



BRIEF EXPLANATION OF USGA COURSE RATING SYSTEM.

The USGA Course Rating system follows a series of assessments by qualified Course Raters through a thorough process. The same process is followed through all sets of permanent tees on the course.

There are standards relative to how far a “scratch” player (a person who can play to a course handicap of zero on any and all rated golf courses) and “bogey” player (a man off a handicap of approx 20 and a woman off a handicap of approx 24 on a course of standard difficulty) hits the golf ball, and it is from these positions that the obstacles are assessed. The assessment process is the same for women and men except the landing zones for women are 210 **yards** Scratch and 150 **yards** Bogey and men are 250 **yards** Scratch and 200 **yards** Bogey. (Yards will be used for rating purposes only. This use of imperial measurement will not impact on Clubs in any way).

The main formula component is the *effective playing length* of the course, which is derived from the course’s measured length. There are then five factors that are considered, giving a more accurate reflection of the true playing length of the course. These are:

- ◆ Roll
- ◆ Changes in elevation
- ◆ Wind factor
- ◆ Forced Lay up areas
- ◆ Altitude

The measured length and the effective playing length adjustments are used to determine the Scratch and Bogey Yardage Rating.

A further analysis of the course assesses each hole and the obstacles that affect the playing difficulty. There are 10 obstacles being:

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|-----|------------------------|---|
| 1. | Topography | the impact of the terrain on play. |
| 2. | Fairway width | the difficulty of keeping the ball on the fairway. |
| 3. | Green target | the size and difficulty of hitting the green. |
| 4. | Rough & Recoverability | covers the difficulty of a shot when the fairway or green has been missed. |
| 5. | Bunkers | how they come into play and the difficulty of recovery. |
| 6. | OOB & Extreme rough | the proximity of these factors and how they come into play. |
| 7. | Water Hazards | the proximity of these factors and how they come into play |
| 8. | Trees | based on the density, proximity, and difficulty of recovery. |
| 9. | Greens surface | assesses the difficulty of the green, and includes speed and contouring of each green. |
| 10. | Psychological | based on the accumulative effect ratings of the other 9 obstacles, there may be a value added in this category. |

The values allocated to the above obstacles are multiplied by various weighting factors giving a final number to the Scratch & Bogey obstacle rating values.

SUMMARY SLOPE SYSTEM.

COURSE RATING

- ◆ USGA Course rating system ensures that the rating of one course is in proper relation to the ratings of all other courses. The rating process will be the same for men and women and should have uniformity across Australia. The US Golf Assn insists that training is paramount and is updated every four years.
- ◆ All courses in Australia will need to be re-rated for a scratch golfer and a bogey golfer (male handicap approx 20, female handicap approx 24). Ratings will be done from a variety of permanent plates on a course. e.g. Course 1 – Men’s championship tees; course 2 – women’s championship tees; course 3 – men’s short course; course 4 – women’s short course etc. In the initial rating period a Club is limited to 5 ratings. (Any more to be negotiated with Golf NSW)
- ◆ A Golf Australia directive states that permanent plates for each set of tees to be rated must be embedded in the ground. (Refer to GA Memo – 22.7.09).
- ◆ Rating for NSW courses will commence in June 2010. Zone Co-ordinators will be appointed to organise the ratings within their Zone.
- ◆ NSW has been divided into 29 Zones (22 Country roughly based on the District Golf Assns and 7 Metropolitan Zones (geographically based).
- ◆ Time frame: ratings to be completed by December 2011.
- ◆ A Slope rating is achieved by subtracting the *scratch course rating* from the *bogey rating* and multiplying by 4.24 for women and 5.381 for men.
e.g. Scratch CR is 71, Bogey CR is 95.
Men’s slope rating is $95 - 71 = 24 \times 5.381 = 129$
Women’s slope rating is $95 - 71 = 24 \times 4.24 = 102$
- ◆ Slope ratings are calculated on a sliding scale which go from lowest (or easiest) slope rating of 55 to highest (or hardest) slope rating 155 with a standard playing difficulty rating of 113.

USGA HANDICAPPING SYSTEM

- ◆ A *Handicap Index* will be the measure of a player’s potential ability on a course of standard playing difficulty.
- ◆ *Handicap index* will be calculated by using the 10 best of the last 20 calculated differential scores and adjusted to a standard playing difficulty of 113, then multiplying by 0.96. All handicap calculations are based on the *handicap index*. Formula for adjusting a differential to Std difficulty is:
Handicap Differential = $(\text{Adjusted gross score} - \text{CR}) \times 113 / \text{Slope Rating}$.
- ◆ A player’s handicap on the day (*Course Handicap*) will be determined by using his/her *handicap index* multiplied by the course slope rating and divided by 113. Each course will have a Handicap Chart to which the player may refer to find his/her *course handicap*, including the Home course. Players do not use the *handicap index* as their playing handicap.
Formula for a Course Handicap = *handicap index multiplied by course slope rating divided by 113*.
- ◆ If a player competes at a course with a slope rating of 55, his/her course handicap will be lower than the handicap index, if he/she competes at a course with a slope rating of 155 the course handicap will be higher than the handicap index.
e.g.

Index	Slope 155	Slope 125	Slope 113	Slope 75	Slope 55
29	40	32	29	19	14
18	25	20	18	12	9
7	10	8	7	5	3

- ◆ It will be essential to know your current *handicap index*.
- ◆ Your *Handicap index* will be increased/decreased by using a rolling average of 10 best of the last 20 calculated differential scores.

- ◆ *Handicap index* review date will be confirmed. (Currently handicaps under the “rolling averages” are revised daily, this may be changed to fortnightly or monthly).
- ◆ It is anticipated that all Clubs will have access to a GOLFLink or a computer in order to calculate the *handicap index*.
- ◆ All courses must be re- rated under the US system before the slope handicap system can be used.
- ◆ Details of any changes will be advertised by Golf Australia and may be viewed on the GA website.

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Course Rating Committee.
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