



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2009

## **GOLF AUSTRALIA MOVES TO GLOBAL COURSE RATING SYSTEM**

Golf Australia today confirmed Australia's adoption of the United States Golf Association Course Rating System.

This resolves the course rating component of the national handicapping & course rating review. The Board of Golf Australia will determine the future direction of the Australian Handicapping System (and CCR) following a state forum to be held at the end of April.

The course rating decision follows a lengthy period of review and will see the existing Australian Women's Course Rating System and Australian Men's Course Rating System be replaced by the USGA Scratch Course Rating System.

In making the announcement, Mrs Lenagan commented: "We've spent the past three years on a process which has involved inviting feedback and then listening to what everyone has to say. That's meant having a dialogue with not just state associations, golf clubs and individual golfers, but also Golf Management Australia, Golf Link, the media, and any other party that's shown a desire to engage on this issue."

"This outcome is a genuine good-news story for the industry, and takes us further down the path of removing un-necessary inconsistencies between women's and men's handicapping in Australia."

Golf Australia CEO Stephen Pitt said Australian golfers could look forward to the benefits of the new system.

"The USGA Course Rating System is considered world's best practice and is the result of significant financial and scientific investment. It is exciting that all Australian clubs and handicap players will now be exposed to the benefits experienced by most golfers around the world."

Golf Management Australia President Max Mason said he was pleased with the new direction and the consistency it would bring.

"I applaud the initiative taken by Golf Australia in adopting the USGA Course Rating System that now applies in USA, Europe, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, much of Asia as well as our friends across the Tasman. This system will greatly improve the relativity between all courses and provide greater consistency in the rating procedure."

Golf Australia Handicapping & Course Rating Committee Chairman Ian Read, explained the finer points of the system:

"Fundamentally this will see the 'actual measured length' of a course being replaced by 'effective playing length', and that's important because the course rating will now reflect what it is that the golfer encounters. This means giving greater consideration to the factors we all know make such a difference. And I'm talking about the obvious things such as roll, elevation, prevailing wind, altitude, and forced lay-ups caused by dog-legs and dams or streams, etc. It really is a major step forward.

"We'll also be putting a national training regimen in place to ensure the same approach is being exhibited by raters whether they be in Broome, or Cooktown, or Melbourne. The review process strongly identified the inconsistent rating of courses as being a real problem so whichever way we went, we knew there was going to have to be a significant investment in training. Now we're able to tap into resources and processes the USGA has spent a lot of

time and money in developing, so from a real-cost perspective the pieces fit together very nicely.”

Clubs will use the new scratch ratings immediately their course has been re-rated, with the implementation timetable being as follows:

- Approximately 120 personnel to be trained throughout Australia between June and October 2009. This will include the USGA conducting seminars in Australia in June.
- September 2009, begin rating courses with an initial concentration on new and changed courses.
- By the end of 2011 we expect that all courses will have been completed, with most metropolitan courses to be finished by the end of 2010.

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For enquires please contact **Simon Magdulski** at Golf Australia on 03 9626 5023.

### **About Golf Australia**

*Golf Australia is the national sporting organisation for golf in Australia and the governing body for amateur golf.*

*Our goal is to raise the level of interest and participation in the game from grassroots golfers through to the elite levels, spectators, volunteers and associated industry bodies. Key responsibilities incorporate managing national tournaments and championships including the Australian Opens as well as rules and handicapping. Working in with government, business and community, Golf Australia ensures the value of golf is understood and supported in all policy and business decisions.*

*Golf is a game for life where participation contributes to a healthy Australian community.*

*For more information on Golf Australia visit [www.golfaustralia.org.au](http://www.golfaustralia.org.au)*