



HR&CRC Bulletin Jan 2018

In this bulletin from the Handicaps, Rules and Course Rating Committee (HR&CRC) I hope to give an insight into the modifications and improvements that have been made and indeed may be ongoing to the Islands courses.

The next 2 years will also see some major changes to how we play golf and the functions of the various Worldwide Handicap authorities.



World Handicap System (WHS)



The what? Well it was jointly announced by the R&A and USGA in April 2017 and at that time the various Golf Media came out with a rash of video and written articles. However, it's all gone a touch quiet and we eagerly await news on the progress reached on this project, which is now in its 4th year off research, development and co-operation across the Worlds six handicap systems.

CGF has attended the initial introduction and feedback seminar which was aimed at National Handicap authorities, however there has been no public document release. The next stage is expected to be a public release of Educational material sometime late in 2018 and CGF will of course be present at future seminars.

In a nut shell the aim is to have a portable and unified Worldwide handicap system, so that players worldwide all compete off the same handicapping system. Integral to that is the USGA Course and Slope rating system which we use in Cyprus under license and which is to be adopted worldwide.

Rules



No not a regurgitation of the Proposed New Rules of Golf 2019 but a comment on unofficial formats of the game. It is not the intention to duplicate all that has been written on the Rules of Golf 2019 as this information is readily available.

Unofficial Game Formats: The HR&CRC has received requests for rulings concerning club events where unofficial formats of the game have been played. The Rules of Golf apply to the two main formats, Match play and Stroke play.

The Rules of Golf do not provide specific rulings for formats such as Scrambles and Waltzes. These unofficial formats mean strict compliance to the Rules of Golf are not possible, scrambles and notably the popular Texas scramble fall into this category.

A Texas scramble at one club may not be played to the exact same format as at a neighbouring club. Local custom and practice does not mean that it is the accepted custom and practice at a neighbouring club, and that custom and practice may be contrary to the Rules of Golf itself. This is often down to the roots of the club and where it may have drawn its core membership and competitions committee from and any associated National interpretations.



It is incumbent on the Host club to ensure participants understand what is the host clubs' interpretation and playing format of the game, especially important when playing Inter Club events. Agree matters in advance and you should not have an issue.

HR&CRC is unable to and will not provide rulings for unofficial formats of the game.

Stroke Index (SI): The allocation of stroke index is a subject at the bottom of many a patio conversation, usually disputing the allocation of indices on the scorecards. The oft quoted and misunderstood concept is that holes should be indexed with the most difficult being SI.1 and the easiest SI.18. That is not the case and under the present EGA guidelines and within WHS Indices are allocated with a number of considerations.



Stroke indexing comes into its own during Matchplay events and its use is to apportion shots as evenly as possible across all 18 holes. The EGA state that SI has virtually no influence on stableford scoring and handicaps.

It is a club responsibility to allocate indices however the HR&CRC is always ready to offer advice.

An overview of the indices allocation process

is that we start by dividing the course into 6 groups of 3 holes. Holes 1,2 & 3, then 4,5 & 6 and so on. Then allocate Index 1 to 6 across those holes in an ordered sequence. Allocating Index 1 to the most difficult of 7,8 & 9, Index 2 to the most difficult of 13,14 & 15, Index 3 to most difficult of 4,5 & 6, index 4 to the most difficult of 10,11 & 12, Index 5 to the most difficult of 1,2 & 3, then Index 6 to the most difficult of 16,17 & 18.

Next, we allocate indices 7 to 12 into the 6 groups and then repeat for Indices 13 to 18. There are a number of guidelines to help with the fair distribution within each of the 3 indexing sequences.

It is recommended to use official course data records to define the most difficult holes and not individual interpretations. DataGolf stores all the historical degree of difficulty for all holes, tees and handicap ranges since records commenced on island in Jan 2008 so we have plenty of Data to work with when establishing the most difficult holes.

The aggregate of the 6 groups should be between 27 and 30. It's no easy task as your course might have a run of 2 or more consecutive holes which could be considered the hardest 2 holes on the course, but to allocate them in order would cause an imbalance and potential unfair advantage to the player receiving the most strokes if allotted successive SI.

The expectation is that in 2020 all courses worldwide will operate the same process but that does not mean a standard SI across all courses worldwide, just that the same process is applied, which currently is not the case.

The recommendations also include such topics as allocate the odd numbered SI to the front 9 and even to the back 9. If possible allocate the same indices across all tees and to both Men and Women.

And now to the changes made to our courses over the last 15 months or so.

Aphrodite Hills



Aphrodite Hills
- Golf -

PGA National
CYPRUS

Following the reconstruction of all greens and bunkers, and some tee ground extensions the course reopened on Jan 18.

Greens: All 18 Greens and the practice putting greens have been reconstructed and reseeded.

Teeing Grounds: There have been 2 tee ground extensions:

3rd Hole - This has had an extension to the Men's White teeing ground going "backwards" over the ravine. New tee positions are in use and see the hole played as a Par 5. Additionally, a Ladies Yellow tee has been rated.

15th Hole - The Yellow tee ground has been lengthened to Par 3 177 metres.

All the course ratings have been updated to include the Ladies Yellow tee set. The new course ratings will come into effect on course re-opening.

Secret Valley

The overall course length of a number of the tee sets has been increased. This has been achieved by integrating a number of White Tee positions into the Black tee set, Yellow tees positions into the White tee sets and so on. The new Course ratings have been in effect since August 2017.



Eléa Estate



The course has had a mandatory rerate and minor changes made to the CR and SR. The new Course ratings will come into effect in early 2018.

Minthis Hills

2018 will see a number of hole sequence changes and introduction of two new holes and greens. The current 10th hole in front of the clubhouse will be taken out of play and replaced by a brand-new hole which has its tee ground on the current 18th tee ground. This will be a Par 3 in the direction of the current 12th. Some major landscaping has taken place to create a new green, bunker and fairway approach. This new hole and a reviewed tee sequence will come into effect in the late spring of 2018. Meanwhile construction work will be underway to create a new Par 5 on the driving range side of the road which will become the new 10th hole. This is expected to be in play along with another tee sequence change in Oct/Nov 2018.



Course ratings will be updated for each layout so that handicap qualifying events can continue through the modifications and layout changes.

Vikla



Some significant changes to the overall course layout with a new 11th green built, some revised tee positions and changes to Par notably on the 8th, 11th and 12th. The updated Course ratings came into effect in Sep 2017.

JSGC(D) - Dhekelia

All 18 holes now have artificial grass greens along with grass surrounds. Work is ongoing with the ambition of providing as much fairway grass as the club's ability to irrigate and maintain can sustain. New Course ratings came into effect in November 2016.



JSGC(E) - Episkopi



A total of 6 of the existing 18 artificial grass greens have been replaced and are in play. There are no changes to the existing Course Ratings at this time.

IGCN - Nicosia



No changes.

ANGC - Ayios Nikolaos



No changes.

I hope this bulletin has been of interest and will endeavour to produce a further release later in the year, when we hopefully will have an update on the progress of WHS and news on any further course modifications.

Peter Bromley
Chairman CGF HR&CRC
Jan 2018