



Short Course Guidelines

When your Course or Match Committee is considering having a short course rated, there are firstly some guidelines that must be adhered to for the course to meet the specifications set out by the USGA to qualify for a Course and a Slope Rating under the Course Rating System which GolfAustralia uses under licence from the USGA.

The course must be at least 2743 metres (3000 yards) long.

For any combination greater than nine holes, there must be at least two holes that would require a scratch player to hit a full shot greater than or equal to 228 metres (250 yards)

Apart from those requirements, the layout of the course is up to the club to design. However, it should be borne in mind the original purpose of the short course - that it should be a good introduction to the game of golf, and ideally be a stepping stone to the aim of playing and enjoying the conventional course. In achieving this, the character of the course should not be lost; for instance a feature of McCracken Golf Course is its water hazards and sand-bunkers and the new players should be given the opportunity to master the hazards and the varied topography, even if in a modified form. It would probably be useful if a person who has had experience with junior golf be involved in the layout process.

The front area of some of the existing tee blocks can be used, putting the orange tee markers well forward, but allowing at least two metres space in front. This is often a good option for Par 3 holes where there may not be any area closer to the hole cut to fairway height. On short Par 4's, the front area of existing tee blocks may also be suitable. Long Par 5's mean a lot of scope for converting either to a Par 4, or a much shorter Par 5. The raters will be guided by the club as to whether a hole should be entered into the system as a Par 4 or a Par 5.

From the experience of other clubs in SA who have had short courses rated, the teeing area does not need to be raised – a reasonably flat and closely mown area, generally to the side of a fairway, is sufficient. If there are two permanent tee blocks set into the ground, they may also serve as the tee markers (see the definition of Teeing Ground in the Rules of Golf), as the volume of use would probably not need them to be varied from day to day. It is also probably not practical to have tee signage in place, as it could come into play from shots from the regular tees.

A recommended way to start the design process is with a map of the course and a ruler, or you can use Google Earth with the ruler function, and roughly decide where you would like the new tee blocks to be, followed by a trip round the course to see whether the proposed new tee area is workable. If you have access to a laser range finder, you can record exact measurements so that the GolfSA raters don't need to re-measure.

Club Committee Representatives to Contact Golf SA via email admin@golfsa.com.au should you wish to enquire further.

Golf SA Course Rating Sub-Committee (Aug 2015)