

GOLF AUSTRALIA REVIEW **GROUPS ESTABLISHED TO** **INVESTIGATE THE U.S.G.A.** **HANDICAP & COURSE** **RATING SYSTEMS AND** **OTHER SYSTEMS UTILISING** **THE ‘SLOPE’ CONCEPT –** **General Scope Document**

Background

The Golf Australia Board has requested the Handicapping & Course Rating Committee to prepare:

- a detailed evaluation of the various course rating systems which underpin US ‘Slope’ and ‘Slope’-like handicap systems.
- a detailed evaluation of US ‘Slope’ and ‘Slope’-like handicap systems for comparison with the Australian Handicapping Systems.
- consider the logistics of implementation with a view to properly assessing feasibility.

The process will be carried out by two review groups.

One review group will focus on course rating (Lynne Ritchie – Chair), the other (Murray Cropley – Chair) on handicapping. Additionally each review group will consider and report on point three.

It is envisaged that the review group draft findings will be completed by mid October and presented to the November Board meeting of Golf Australia.

Ongoing Purpose of the Golf Australia Handicapping System (NB this statement was accepted at the National Handicapping & Course Rating Forum)

- To enable as many golfers as possible (males and females, amateurs and professionals, club members and social players) throughout Australia to obtain a handicap and be able to participate in handicap golf competitions.
- To make the game of golf more inclusive and enjoyable by enabling players of all abilities to compete against each other on an as equitable a basis as possible.
- To encourage participation in the game of golf amongst males and females and people of all ages, and foster golf as a game for life.
- To provide a system that is as transparent and simple and fair as possible to administer and understand.
- To provide a system that all clubs throughout all areas of Australia are able to uniformly and efficiently apply.

Stated General Philosophy of Current System

The Golf Australia Course Rating Systems are systems for evaluating the playing difficulty of individual courses to provide a uniform basis for the computation of handicaps which should enable golfers of all skill levels to compete on an equitable basis.

The Golf Australia Handicapping Systems, based on the course rating systems, are designed to achieve uniformity of handicapping throughout Australia for amateur golfers.

Essential points of the Systems are:

- all handicaps shall be calculated in accordance with the Australian Course Rating Systems for men and women.
- every eligible round will be reported and accurately recorded for handicapping purposes.
- every player will endeavour to make their best score at each hole in every round played.
- the Australian Handicapping Systems are to be properly applied.
- there is uniform determination of the course rating of golf courses in Australia.
- all handicaps referred to in the Systems shall be either Australian Handicaps (valid at all affiliated clubs), or Club Handicaps (valid as determined by the committee in charge of a competition).
- all handicaps referred to are stroke handicaps.

The Handicapping Review Group will need to achieve the following outcomes (NB the findings are to be contained in a report of no more than 6,000 words):

- ◆ Compile a list of the Slope-like handicap systems which are currently in operation (NB the list will include US Slope, European Golf Association Slope, and NZ Slope). The systems on this list will be the systems the review group considers. The review group will also consider the Ray Vize proposed system.
- ◆ Put forward findings consistent with the handicapping & course rating system component preferences which were exhibited at the National Handicapping & Course Rating Forum (as contained in the Summary document – which is attached). The Review Group may operate outside the preferences exhibited at the Forum, however amendments must be noted and explained. Each preference should be briefly discussed by the Review Group before it commences its general considerations.
- ◆ Prepare a summary of the key conceptual & operating points of each system on the list (taking account of any material difference between the NZ set-up and the USGA Handicap System).
- ◆ Prepare a summary of the material pros & cons of each system on the list when compared & contrasted with the existing Australian systems (taking account of any material difference between the NZ set-up and the USGA Handicap System). Each system on the list will have its own summary (if this would be helpful).
- ◆ Prepare a summary which considers the logistics of implementation of each system with a view to properly assessing feasibility.
- ◆ Include in the report other findings considered to be significant.
- ◆ Include in the report findings on any other investigation as requested by the Board or Handicapping & Course Rating Committee if such an investigation is considered to be of significant importance.
- ◆ Provide substantiated answers to the following two questions: *“Which of the assessed systems is best suited to Australia?”* AND *“Is this system better suited to Australia than the existing Australian systems?”*

The Course Rating Review Group will need to achieve the following outcomes (NB the findings are to be contained in a report of no more than 6,000 words):

- ◆ Obtain from the Handicapping Review Group the list of systems it is to assess.
- ◆ Put forward findings consistent with the handicapping & course rating system component preferences which were exhibited at the National Handicapping & Course Rating Forum (as contained in the Summary document – which is attached). The Review Group may operate outside the preferences exhibited at the Forum, however amendments must be noted and explained. Each preference should be briefly discussed by the Review Group before it commences its general considerations.
- ◆ Prepare a summary of the key conceptual & operating points of the course rating regimen underpinning each handicapping system on the list.
- ◆ Prepare a summary of the material pros & cons of each course rating regimen on the list when compared & contrasted against each other.

- ◆ Prepare a summary of the material pros & cons of the USGA Scratch Course Rating System when compared & contrasted with the existing corresponding Australian systems.
- ◆ Prepare a summary which considers the logistics of implementation of each regimen with a view to properly assessing feasibility.
- ◆ Include in the report other findings considered to be significant.
- ◆ Include in the report findings on any other investigation as requested by the Board or Handicapping & Course Rating Committee if such an investigation is considered to be of significant importance.
- ◆ Provide substantiated answers to the following two questions: *“Which course rating regimen best supports a Slope or Slope-like system?”* AND *“Would there be material benefit in replacing our existing AWCR/AMCR evaluation systems with the USGA Scratch Course Rating System (the answer needs to consider current Australian concerns on the over-reliance in our existing systems on length).”*
- ◆ NOTE – It is not within the scope of this investigation to consider ways in which the existing AWCR/AMCR systems may be improved. However, in the event Golf Australia does not decide to adopt a ‘Slope’ or ‘Slope’-like system, the findings of the Course Rating Review Group may be used to assist in the development of the AWCR/AMCR systems.