

SCGU news:

Countdown to the Slope System - As South Africa nears the launch date of the USGA Course Rating System, including Slope, we look at what golfers can expect when the new system is launched on 3 September this year.

A change to your Handicap when we introduce a Handicap Index

It's likely that the first thing you will notice when you check your handicap after 3 September 2018 is that your handicap will have changed to a [Handicap Index](#). For most golfers, their old 'handicap' will have come down by between one and two shots, and it will now also feature one decimal place.

The reason for this is that, in preparation for joining the World Handicap System, GolfRSA has re-rated all of the golf courses in South Africa using the new [USGA Course Rating System](#). The USGA rating system is far more accurate and detailed than the current SAGA system, and by assessing variables other than simply the length of the hole, most courses have been rated as more difficult than previous ratings suggested.

GolfRSA has also introduced a [Slope Rating](#) for each course, which factors in how difficult a course plays for higher-handicapped golfers and scratch players.

The combination of the new USGA Course Rating and the Slope calculation will affect your differentials – in most cases reducing them – and we will retroactively apply these ratings to your last 20 scores. So when you log in to check your scores and/or your handicap, it is probable that your Handicap Index will be lower than your current handicap.

There is no need to worry, however, because everyone else's handicap will have been similarly affected, and when you get your Course Handicap for the round it will usually be higher than your Handicap Index, according to the slope of the tee you choose.

Your chance to choose which course (tees) you'd like to play

Your new Handicap Index will be a measure of your playing potential, but you will not play off the Handicap Index itself. Instead, each time you play a round of golf, you will need to ascertain your Course Handicap for the tee you choose.

To determine your [Course Handicap](#), you first need to decide which tee (for example, Yellow, White, Blue or Red) to play off. Once you know which tee you want to play off, do one of the following to obtain your Course Handicap for the round:

- 1) At registration, tell the assistant which tee colour you want to play off – he or she will enter this into the terminal and give you your Course Handicap for that tee.
- 2) Enter the colour of the tee you wish to play into your [HNA mobile phone App](#) or on the HNA Terminal at the club.
- 3) Use the Course Handicap Conversion Table at the club to match your Handicap Index with the tee (course) you wish to play off.

Golfers playing a course with a high Course and Slope Rating will have a Course Handicap for the day that will be higher than when they elect to play an “easier” course with a lower Course and Slope Rating. Remember, however, that your Course Handicap will also be adjusted for the difference between Par for the course and the Course Rating of the tee.

This introduces one of the great strengths of the new system: on any given day, a golfer can choose which set of tees he or she would like to play off – unless stipulated otherwise in the Competition Conditions – and their Course Handicap will be adjusted up or down according to the difficulty of the course (tees) they are playing.

Another significant change is that golf clubs will do away with the traditional labelling of their tees into categories such as Ladies' tees, Club Tees or Senior Tees. Instead, each set of tees will be colour coded and will effectively represent a different course for the golfer to play.