

An aerial photograph of a golf course. The image shows a large, vibrant green fairway on the right side, which is partially enclosed by a circular boundary. To the left of the fairway is a complex sand trap area with several interconnected sand pits and narrow paths. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green grass and brownish-yellow vegetation, suggesting a natural or semi-natural setting. The lighting is bright, creating high contrast between the green grass and the tan sand.

World Handicap System™

An overview of key changes for the 2024 revision

USGA®

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The World Handicap System is governed jointly by the USGA and The R&A, consistent with the other sets of Rules.

The WHS™ is comprised of the *Rules of Handicapping* and the Course Rating System™.



Rules of Golf

Rules of Amateur Status

The Equipment Rules

World Handicap System

THREE KEY MESSAGES



The WHS welcomes everyone to compete or play socially with anyone on a fair and equal basis, helping to make golf a more enjoyable game.



The WHS provides a consistent method of measuring skill-level and produces handicaps that are portable from course to course, country to country.



The WHS is modern, adaptable across golf cultures and easy to use.

KEY CHANGES

An aerial photograph of a golf course, showing vibrant green fairways and tees on the left side, transitioning into a complex system of blue water hazards and sand traps on the right. The lighting is dramatic, with deep shadows and bright highlights, suggesting a low sun position.

9-HOLE SCORES



9-HOLE SCORES

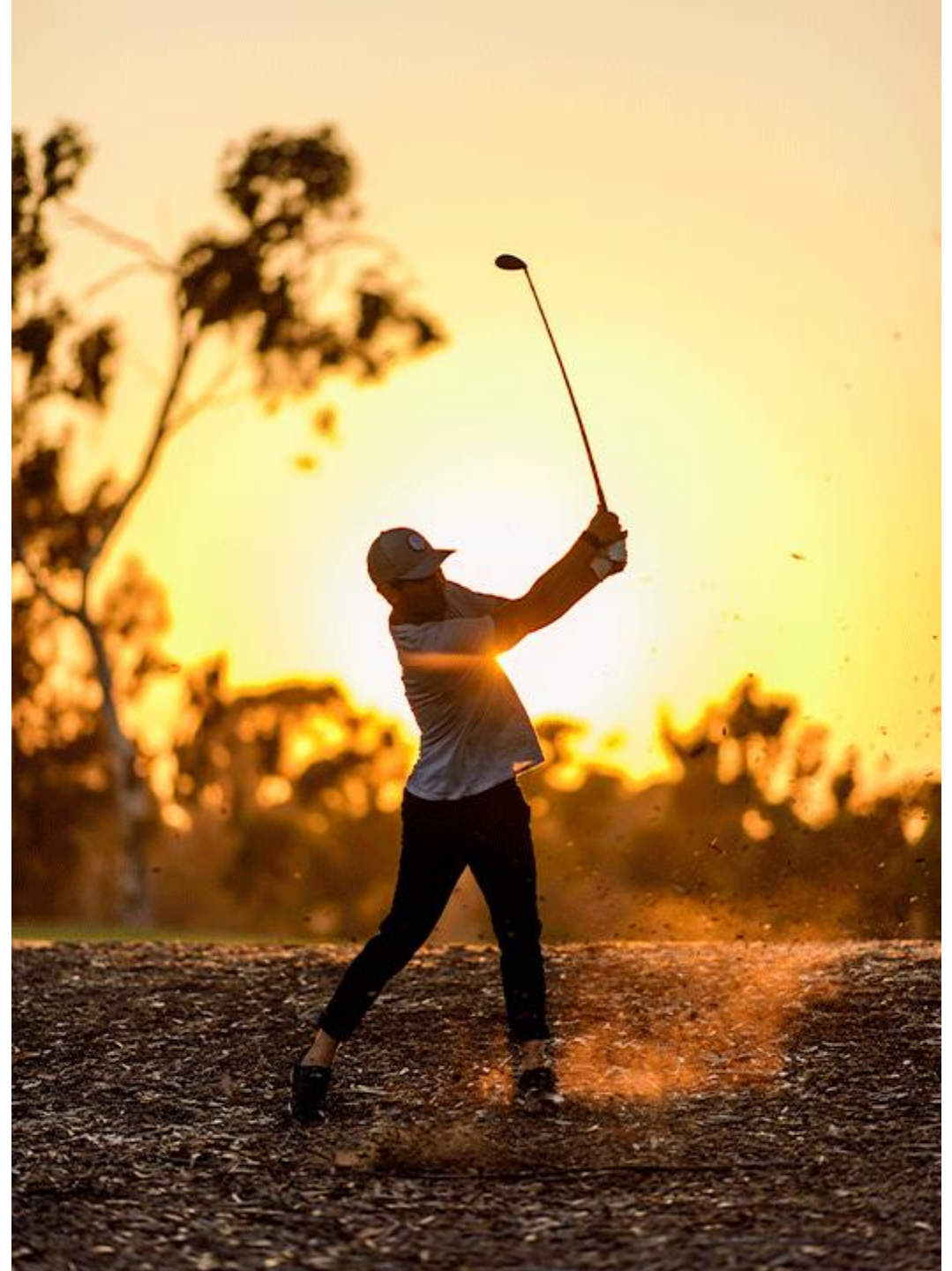
Pre-2024

If a player posts a 9-hole score, an 18-hole Score Differential™ is created by combining two 9-hole Score Differentials.

Change for '24

When a player posts a 9-hole score, a 9-hole Score Differential will be calculated for the 9 holes played, and that number will be combined with an expected Score Differential based on the player's Handicap Index to create an 18-hole Score Differential.

Note: If fewer than 9 holes are played, the score is not acceptable for handicap purposes.



HOW IT WORKS

The expected score is based on the average Score Differential of a player with a given Handicap Index and a normal distribution of scores – so it is not specific to each player:

- If two players have a Handicap Index of 5.9, then their expected score for the second nine will be the same regardless of the course/tees being played.
- If two players with a different Handicap Index shoot the same 9-hole score from the same course/tees, their expected scores for the second nine will be different.

Note: Use of expected score can begin as soon as a player has established a Handicap Index – 54 holes comprised of 9 and/or 18-hole scores.

The screenshot shows a mobile application interface for recording golf scores. At the top, a dark blue header contains a back arrow, the title "Post Hole-by-Hole Score", and the text "Total Adj. Score: 37 | To Par: +1". Below the header is a table with the following data:

Hole	6	7	8	9	Total
Yards	198	492	400	390	3179
Par	3	5	4	4	36
Stroke Index	9	5	1	7	
Score	2	3	6	4	37
Adj. Score	2	3	6	4	37

Below the table are two buttons: a red "GPS" button and a dark blue "POST SCORE" button. A red arrow points from the "POST SCORE" button to a numeric keypad below. The keypad has a "Done" button at the top right and a grid of numbers 1-9, 0, and a delete key (X).

Rule 5.1b

9-HOLE SCORES

When 9 holes are played, the scoring record will display the following:

- The 9-hole adjusted gross score.
- The 9-hole Course Rating and Slope Rating.
- The 18-hole Score Differential equivalent.
- A score type of (N).

Use of Expected Score can begin as soon as a player has established a Handicap Index.

REVISION SCORES						HANDICAP INDEX: 9.9		
Used	Type	Date	Score	C.R./Slope	PCC	Diff	ESR	Adj.
	A	4/10/24	88	72.2/135	—	13.2		—
*	N	4/07/24	41	35.8/130	—	9.8		—
*	H	4/03/24	82	71.7/130	—	9.0		—
	A	4/01/24	90	71.3/133	—	15.9		—
	A	3/25/24	88	71.5/133	—	14.0		—
	A	3/22/24	88	72.2/135	—	13.2		—
*	N	3/20/24	40	36.1/132	—	9.2		—
	A	3/15/24	90	72.2/135	—	14.9		—
*	H	3/13/24	82	71.7/130	—	9.0		—
*	H	3/11/24	82	71.7/130	—	9.0		—
	N	3/09/24	43	35.8/130	—	13.3		—
	H	3/05/24	90	71.7/130	—	15.9		—
	A	3/01/24	91	70.6/131	—	17.6		—
	A	2/26/24	91	71.5/134	—	16.4		—
*	H	2/25/24	83	71.7/130	—	9.8		—
	A	2/20/24	88	72.2/135	—	13.2		—
*	A	2/14/24	85	71.5/129	—	11.8		—
	N	2/12/24	45	35.5/128	—	17.7		—
	A	2/04/24	93	69.0/125	—	21.7		—
*	N	1/30/24	42	35.2/129	—	11.9		—

BENEFITS



CONSISTENT

It produces a consistent Score Differential based on the Handicap Index and avoids volatility seen with the previous treatment of 9-hole scores.



RESPONSIVE

It provides responsive Handicap Index revisions and allows players to reach a full scoring record of 20 scores more quickly.



EQUITABLE

The new method provides a better indication of what the player would have scored on the second 9 (using player equations rather than net par) and should result in a more equitable Handicap Index.



WELCOMING

It is welcoming to players who typically play 9 holes of golf on a given day. For example, this could be due to preference, time available, or participation in a league.

10-17 HOLE SCORES





10-17 HOLE SCORES

Pre-2024

If a player plays 10-13 holes, only a 9-hole score is acceptable for handicap purposes. If between 14-17 holes are played, net par is used on holes not played to produce an 18-hole score.

Change for '24

Rounds of 10-17 holes receive an 18-hole Score Differential with an expected score value for holes not played.

HOW IT WORKS

When 10-17 holes have been played, a Score Differential is calculated from the holes played (must include a rated 9). Then, an expected Score Differential is determined for any holes not played. Lastly, these values are added to determine the 18-hole Score Differential.

Note: The player will be required to post their score hole-by-hole when 10-17 holes are played so the appropriate Score Differential can be calculated from the holes that were played to combine with the expected score for the holes not played.

Post Hole-by-Hole Score

Total Adj. Score: 73 ⓘ | To Par: +9 ⓘ

Hole	16	17	18	In	Total
Yards	437	287	426	3364	6543
Par	4	4	4	36	72
Stroke Index	4	16	2		
Score	5			34	73
Adj. Score	5			34	73

GPS POST SCORE

Done

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
	0	✕

Rule 3.2

SCORING RECORD

When between 10 and 17 hole are played, the scoring record will display the following:

- The actual adjusted gross score.
- The number of holes played, in parentheses, next to the adjusted gross score.
 - This is intended to help with potential confusion from seeing a score that is unlike most/all others in the scoring record.
- The 18-hole Course Rating and Slope Rating.
- The 18-hole Score Differential equivalent.

REVISION SCORES						HANDICAP INDEX: 15.3		
Used	Type	Date	Score	C.R./Slope	PCC	Diff	ESR	Adj.
*	A	4/10/24	89	72.2/135	—	14.1	—	—
*	H	4/07/24	87	71.7/130	—	13.3	—	—
	H	4/03/24	96	71.7/130	—	21.1	—	—
	A	4/01/24	100	71.3/133	—	24.4	—	—
*	A	3/25/24	91	71.5/133	—	16.6	—	—
	A	3/22/24	95	72.2/135	—	19.1	—	—
*	A	3/20/24	78 (16)	72.4/126	—	14.8	—	—
*	A	3/15/24	88	72.2/135	—	13.2	—	—
	H	3/13/24	98	71.7/130	—	22.9	—	—
*	H	3/11/24	93	71.7/130	—	18.5	—	—
	H	3/09/24	94	71.7/130	—	19.4	—	—
	H	3/05/24	96	71.7/130	—	21.1	—	—
	A	3/01/24	97	70.6/131	—	22.8	—	—
*	A	2/26/24	90	71.5/134	—	15.6	—	—
*	H	2/25/24	90	71.7/130	—	15.9	—	—
	A	2/20/24	101	72.2/135	—	24.1	—	—
	A	2/14/24	99	71.5/129	—	24.1	—	—
	A	2/12/24	94	70.0/128	—	21.2	—	—
	A	2/04/24	95	69.0/125	—	23.5	—	—
	A	1/30/24	104	71.4/129	—	28.6	—	—

BENEFITS



CONSISTENT

Players will see more consistency than if they were to apply net par for remaining holes not played. This is because the expected score is not course specific or reliant upon the course's stroke index allocation.



FLEXIBLE

For the first time, if between 10-13 holes are played, the player will have an 18-hole Score Differential in their scoring record.



MODERN

By leveraging score-posting technology to make this process simple and intuitive, the result will be a more modern experience for players.

PAR 3/SHORT COURSES





PAR 3/SHORT COURSES

Pre-2024

To receive a Course Rating™ and Slope Rating™, a set of tees must be at least 1,500 yards for 9 holes or 3,000 yards for 18 holes and have at least one hole per nine that requires a full tee shot. Those not meeting these minimums qualified for a Short Course Rating used with a stand-alone Short Course Handicap System.

Change for '24

The new minimum length requirement to receive a Course Rating and Slope Rating is 750 yards for 9 holes and 1,500 yards for 18 holes.

BENEFITS



PORTABLE

This will allow scores to be acceptable for handicap purposes at more golf courses and a Handicap Index to be portable between shorter and more traditional length courses.



INCLUSIVE

As these courses are typically played by beginners or players with shorter hitting distances, it provides an opportunity to enjoy the game more by using their Handicap Index.



MODERN

This is supportive of current trends in golf including more short courses being built and shorter tees being added to existing courses to accommodate more players based on their ability.

HANDICAP REVIEW



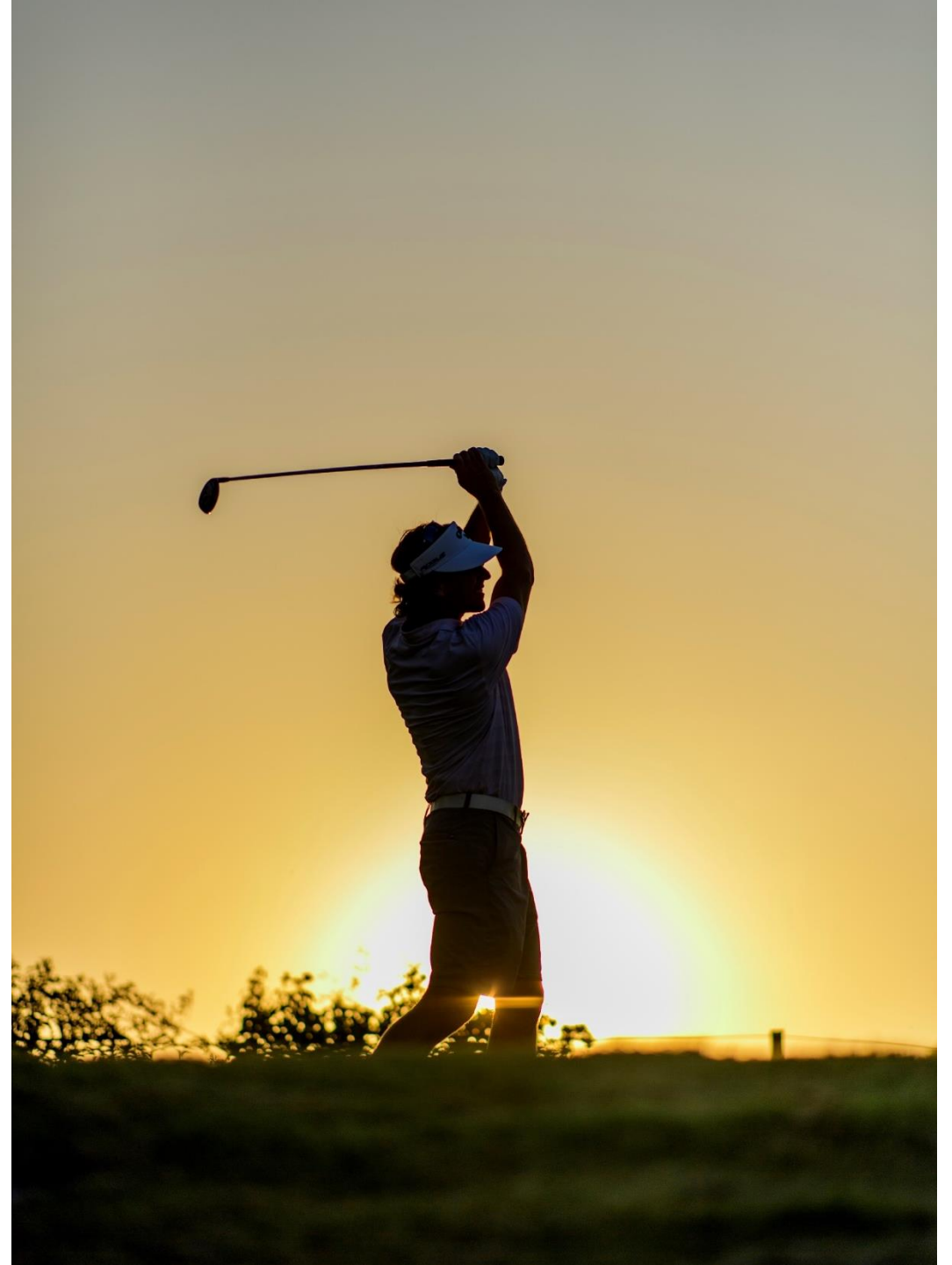
HANDICAP REVIEW

Pre-2024

The Handicap Committee at a golf club is strongly encouraged to conduct a handicap review at least annually for all members who have designated that golf club as their home club. A thorough listing of considerations and reports are available to determine whether a Handicap Index adjustment is warranted.

Change for '24

Handicap administration software will include additional reports, analyses and notifications to identify players with abnormal scores and provide recommended actions for the Handicap Committee to consider.



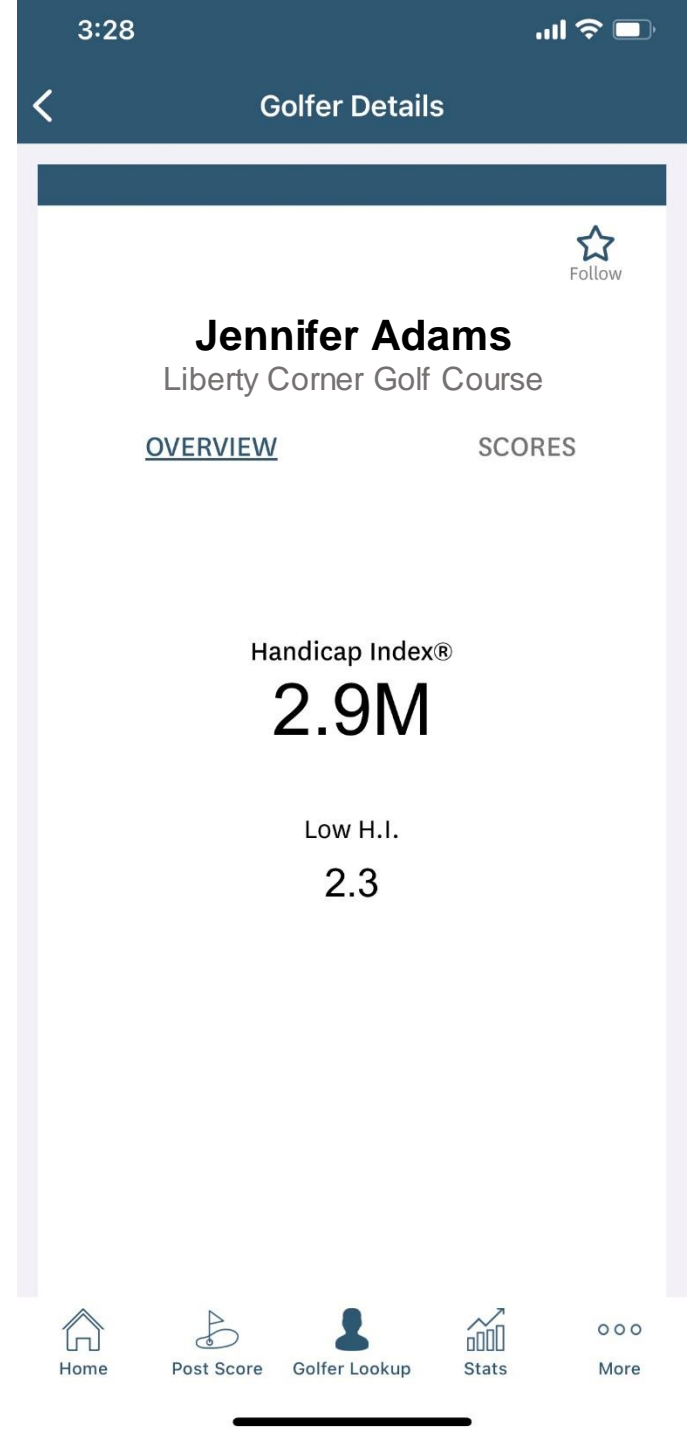
HOW IT WORKS

These enhanced handicap review tools will:

- Identify players who are consistently scoring above or below their 'expected' scoring range, or where other abnormalities within a player's scoring record exist, and
- Make a recommended adjustment to the Handicap Index of each player identified.

A Handicap Review should be run at least once a year for every player, but our recommendation will be to run it on a monthly basis.

Handicap Review will also include reporting that takes into consideration competition vs. recreational scores, as well as any incidences of Cap (soft or hard) or scores that qualified for an Exception Score Reduction (ESR).



BENEFITS



SAFEGUARD

The handicap review process gives a Handicap Committee the ability to ensure the Handicap Index of a player reflects their demonstrated ability.



DATA-DRIVEN

The handicap review reporting tools are automated and data-driven comparing a player's Handicap Index, individual scores and scoring patterns to expected performance.



HUMAN ELEMENT

A Handicap Index adjustment will be applied only at the discretion of the Handicap Committee, based on any other knowledge or evidence that they have about the player and their demonstrated ability.

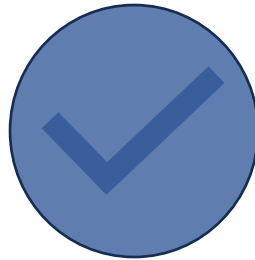
Next Steps

CLUB AUTHORIZATION

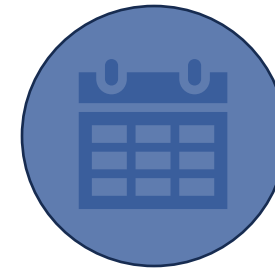
All clubs wishing to be authorized to use the WHS for the 2024 revision must complete the following.



You will receive a link from me (sophia@wsga.org) with a link for this year's quiz.



Take the quiz with a passing score of 80% or higher.



If not completed by July 1st then your club will be set to inactive, and members handicaps will display NH (No Handicap)

USGA[®]

FOR THE GOOD OF THE GAME