

**GOLF AUSTRALIA
RULES, AMATEUR STATUS, HANDICAPPING
& COURSE RATING COMMITTEE – MEETING
MONDAY 14 MAY 2007
AT BARWON HEADS GOLF CLUB**

SUMMARY

Present from the Committee: John Buckley (Chairman), Joan Coles, Frank Gal, Andrew Langford-Jones, Val Oswald

Apologies: Jenny Hoff, John Hopkins, Barry Shepherd

In Attendance: Nick Green (Director – Game and Club Development), Simon Magdulski (Manager – Rules & Handicapping), Therese Ritter (Manager – Championships), Trevor Herden (Director – Championships)

1. Previous Meeting Summary

This was agreed.

2. Committee Procedural Recommendations for Golf Clubs

2.1 WGA Rules and Regulations

The review group comprising Barry Shepherd, Val Oswald, Simon Magdulski, and Therese Ritter is in the process of developing a draft set of Golf Australia competition rules and regulations. This draft will then be presented to the Committee.

3. Rules of Amateur Status

3.1 R&A Amateur Status Conference

A written summary of the recent R&A Amateur Status Conference was provided by John Hopkins.

3.2 AIS Contract

The previous generic AIS contract has been made golf specific in order to take account of Amateur Status regulations.

4. Rules of Golf

4.1 R&A Update

John Hopkins provided the latest White Sheets.

4.2 Refereeing at MFS Australian Opens

Trevor Herden advised that the refereeing format used at the 2006 MFS Australian Open and 2007 MFS Women's Australian Open is to be used again at the 2007 MFS Australian Open at The Australian Golf Club and the 2008 MFS Women's Australian Open at Kingston Heath Golf Club.

5. Handicapping & Course Rating

5.1 Issues Relating to National Handicapping & Course Rating Forum

5.1.1 System Options for Consideration at Forum

These will be as follows:

- The Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU) Handicapping & Course Rating Systems as a replacement for the existing Australian handicapping & daily course rating systems.
- The CONGU Daily Course Rating System as a replacement for CCR.

- The USGA Handicapping & Course Rating Systems as full replacements for the existing Australian handicapping & course rating systems.
- The USGA Scratch Course Rating System as a replacement for the existing AMCR/AWCR Systems.
- The European Golf Association (EGA) Handicapping & Course Rating Systems as full replacements for the existing Australian handicapping & course rating systems.
- Submission by NSWGA (Ray Vize).
- Submission by VGA (Murray Cropley).
- Abandon CCR and solely use AWCR/AMCR (broadly supported by women's bodies).

5.1.2 Existing Australian Handicapping Systems

If the ultimate decision is to maintain the existing handicapping systems, the minimalist Golf Australia position will need to apply. This requires a consistent methodological approach between men's and women's handicapping (plus the addressing of minor issues) and is represented by the Draft Golf Australia Handicapping System (or variations thereof).

5.1.3 Existing Australian Course Rating Systems

If the ultimate decision is to maintain the existing course rating systems, the minimalist Golf Australia position will need to apply. This requires a consistent methodological approach between men's and women's course rating and would require new documents be produced, or execution of the VGA (Murray Cropley) submission.

In the instance of the existing course rating systems being maintained, the small field issue will need to be addressed.

5.1.4 Golf Australia Course Rating Option for Consideration

Whilst this received reasonable support from clubs, the lack of interest from Member States led to the Committee deciding against pursuing it further. However, it is worth noting that this option served to generate a large degree of discussion and engagement and has also been significant in displaying to Member Clubs the willingness of the national and state bodies to be proactive in dealing with the problems experienced by stakeholders.

5.1.5 Handicapping & Course Rating System Development Pathway

The aim of the Forum is to provide for the formal consideration of Member States a specific alternative handicapping system and/or a course rating system to what is currently in place (unless there is overwhelming support for the existing systems). This will follow consideration and discussion at the Forum of the various major handicapping and course rating systems in operation around the world (including in Australia), together with the thoughts of leading Australian experts.

(NB An alternative system option put forward by the Forum will not necessarily be preferred by the delegates to the existing Golf Australia systems, rather it may simply be considered to be worthy of further investigation and formal consideration by the Member States.)

Moving beyond the Forum, the development pathway for Australia's handicapping and course rating systems is as follows:

- The Forum's preferred handicapping option and/or a course rating option to be put to the Member States for formal

consideration (unless there is overwhelming support for the existing systems).

- If this option is 'supported' by the Member States, Golf Australia will have it formally costed (NB Golf Link estimates there may be an expense of \$20k attached to constructing a quote).
- The supported option will then be put back to the Member States, with an accompanying funding model. This second consideration by the Member States will be of a complete option (ie the Handicapping & Course Rating Model PLUS a funding model).
- A timeline for adoption of a new system, or for implementation of amendments to the existing systems, will be determined once the scope of changes has been established.
- Another Forum will be convened to re-visit the Handicapping & Course Rating System within a period of two years following the initial Forum (regardless of whether or not major changes are made).

5.1.6 Requirement for Change

If the Forum puts a handicapping option and/or a course rating option to the Member States for formal consideration, Golf Australia will consider the Member States to support the option/s if the following occurs:

1. 60% or more of the Member States vote for a specific change (NB in a state where the men's and women's state associations have amalgamated, the Member State will have two votes).
2. those Member States voting for that change represent 60% or more of the affiliated golfers in Australia.

These requirements were adopted after taking into account the following factors:

- That a decision which impacts almost all affiliated golfers has broad support from bodies representing a large proportion of club members.
- That a decision which impacts almost all affiliated golfers has broad support from a large proportion of Member States.
- That a decision which impacts almost all affiliated golfers not be able to be easily blocked by bodies representing a small proportion of club members.
- That a decision which impacts almost all affiliated golfers not be able to be easily blocked by a small proportion of Member States.
- A factor critical to the introduction of any new system will be the manner in which the supporting funding model is presented to clubs and members. Support throughout the industry will be much easier to achieve with strong and unanimous support of Member States (regardless of whether or not the way forward was initially backed by all bodies). As a result, it will be desirable for all Member States to be confident the voting process has been designed in a manner which requires a successful proposal to have achieved considerable support.

5.1.7 Publication of Responses

All formal feedback and responses received by Golf Australia through the current Handicapping & Course Rating Review will be made available to any club, district, or state, upon receipt of written request.

5.1.8 Forum Facilitator

A professional facilitator will be commissioned.

5.2 Draft Golf Australia Handicapping System

This document was amended following consideration of the extensive feedback provided through the current Handicapping & Course Rating Review. The updated draft is available at www.golfaustralia.org.au.

5.3 AMCR/AWCR Certificates

A proposal to produce AMCR/AWCR certificates for each course will be reconsidered following the completion of the Handicapping & Course Rating Review.

6. Golf Australia Rules, Amateur Status, Handicapping & Course Rating Committee – Structure, Selection, and Changes

6.1 Dissolution of Existing Committee and Formation of New Committees

Following engagement with the Board, it was determined that the Rules, Amateur Status, Handicapping & Course Rating Committee is to be dissolved with two separate committees to be formed in its place – a Rules of Golf & Amateur Status Committee, and a Handicapping & Course Rating Committee. Charters for these two new Committees are available at www.golfaustralia.org.au.

7. Next Meeting

4.00 pm on Tuesday 3 July – by phone.