVjMOaEXsvVkhthJuZrjOrtWxIwtQG-TygI70M4epvdmvIr1ySG_C5iMf9f64NofpLVjMJrow4lEI8am4EbGTX60HYdNNY4GS7bLsOcmhqErnf7XBa4KAaein-uLkXSECUiFgF_ASsszoF2Yvy97Oi4oK1VFnW9PboqlRzsyKOnk3pSE7I8d6a6xObEVCH-ZOMFjo_L6SvAQ4OQZK16RJJ5OLyiziFBeBQI0Tcxi_mOe2btvYbI9F3F-2V1QYGmUuRfyeaoRlP5blNAgwr4OJc214VkiltUvZjhRvL8IisT_122cftaisHLbRgHNI7MnbLyJrF_6Wlg2QMNv9eaNx8meOZjmZxd207wOvfAqAVYV206OhB-cAwJ32g9n9rKK3bzTNscSMx9F4-zss3ZdA7JL3CU5xUvETDqvQ2s3Q2xcZM7yhbNo5sSJ0DPAUQNVFsrPpBG3REIF6KPSzfhUMl6AaUdq6jZeMVTGhHyAlFssW-1YbOMpqE2vtIT9bYLfIj3X-7R48HcZ670gglb1Ba-OrNN2GhKOf1M7-Dy2krB_AeLXNR47Ia05SyqQKUoPuVXjr2eqQQYya6zb_PVrqmEf3xjyz-z982vfQZMVoPNca4nCXheN6PpDHWhI-1KCTJ3Zq1T4VYtD_rFiwEbPufcuuBl5nH1BAihkAqtuo68s0fOKFOqa-mN2J-_S3k-0zILwdBYLT2dagcoIkRCMOZo3RcR6xKzRkqtF1RBsR81snquJbZ_Z7q-cpJmvMTam966Hf2r8TDi9qIswZu2fJK2n9hjY3wYsG9YJwC8ZD67XNxcxgo2VxhXe3znTiEG5HkNlYRWBh860W6b3ZmYA1NO9-owkV4fDxSK2XDxcsGtV4668FvAuIkQPDdI-8Glu0D61tNjwMbGC4xb7LX0U6icNTgbgwGF6lBCU-Qove3-3uRzrNhiHCRXDJX5dhK2kVZjysCyxtzE1Hc2TEt29qfVAOTkD_4EGijTkJ-nQi0Pd-KSGin__Np3M7RBxS7XQ1g-TNDqPn8ATGL68MIOlm4q0rJO378LFBPgcSvZZ4u2qWxh0n8M94HQZbsDqSpsyxrBTSL2eLRXyebM_pXYgLyLLxj7hR0FoAxcx2D3sM5IiUo1EoifUj884LZQBJJdYVgi1m2zdPmXuON8ECekXgAurT1tyOaMA4WYlXGXIZFoWFxFf5ARg2hcxlOikL5vTGxp1wPc4ePImj7aOxLUEwetz5qaY6nadq2ouLwAPf4Y9R_C2BrUwnGcKP55d84h7yxdtrciiDp9Sobw8PBIynhNPPe24E_Z_QdB_j172jv1i-86BNvNtiVRR2_qiwx5OXFJhzKX64k6xO0gz72srIUAoImMDHsSs1ESksf2qxuEzcr9eOtMojks-OtzofKDDmz6awm1G0u3w6MA95CuNqTnuvf-mKYnCxE2FPwXJmZvfaaaIOFknSyCNRYyA0VfAGPG0N4yu-IFdDICn0Th1HIF9bRX3V1xL2ux8ePIi76AqNQsnXNLJLb1EsRnrWuN1uwUpfOjsb782Bie6QFQ11zPqSQ-yBRDI4).

**Rolex**

The Swiss watchmaker’s contribution to excellence in golf is based on a rich heritage stretching back more than 50 years, forged through pivotal partnerships at every level of the game, from the sport’s leading professional and amateur competitions and organizations, to players at the pinnacle of their sport worldwide.

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