**Wiltshire Golf Course Rating**

Every Club that is affiliated to England Golf and Wiltshire Golf and wishes to hold *Acceptable Score* competitions for handicapping purposes must have their course(s) ‘rated’ by their County team. Once rated, Clubs have to be re-rated every ten years.

**What is Course Rating?**

The purpose of rating any tee set on a course is to provide Clubs with numerical values for the *course rating* (*CR)* and *bogey rating (BR)* so that the s*lope rating* (SR) can be calculated.

SR = (BR-CR) x constant

The CR value indicates the difficulty of the course for a scratch golfer.

The BR value indicates the difficulty of the course for a bogey golfer (man with a handicap of about 20 and a women with a handicap of about 24).

The SR indicates the **relative playing difficulty of a bogey golfer compared to a scratch golfer**.

The average SR is 113.

Having all these figures enables players to calculate their handicap index and from that gain a playing handicap for the course or tee set they are playing.

**How is a Course Rating carried out?**

The rating process requires a detailed study of each hole including data obtained from all landing zones for both the male and female scratch and bogey golfer based on the average shot lengths of each type of golfer. As well as looking at effective playing length factors (such as roll, elevation, doglegs and wind speed/direction), the rating team also studies at each landing zone and green, ten obstacle factors (including width of fairway, size of green, bunkers, etc)

The actual on-site process has to be conducted in the playing season between April and October when trees are in leaf and clear definition is seen between fairway and rough. It takes about 4 hours with a team of 6-8 raters to collect all the relevant data. Lead Raters will then input the data into a very complex spreadsheet which computes the course rating and slope rating. This is checked by the Regional Adviser before being sent to England Golf for verification.

**How is the process initiated?**

When a Club/course is due for a rating, the Club will be contacted at the beginning of the year by the County Course Rating Team and guided through the process. A date for the rating will be arranged and details of a number of pre-requisites will be given. These are as follows:

* an up-to-date ‘Certificate of Course Measurement’ (valid for 10 years) carried out by a reputable company
* fixed distance points in place for each set of tees to be rated (e.g. an embedded post, metal disc or paving slab
* details of mid-season course conditions (provided through a questionnaire)
* scorecards and course planners (if available)

All these items need to be in place at least two weeks prior to the team visiting to do the rating.

**How soon do Clubs receive their results after a rating is performed?**

Lead Raters usually input data within a week of carrying out the on-course assessment. However, this has to be checked regionally by an Advisor and then centrally at England Golf. In the middle of the season, there may be a wait of up to a month or six weeks for all the checking to be done thoroughly. In all cases, Clubs will receive their *Certificates of Course and Slope Ratings* directly from England Golf.

**What happens if Clubs want to make changes to their golf courses between ratings?**

In order to maintain the integrity of the handicapping system, It is vitally important that Clubs understand their responsibility in maintaining their courses to meet the same standards found when the course was rated. Some changes can significantly impact the CR and SR data. Just a simple thing like growing the rough around the fairway can make a huge difference, because it affects every landing zone of every shot. Small changes like removing or adding a bunker or two will make little difference (although several small changes do have a cumulative effect). It is very important that Clubs contact the County team when they are considering any change so that the impact of that change on CR and SR values can be properly assessed.

**Additional Information**

As a result of updates to the Course Rating system in April 2024, it is now possible to provide rating data for

* *Short* courses. (1500 < 4800 for men and 1500 < 3600 for women).
* *Long* courses ( >7000 for men and >6000 for women)

However Clubs need to be aware of a few points:

* The Course Rating system loses its accuracy either side of the standard length course
* It is not always appropriate for women to play off longer tee sets because some holes may become too difficult or even unplayable
* Having ratings off all tees for both genders greatly increases the complexity of the scorecard
* Course furniture and other hardware might need to be changed
* Rating teams might not have the capacity or availability to meet such requests made by Clubs and in some cases Clubs might need to wait some time before the job can be undertaken

For all enquiries please contact Wiltshire Golf’s Course Rating Coordinator and Regional Advisor:

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