

HANDICAPPING CHANGES

How will we be affected in 2010 by the
introduction of the USGA Handicap
System?

Why are the changes being made?

- The main benefit of the changed system will be the “portability” of handicaps. The need for this is clear at a club such as The Dunes where there are two courses, The Dunes and The Cups. The Cups is shorter, has fewer bunkers and its AWCR is 66. The Dunes is longer, has too many bunkers, and an AWCR of 72.

Why is this a problem?

- A player who gains her handicap on The Cups finds that when she transfers to The Dunes her handicap is too low for the more difficult course and she can't play to it. It takes a long time for it to be realistic.
- A Dunes player who plays well on The Cups may well win the event, which isn't always popular, may break her handicap by 3 or 4, and take months to get back to a handicap which reflects her golfing ability.

Does this matter?

- In most club events it doesn't matter. Most people play most of their golf on the course for which their handicap is appropriate.
- But it does matter for competitions where players from different clubs are using handicaps gained on very different courses. This includes our District events or any event you may play as a visitor away from home.

An example:

- A player with a handicap of 18 at a metropolitan sand-belt course goes to play on a fairly short, flat country course with no bunkers and no water hazards. If she plays to her handicap she will be likely to win.
- A player from the country course, also on 18 but gained in much easier conditions, who visits the city course is very unlikely to win no matter how well she plays.

How will this change in 2010?

- The first change, starting on February 1st, will be to alter the way our handicaps are gained and altered.
- Each player will have a Handicap Index which will be the average of the best 10 scores she has had in the last 20 rounds she has played, multiplied by 0.96.
- She will play off this handicap on her “home” course.

Who will work all this out?

- Golflink, thank goodness!!
- Clubs not on Golflink yet will be given every encouragement to join.

How will this solve the problem?

- By itself, it won't, (though Golf Australia believes it will produce a truer indication of our real ability than the present system.)
- But the second part of the new system is the re-rating of all courses according to the USGA system, called the "Slope System". This is beginning soon and will take some time as you will understand.
- Each course, and this will include black tees, blue tees or red tees as separate "courses" in your club, will have a "Slope Rating" between 55 for an "easy" course and 155 for a difficult course. A mid-range course is 113.

How will this work?

Handicap Index of Player	Slope Rating of Course	Handicap to be used
28.6	86	22
28.6	113	29
28.6	135	34
9.2	86	7
9.2	113	9
9.2	135	11

How will we know what handicap to play off?

- “The player will access their Course Handicap from an easily understood table that all clubs will be provided with after their course has been rated. These tables are in poster format which will be in a prominent position.” (Golf Australia)

What about the CCR?

- There will be no CCR (i.e. no daily rating component) in the new system.
- The CCR for men's handicapping will be discontinued as from February 1st 2010.
- Women haven't had one for a couple of years so there is no change.

Any other changes?

- At some stage in 2010 we will have to enter our Stableford score on all our cards, even if we're playing Stroke or Par. The stableford score will be used for processing handicaps only, not for the result of the competition you are playing.
- It is suggested that all clubs start to practise this before it is officially required.

When will all this happen?

- “Best 10” score average as basis for handicapping – 1st February 2010
- Abolition of CCR (for men) – 1st February 2010.
- Converting all scores to stableford – mid-2010 probably; to be announced.
- Use of Course Handicaps– “immediately” after courses have been re-rated.
- Expected finish dates – end of 2010 for metropolitan courses, 2011 in the country.
- Complete introduction of the USGA system – by beginning of 2012.

How will it affect MPDWG?

- The Beacon Plate – our first 2010 event – at Portsea on February 15th is after introduction of the Handicap Index.
- At some stage probably in 2010 our district courses will be re-rated and the new course ratings will be applied.
- **Once the new system is fully implemented**, all players will use the Slope Rating to determine their Course Handicaps rather than play off their Handicap Index.
- *Some time in 2010 or 2011 the new system will apply. By 2012 all our events will be on the changed basis.*

How will it affect your club?

- BIG change in handicaps in February; consistent golfers won't change too much. (My handicap will go out heaps!)
- Need to practise entering stableford scores.
- It will be possible to have two "courses" rated for women e.g. red and green tees.
- Stricter conditions for placing of daily markers.
- Possible for women to play off men's tees and vice versa – interesting changes for mixed competitions!
- Need to change club scorecards to show new course ratings and hole lengths.

More information?

- All documents have been sent to the clubs – last one was dated July 31st 2009. Ask the men if the women haven't got them.
- All documents are available on the Golf Australia website
 - www.golfaustralia.org.au
- Link on our website www.mpdwg.asn.au