

BACKGROUND HISTORY

1925 - British Golf Union' Joint Advisory Council:

The Standard Scratch Score and Handicapping Scheme was prepared by the British Golf Unions' Joint Advisory Council in 1925 at the request of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews and has been in operation throughout Great Britain and Ireland since 1st March 1926.

1960 - Council of National Golf Unions:

In 1960 the British Golf Unions' Joint Advisory Council became the Council of National Golf Unions comprising representatives from the English Golf Union, Golfing Union of Ireland, Scottish Golf Union, Welsh Golfing Union and The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews.

1983 - The Standard Scratch Score and Handicapping Scheme:

The Scheme adopted in 1983 was based on the system used by the Australian Golf Union and takes account of all scores returned by players in Medal Play Conditions.

The Ladies' Golf Union was formed in 1893 with one of its major objectives to provide a national system of handicapping for ladies. Since that time the Ladies' Golf Union has been the handicapping authority for ladies in Great Britain and Ireland and for affiliated Overseas Unions and Associations.

1998 – LGU Handicapping System

In 1998 the Ladies' Golf Union introduced a new handicapping system which was closely related to the CONGU Standard Scratch Score and Handicapping Scheme, the basis of which was that a player's handicap should reflect current form. In 2001, the decision was made for the men and ladies governing bodies to work together to produce a unified handicapping system.

2001 - Unified Handicapping System

The CONGU Unified Handicapping System was borne as the result of much work and consultation to produce a single handicapping system for men and ladies. The System was introduced in the UK and Ireland on 1st February 2004 and the Council of National Golf Unions restructured to have a revised Council consisting of an equal number of representatives from the English Golf Union, English Ladies' Golf Association, Golfing Union of Ireland, Irish Ladies' Golf Union, Scottish Golf Union, Scottish Ladies' Golfing Association, Welsh Golfing Union, Welsh Ladies' Golf Union together with the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews and the Ladies' Golf Union.

2007 – CONGU Council restructure:

Following the merger of the Welsh Golfing Union and the Welsh Ladies' Golf Union in 2007, the CONGU Board is currently comprised of two representatives of the English Golf Union, English Women's Golf Association, Golfing Union of Ireland, Irish Ladies' Golf Union, Scottish Golf Union, Scottish Ladies' Golfing Association, four representatives from the Golf Union of Wales together with a representative from both the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews and the Ladies' Golf Union and an elected Chairman. The purpose of CONGU® continues to be monitor, maintain and develop the Unified Handicapping System, ensuring that its purpose, spirit and intent are being observed by all parties.

2008 - CONGU Unified Handicapping System 2008-2011:

The introduction of the 2008-2011 edition of the CONGU Unified Handicapping System brought changes in both style and substance. The System clauses have been renumbered putting them in a more logical order and associated explanations have been included beside each relevant clause (blue shaded areas) to clarify the System and make it more user friendly for all users.

In terms of substance three new concepts were introduced in the 2008 revision.

Supplementary Scores:

The first, Supplementary Scores, is formally introduced to assist golfers who for whatever reason – and there are many – play in few or no competitions each year. Because our system is based almost entirely on competition scores, these players are unlikely to have a handicap which reflects their current standard of play. Supplementary Scores enables players in this category to return cards outside of competitions. This will assist in establishing more accurate handicaps for these players.

Nine-Hole Qualifying Competitions:

Secondly, at the discretion of affiliated clubs, Nine-Hole qualifying competitions may be run and such scores shall be used to adjust handicaps. This new concept is in response to the limited time available to some club players, who may not be able to play in 18-hole competitions. This option is designed to attract more players into the Unified Handicap System. In both cases there are safeguards built in to prevent handicap manipulation.

Home / Away CSS Calculations (Open Competitions):

The third new concept in the 2008 revision recognised something that most players instinctively know – the ‘Away’ player is at a disadvantage when playing a course compared to the ‘Home’ player. Statistical research over many scores in open competitions has confirmed this ‘Away’ disadvantage and has quantified it as between one and two strokes per round. In recognition of this the 2008-2011 CONGU UHS introduced the concept of calculating separate Competition Scratch Scores for ‘Home’ and ‘Away’ players to take account of these different scoring patterns and provide a more equitable basis for handicap alterations. Furthermore, some players have been disinclined to enter open competitions because they believe they are likely to have their handicap increased. This introduction to the 2008-2011 CONGU UHS is intended to try to meet both objectives.

The CONGU® website – www.CONGU.com – explains the changes adopted within the 2008-2011 CONGU UHS and also provides answers to many other queries about the UHS. The “Myths and Misconceptions” and “Frequently Asked Questions” sections should be of particular interest to the club golfer.