

### **Handicap Network:**

In case you missed the latest news article from Handicap Network regarding the Slope Rating and how it will work, please read the following article:

The GolfRSA committee is in the process of establishing the budget and timeline for the introduction of Slope, as well as the communication and education plans to ensure that everyone is fully informed when we go live.

Background on the USGA Course Rating, including Slope:

We are pleased that South Africa will soon be joining the rest of the world in using the Slope Rating system. This means that once we are all on the same Course Rating system, as well as The World Handicap System, which is going live in 2020, handicaps will be comparable worldwide.

The Course Rating of a tee, as we have it now, is the measure of the difficulty of each tee relative to par for the scratch golfer. The USGA Course Rating system is far more comprehensive than our existing distance-based system and takes into account numerous other factors, including things like the width of the fairways, hazards near the landing zones of drives, as well as the hazards around greens and the difficulties of the greens themselves.

The USGA system also rates each tee not only for scratch golfers but also for a higher-handicapped golfer of around 18 handicap. The difference of how hard a tee is for a high-handicapped golfer relative to a scratch golfer is called the Slope of the course or tee.

The standard slope is 113, so if a tee at a course is harder for a higher-handicapped golfer than a scratch golfer due to carries and other factors, then the slope will be higher than 113, up to a maximum of 155. If it is easier, then the slope will be below 113, down to the lowest of 55.

How will slope work?

For example, let's say your course has a par of 72 and the club tee has a Course Rating (CR) of 71 and a Slope Rating of 125. When you go to play off that tee, you will look up on your phone app or on the club handicap terminal what your Handicap Index is and then,

depending on your Handicap Index, the club, the phone app or the terminal will give you a Course Handicap for that tee.

The calculation – which the club, the app or the terminal will do for you – will be:  $(\text{Handicap Index} \times \text{Slope} / 113 + (\text{CR}-\text{Par}))$ . So at the above course if you were, say, a 16 handicap, it would be:  $(16 \times 125/113 + (71-72)) = 16.69$ . This is rounded to 17, so you would now play off 17 on that tee.

If, the next day, you decided to play off a more forward tee, with a Course Rating (CR) of, say, 69 and a Slope Rating of 123, your Course Handicap for that tee would be:  $(16 \times 123/113 + (69-72)) = 14.4$ , so you would play off 14.

This might look a little complicated, but the good news is that your phone, the terminal or the club system will do it all for you. All you have to do is choose the tee you wish to play off – the system knows your Handicap Index and the Course Rating and Slope Rating of each tee at each course and will do the calculation for you. If there is no terminal at your course on a particular day and you do not have a smart phone then there will be a chart at the course from which you can look up your Course Handicap.

When you have completed playing your round from that tee, you simply enter your score on the system as you do now and the system will calculate your Handicap Index.

The reason the whole world has or is going to the USGA Slope system is that the World Handicap System Committee has adopted this system as the international standard to rate courses, as it will give a much fairer and more competitive handicap for golfers, no matter which tee they choose to play off on a given day. The Course Handicap will also adjust the handicaps for players playing off different tees so that everyone is effectively playing to the par of the course.

This is just a brief introduction to slope, so don't be concerned if you don't fully understand it, as there will be a comprehensive communication and education programme to ensure that all clubs and golfers will understand it when we go live later in the year. For more information, log onto the [USGA Slope Rating page](#).

