

## USGA Course Rating Process

✚ Course Rating is an evaluation of the playing difficulty of a golf course for scratch golfers under normal course and weather conditions. (This means that generally rating can only be undertaken from April until the end of September.) It is based on the effective playing length and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring difficulty of the scratch golfer.

✚ Additionally rating under the USGA system provides procedures for determining a Bogey Rating (same criteria as Scratch above). This rating is used in conjunction with the Scratch rating in determining a Slope Value for each Course.

✚ In addition to the measured length of the golf course the four factors that influence the **effective playing length** are: Roll, Lay-up, Wind and Elevation.

✚ In addition there are ten obstacle factors: **Topography, Fairway** (width), **Green Target** (effectively size), **Recoverability and Rough** (difficulty of playing shot e.g. heather and length of rough), **Bunkers** (size, proximity to landing area, depth, proportion of greenside bunker length against circumference of green etc), **Out of Bounds/Extreme Rough** (i.e. a player is forced to take a drop if in this situation), **Penalty Areas, Trees, Green Surface and Psychological**.

✚ Each hole of the golf course is evaluated on a scale 0-10 for each of the ten obstacles and account taken of the effective length correction factors. All evaluations/measurements are noted on site and entered onto a web based data information form. The completed form is then submitted for Regional Scrutiny before going to England Golf for further scrutiny and the allocation of SSS and Slope rating.

### **In practice:-**

✚ For each course rated a team of at least four or five people are required depending on whether the greens have been assessed previously by a team leader. The rating team should consist of two team leaders. (In Dorset we only have two trained team leaders whereas other Counties may have as many as six plus teams).

✚ On each hole all assessments are made in relation to each tee colour and for the gender use of that tee. For example at Ferndown the main course is

rated for men from the blue, white and yellow tees and for women from the red tees. The Alliss course however is rated for both men and women on both the green and the gold tees.

✚ As each hole/tee is rated for both scratch and bogey golfers this **can mean** a total of 16 separate assessments for each hole and 16 separate spread sheet pages to be filled out for each hole. This amounts to a total of 432 pages of data submitted to England Golf for this one Club alone.

To give you an idea of what the spread sheet pages look like I have attached a copy of the CR1 form which we used in the very early days before the web based assessment was fully developed.

✚ On each hole the following takes place.

1. Team leaders go to teeing area and measure elevation change from there to the green and the distance to the start of the fairway where the remaining members are standing. If a penalty area has to be crossed with the tee shot this distance is also measured (+10 yds to carry safely). The overall impact of the trees on the whole hole is also assessed. As is the presence of a Chute.
2. The team then proceed to each landing zone in turn. Depending on where the teeing grounds are in relation to each other, typically it would be bogey 1 red landing zone, probably followed by bogey 1 yellow, etc. The landing zones are a prescribed distance consisting of an amount for carry and an amount for roll:-  
Scratch male hits 230 carry with 20 yards roll on his tee shot (250) and 200 carry with 20 roll on subsequent full shots (220).  
Bogey male 180 and 20 (200) for tee shot and 150 & 20 on subsequent full shots (170).  
Scratch lady 190 +20 (210) for tee shot and 170 + 20 (190) for subsequent full shots.  
Bogey lady 150 + 20 (170) for tee shot and 110 + 20 (130) for subsequent full shots.
3. At each landing zone fairway firmness and topography are noted. Roll is determined and shot lengths adjusted where appropriate. Where lay ups apply, whether forced or by choice shot lengths are adjusted. Fairway width is measured and nature of stance and lie noted. At last landing zone before green for each tee elevation to green is determined.

Distances from the centre of the fairway are measured and noted to trees, OB/ER, penalty areas and assessments made as to recoverability where appropriate

Height of fairway rough is evaluated.

Presence and punitive nature of bunkers is noted.

Any shot length adjustments caused by carrying ditches, lakes or bunkers are measured including a 10 yd safe carry adjustment.

4. At the green, width, length are measured and the circumference if greenside bunkers are present.

Determine fraction of green bordered by bunkers.

Assess depth and severity of bunkers

Measure distance from centre of green to OB/ER, penalty areas etc and assess recoverability.

Assess any other features such as mounds or steep fall offs and record appropriately.

Use stimpmeter to determine slope (speed) of green.

Assess green surface, contours and any level changes (tiers).

Go home and put all this information onto the data base and submit.

#### **COURSES RATED**

**TAWGC**

**Bulbury Woods**

**Came Down**

**Canford School**

**Crane Valley**

**DG&CC**

**Dudsbury**

**Ferndown (Main & The Alliss)**

**Ferndown Forest**

**Highcliffe Castle**

**IoP The Deane**

**Knighton Heath**

**Lyme Regis**

**Moors Valley**

**Parkstone**

**Parley Golf Centre**

**Playgolf Bournemouth (Iford)**

**Remedy Oak**

**Rushmore Park**

#### **COURSES TO BE RATED**

**Bournemouth & Meyrick Park**

**Bridport & West Dorset**

**Broadstone**

**Folke**

**Henstridge**

**IoP Main Course**

**Queen's Park**

**Wolfedale**

**Sherborne**  
**Somerleigh**  
**Sturminster Marshall**  
**Yeovil (Old Course & The Newton)**  
**Wareham**  
**Weymouth**