



KGA COURSE RATING GUIDE

For Club Administrators

CONTENTS

What is a Course Rating, pg. 2

The Course Rating Process, pg. 3

Frequently Asked Questions, pg. 5

After the Rating, pg. 12

Contact KGA

Course Rating Support:

Alec Bahnick, PGA

Handicapping & Course Rating Manager

abahnick@kygolf.org

502-912-9606

Membership Support:

*including Handicapping, GHIN,
and KGA Club Admin*

kentucky@kygolf.org

502-243-8295 ext: 305 or 308

Dear Club Administrators,

We hope this message finds you well and excited about all the wonderful opportunities golf in Kentucky has to offer. This guide is designed to provide you with valuable insights into the course rating process in Kentucky, as well as what you can expect when working with the Kentucky Golf Association (KGA) and our Course Rating team.

Whether a club administrator, handicap committee chair, or one of our 35,000-plus members, we believe this resource will enhance your understanding of KGA's course rating process and its impact on your participation in the World Handicap System® (WHS).

The Course Rating System™ operates under the World Handicap System® (WHS), which is governed jointly by the United States Golf Association® (USGA®) and Royal and Ancient Golf Club® (R&A®). As an authorized association, KGA holds the responsibility within Kentucky, as delegated by the USGA, to oversee and implement the World Handicap System (WHS). This includes the essential task of conducting all course ratings within our jurisdiction.

KGA takes great pride in our Course Rating Program, which is powered by over 20 dedicated volunteers from across the state. Year over year, KGA completes between 20-30 comprehensive course ratings. This process involves raters undergoing training in line with the USGA certification standards. Additionally, our teams participate in further specialized training provided by the USGA.

As we approach the upcoming season, KGA's course rating teams are prepared and enthusiastic to continue supporting Kentucky's vibrant golf community. We trust that the information in this guide will deepen your understanding of the course rating process and its significant role in enhancing the game of golf.

Kind Regards,

Alec Bahnick, PGA

Handicapping and Course Rating Manager

What is a Course Rating?

And how is it established?

No two golf courses are the same. Course Rating® and Slope Rating® are the fundamental information necessary for the World Handicap System to compensate for that fact.

Authorized associations, like the KGA, are given the jurisdiction to issue Course, Bogey, and Slope Ratings in accordance with the Course Rating System™. In the United States, the term "authorized association" is generally interchangeable with the term "Allied Golf Association" (AGA).

A Course Rating reflects the difficulty of a golf course for the scratch player (a player with a Handicap Index® of 0.0) under normal course and weather conditions. A Bogey Rating reflects the difficulty of a golf course for the bogey player (a player with a Handicap Index of 20.0 for men and 24.0 for women) under normal course and weather conditions. The Slope Rating is an indication of the relative difficulty of a golf course for players who are not scratch players compared to players who are scratch players, which is calculated via the relative difference between the Course and Bogey Rating.

The Course Rating and Slope Rating establish the difficulty of a course compared to other courses. They are used as the course data in establishing handicap differentials for score posting and the calculation of a playing handicap for formal or friendly competition.

Authorized associations, like KGA, assemble qualified teams to conduct course rating activities. The team evaluates the golf course over one or two days - one for measurement (if needed), and the other for rating. If it has been over ten years since a golf course has measured, it is highly recommended a re-measurement is conducted.

On measurement day, each set of tees are evaluated and verified with the current scorecard. This is conducted by using GPS Trimble Course Mapping Software Program. We start our coordinates at the midpoint of each teeing area, and then discern if any pivot points need to be taken depending on the intended line of play (doglegs). If not, we find our final coordinates at the center of the putting green. The high accuracy GPS unit is used to mark waypoints and software is used to tabulate the distances between those points. This method is approved by the USGA for measuring the length of golf courses.

On rating day, course raters complete a "Form 1" sheet to collect data on both effective playing length corrections and evaluate obstacle factors. Effective playing length corrections account for examples such as abnormal roll, forced lay-ups, and the ability or inability to cut doglegs. Obstacle factors include topography, fairway, green target, recoverability and rough, bunkers, crossings, laterals, trees, green surface and psychological. Each obstacle is given a rating between 0 and 10 from these charts and associated adjustments. The evaluated numerical values given to these factors are produced via data and observations collected and charts found in the Course Rating System Guide that raters are trained on and use while on the course.

The Course and Bogey Ratings (both establishing the Slope Rating) are formulated through sum of a calculated length rating and obstacle rating. The length rating, which makes up the vast majority of the formula is calculated via the effective playing length of the golf course. This is calculated as the measured length plus or minus the effective playing length corrections applied by rating teams. The obstacle rating is calculated via a weighting of each obstacle's cumulative values from each hole.

The Course Rating Process

Start to Finish

Pre-Fieldwork

The Course Rating Process begins with the Master Expiration List maintained by KGA, which tracks the expiration dates for each golf course rating in Kentucky. Each year, the list identifies 20-30 courses that are due for re-rating based on their expiration dates. Additionally, a few clubs may proactively reach out to request an earlier rating, and they are added to the list accordingly.

When a course is due for re-rating, KGA Staff will reach out to schedule the rating process. This typically involves two days of fieldwork: one day for measuring the course and another for conducting the rating. These days are scheduled at a time that works for both the club and KGA's course rating teams.

Once the schedule is set, the Handicapping and Course Rating Manager will reach out to confirm details, discuss any changes since the last rating, and ask about relevant course data and maintenance practices.

Measurement Day (Length Verification)

The first day of on-course fieldwork will be the measurement day. For a standard 18-hole routing, Handicapping and Course Rating Manager will measure all holes at the designated time (generally around 8:30am). It is highly preferred that the club provide a 30-minute block to tee times behind this designated starting time if possible to minimize impacts to your golfers. The team will move around the golf course at or ahead of the pace of play and require a golf cart.

For measuring day, it is extremely important that the tee markers on each hole are placed on the teeing pad in which they are at for standard, normal play. For each tee, the team will measure the overall hole lengths on this day from the midpoint of the pad (or its portion of the pad when more than one tee exists on a pad). If the markers are placed on pads not regularly used, a significantly longer or shorter measurement could be taken, skewing the final results. If a tee is healing or under construction at the time of the rating (and therefore cannot be used for play temporarily), please notify the Handicapping and Course Rating Manager of this for an accurate measurement to be taken.

The length measurement of the golf course is completed with precise techniques and GPS software as it is the most impactful factor towards the final Course Ratings and Slope Ratings issued. Roughly, every 22 yards for men, and 18 yards for women, adds one-tenth of a point to the length rating.

Between Fieldwork

Between the two days of fieldwork, the team inputs data from the measuring day to build the Form 1's (standard forms used to collect data on rating days) and verify accuracy of the measurement data.

Rating Day (Course Rating)

The second day of on-course fieldwork will be the rating day. On rating day, each "team" of raters completes a formal evaluation of 9 holes of the golf course, starting on each nine at the designated starting time (generally about 8:30am). Depending on volunteer availability, one rating team may have to complete all 18 holes, instead of splitting into two teams for each 9 holes. Most 18-hole golf courses require 3-8 raters to complete all required evaluations.

Rating teams move approximately at the pace of play while on the course, completing nine holes in 90 to 150 minutes depending on complexity. Each rater requires their own golf cart to gather data throughout the assigned holes. Again, on the rating day, it is highly preferred that the club provide a 30-minute block to tee times behind the designated starting time to minimize impacts to your golfers while on the course.

The team will take common measurements which apply to all players on the course and each hole such as green size, bunker depths, crossing lengths, and green surface slopes. Additionally, the team will measure green speed and rough heights. If your average midseason green speed or rough height is different than what is on the course on rating day, please pass that information along to Handicapping and Course Rating Manager. The rating team will also meet with a club administrator and/or the superintendent on site at each fieldwork visit.

Also during the rating, team members gather two important sets of data for each tee set and gender. The first is corrections to the effective playing length of a golf course, which can include adjustments for doglegs, lay-ups, or abnormal roll. The second is collecting data for the assignment of obstacle values. There are ten obstacle factors evaluated, all of which require individual raters to collect several snapshots of data. These data points are then entered into standardized tables and then combined with applied adjustments to create obstacle values. The effective playing length corrections and final obstacle ratings are the final data entered into the course rating database to calculate Course and Slope Ratings.

When raters return from the course, they spend some time calculating the individual obstacle ratings and completing their paperwork. They also perform checks over their sheets to validate accuracy, before handing them over to the Handicapping and Course Rating Manager for processing.

KGA asks that the club provide the rating team with lunch following the completion of fieldwork. Following lunch, it is customary that the club provide tee times for the team to play the golf course. The post-rating playthrough is an important part of the Course Rating System. The team takes note of any missed observations from the morning from the vantage point of a player and as needed makes modifications to their evaluations. If lunch or play following is not possible, please let the Handicapping and Course Rating Manager know well in advance of the day of the rating so alternate arrangements can be made.

Processing and Publishing

Following the completion of the on-course fieldwork, the Handicapping and Course Rating Manager agglomerates the data from the individual rating sheets and does a thorough review for accuracy in data and calculations. After review, the final documents are ready for processing.

Then, the data is entered into the USGA's course rating data portal. Each yardage, effective playing length correction, and obstacle value from the Form 1 are entered for the system to calculate Course and Slope Ratings for each tee and gender. At this point, various reports are produced to ensure there are no "red flags". After running these reports, the final Course and Slope Ratings are sent to the club for review. Unless a large data discrepancy is found, these sent ratings are issued for publishing.

The club has several options in regards to when to publish to GHIN. If the club wants the ratings active in the current season, they may ask for immediate publishing, or for the ratings to be published at a set date in the future. The club may also delay publishing the new ratings until the next offseason to avoid confusion in regard to score posting and printed scorecards. If KGA is not notified of a preference otherwise, new ratings will be scheduled to be activated prior to the next active season (generally in February or March).

Frequently Asked Questions

Better Understanding the System

When is a course rating necessary?

Golf courses change subtly and dramatically over the course of time. Trees grow taller and maintenance practices are continuously improved. Changes to the golf course's playability require to be conducted periodically throughout time.

The most common periodical re-rating of an existing golf course occurs every ten years. The Rules of Handicapping establish this interval as the point at which authorized association and AGAs like KGA are required to conduct a full course rating to re-evaluate the golf course. There are two reasons: (1) there are instances where golf courses have several small changes that impact a course's difficulty and (2) to re-rate the golf course according to the most updated version of the Course Rating System built from continuous research by the WHS (with the USGA and R&A). The system also requires that a course is remeasured on the same cycle.

New constructions are rated initially before or shortly after the course is opened, and then again within five years of its first rating. This is because golf courses mature and can change dramatically over these first several years.

Likewise, when renovation projects or natural factors change the golf course significantly, the club should request KGA to provide an opinion on whether a full or partial re-rating is necessary. Several factors, especially those that impact the length of the golf course, will have an outsized impact on playability, and will therefore prompt an increased need for a partial rating, where a course rating team will modify the previous rating on select holes. The final factor of whether KGA would recommend a full rating is the length of time since the previous rating. If the current rating is nearing its ten-year re-rating, there is a higher probability of the course being recommended for a full re-rating in advance of when it is due.

What happens if a course rating is not conducted by its due year?

Course ratings are issued for a ten-year period from the date of the rating. For example, if the course was last rated in 2015, then its rating would expire by the end of 2025, and be contacted to schedule a 2025 rate date. KGA uses a year of expiration rather than a specific date, meaning that those ratings expire at the end of the active season in that year – November 30.

Unless a temporary rating extension is granted (generally due to approaching construction or course modifications), KGA is required to inactivate all expired ratings during the offseason following their expiry. When ratings are deactivated, rounds played on the course are no longer eligible for score-posting purposes. If a lapse in an active course rating occurs, when a re-rate is scheduled and payments (if required) are complete, a temporary rating may be put back into effect, if eligible, until the new rating is completed.

Is there a cost for a course rating?

Existing KGA Member Clubs in good standing receive full course rating services at no charge at each WHS-required interval. Non-KGA Member Clubs will be charged \$2,000 for an 18-hole course and \$1,000 for a 9-hole course.

KGA does ask that the club provide a lunch for the raters who volunteer their time, the necessary golf course access required to complete the rating process, and a round of golf for each rater following the rating.

What are the new eligibility requirements for a course rating?

Under the Rules of Handicapping, as revised in 2024, a 9-hole course (or tee) must be greater than 750 yards and an 18-hole course (or tee) must be greater than 1,500 yards to be eligible for a course rating.

If your facility has a newly-eligible course to be rated, please contact Alec Bahnick, Handicapping and Course Rating Manager, at abahnick@kygolf.org for more details.

What is discussed with club administrators and/or the superintendent?

The Handicapping and Course Rating Manager will be in touch with club administrators and the superintendent to discuss several key topics. First, the schedule for the day will be confirmed, ensuring times are set and addressing any potential conflicts or weather issues that may arise.

Second, the rough height and green speed measurements will be verified that they are accurate and reflective of everyday playing conditions, as incorrect measurements in these areas can significantly affect the final rating values.

Finally, the course rating team aims to ensure the process is thorough and comprehensive. Questions may be asked to better understand how the club and its members approach specific obstacles and challenges on the course. A critical aspect of the rating is to guarantee that the golf course is evaluated not only for mid-season conditions but also for how it is typically played day-to-day.

Can I observe the process?

Club administrators and members are welcome to observe both days of fieldwork in a mutually beneficial way, both for the club to learn more about the system, and for the teams to better understand the golf course. We do ask that the number of individuals is limited, however, for the efficiency and timeliness of the process.

If you, another staff person, or a member would like to be an observer at the measurement or rating day, it is recommended to please communicate that prior to that date for planning purposes. It is our hope to be able to have you or any observers ride along with an experienced rater for the fieldwork, if possible.

How should I use the confirmation document I receive?

Following the scheduling of course rating date(s), you will be sent a confirmation document, which includes many scheduled details that form the itinerary of the day for both your club and for the rating team. Please review and respond to the pre-rating questions in this document.

As a club administrator, it is suggested that you share the confirmation document or notify other staff at the club that the KGA course rating team will be on site. The volunteers have been instructed to cause as little disruption as possible to the day-to-day operations of every club visited.

How should I correctly setup my tee markers prior to fieldwork days?

On the confirmation document, you will be asked to send a current copy of your scorecard so that yardages can be confirmed. On the checklist, we ask that the tee markers physically on the golf course are placed where they would be for average daily play. As length is the most important factor in a course's ratings, it is extremely important that the course is measured in accordance with the average placement of any tees.

When a tee is often moved between multiple tee pads, please place the tee markers on the pad in which it is most often played from.

If two sets of tees are played from the same yardage (and two different sets of tee markers exist), please place the tee markers side by side of one another. When multiple sets of tee markers are paired, that means the team will measure them as one tee placement. If two (or more) sets of tees are on the same pad, but are not paired immediately next to one another, the pad will be divided equally, giving each tee it's share of the pad being measured.

If a new set of tees is being added that does not currently exist on the course, it is preferred that you discuss with the Handicapping and Course Rating Manager a way to mark each of these new placements with an item such as a small marking flag.

Because yardage is so important, Alec and the rating teams will take extreme caution to ensure that the course is properly measured. Please be sure to ask any questions that you have to Alec prior to the measurement regarding tee placement and be available to answer any questions from him that may arise.

How does tee placement impact golfers?

Having an inaccurately measured golf course due to not properly setting up and communicating with the rating team can make an impact on the Handicap Index of golfers who regularly play your golf course.

It is additionally very important that the tee locations chosen accurately reflect the average daily play of the golf course. Intentional manipulation of tee placement to achieve a certain yardage violates the Rules of Handicapping. Please read the "After the Rating" section for more details on the importance of tee placement.

Why does the course rating team rate certain tees?

KGA strictly follows and exceeds all USGA/WHS requirements and recommendations in regard to rated tees. As a result, provided that the tee meets the minimum length requirement of 750 yards for nine holes, all tees are rated for men, and all tees up to at minimum 6,500 yards (18 holes) are rated for women. Upon request, or at the discretion of the KGA Course Rating Staff, KGA will rate even longer tees for women.

While all of these tees must be rated, not all are rated by individual raters on course. Specific rules exist within the Course Rating System to allow for extremely long or short tees to be rated through a replication methodology using the data from other tees that are rated. These methodologies reduce the number of raters required and safeguard the accuracy of the WHS. KGA uses these methodologies whenever possible.

When should I contact KGA about needing a new rate/revision?

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Contact Alec Bahnick - Handicapping and Course Rating Manager at abahnick@kygolf.org to discuss and develop a plan.

It is important to contact KGA as soon as possible to discuss any need for a new rating, partial rating, changes to your stroke index allocations (individual hole handicaps), or in-office edits to your course rating information. If you have any questions about a potential need for course rating services to be provided, please ask those as soon as possible.

With plenty of advance notice, most requests can be accommodated for. The earlier KGA is contacted, the earlier a rating/edit can be completed, and the more conveniently a rating can be fit into your club's schedule.

When should I schedule my re-rate to ensure timely scorecard updates?

If you need updated ratings for new scorecards, do NOT wait until spring to be re-rated. To ensure your ratings are ready for next golf season, it is highly recommended to schedule your re-rate by October of the previous year.

Ratings requested in early spring are limited due to weather conditions and the reduced availability of course rating volunteers. Waiting until spring could result in delayed results, possibly arriving too late for your scorecard provider's deadlines. Contact KGA as soon as possible to develop a plan and schedule your rating in advance.

Will our ratings change?

Going into each re-rate our course raters and KGA will not be able to completely estimate the effect of any course change. Due to the changes in the system through the years, objective nature of the process, and complexity of the formulas in the Course Rating System, no one will be able to accurately predict potential changes.

Can I see the course rating data?

Besides the measurement-based information, course rating teams are barred from sharing any specific rating values or information with the club. Only the team leader or KGA staff (Alec Bahnick) should communicate with the club staff regarding course rating information to ensure only shareable measurement information or final rating information is shared with the club. Following processing, KGA will provide the final new ratings scorecard report and handicap tables.

General club members should not ask KGA for any course rating based information. Only club staff, or staff designated individuals may receive any course rating related reports that are not available to the public.

KGA's handling of course rating data is done in this fashion to not interfere with the objective process laid out in the Course Rating System. Subversions of these protocols may jeopardize the integrity of the data produced.

Why did our rating change?

When a course is re-rated, the ratings may increase, decrease, or remain quite consistent. If there are changes in the ratings, KGA will provide an explanation to club using shareable, available information.

Changes in ratings typically fall into a few categories. First, every four years, the World Handicap System (WHS) updates the Course Rating System Guide to align with the latest data and trends in the game. Additionally, over the span of ten-years, a course can undergo subtle yet significant changes – such as shifts in green speeds, changes in maintenance practices, or other factors that might not be immediately visible. The Course Rating System is designed to offer a consistent measure of difficulty for handicapping purposes globally. It is important to remember that these ratings are intended as a universal standard, comparing each course to courses worldwide, rather than to the previous rating or other local courses.

Is rating a golf course objective or subjective?

More than 99 percent of the overall Course and Slope Rating of a golf course is entirely calculated from objective data measurements taken and refined into standardized rating values throughout the process. All subjective elements (comprising less than one percent of the final ratings) are gathered through rating team consensus and with stringent criteria defined in the Course Rating System.

How is effective playing length evaluated?

Effective Playing Length is equivalent to the measured length of the golf course, plus or minus corrections made by the rating team.

Roll occurs when the ball, once it comes out of the air in the landing zone, will roll less than or greater than the average 15-25 yards on a full shot.

Elevation considers the playability and length effect changes because of tee-to-green elevation change on the hole and adjusts the effective playing length accordingly.

Dogleg corrections occur when the scratch or bogey player can cut across a corner with a measured pivot point (reducing the effective playing length) or is obstructed from doing so and is therefore not able to hit a full shot (increasing the effective playing length). Subsequently, a **Forced Lay-up** also occurs when the scratch or bogey player is not able to hit a full shot (increasing effective playing length), due to a crossing or punitive obstacle.

Wind adjustment is determined by the average daytime wind speed during the midseason; this data is maintained by the KGA in cooperation with data from the National Weather Service.

Altitude is considered for courses greater than 2,000 feet above sea level; in Kentucky, very few courses qualify for this correction.

How are obstacle factors evaluated?

Each obstacle factor requires several data measurements on the golf course which are then calculated into an obstacle value via the standardized tables and adjustments found in the Course Rating System. Each obstacle is thus assigned a value of 0 to 10 for both the scratch and bogey players on each hole based on these criteria.

Topography is an evaluation of the impact of terrain on play. It is calculated from an evaluation of the stance and lies in the landing zones and the elevation change of the approach shot.

Fairway is an evaluation of the difficulty of keeping the ball in the fairway from tee to green. It is calculated by the width of the fairway in the landing zones and the length of the hole. A longer hole has more shots and longer shots with greater dispersion and therefore has more probability of missing the fairway.

Green Target is an evaluation of the difficulty of hitting the green with the approach shot. It is calculated from the size of the green measured as an “Effective Green Diameter” (EGD) and the length of the approach shot. The EGD is more or less the average diameter of the green surface, with safeguards and adjustments in place for narrow, oddly shaped, or highly sloping green surfaces. False fronts and sides are also not included in a green’s dimensions for EGD purposes. Longer approach shots have greater dispersion, causing higher values.

Recoverability and Rough (R&R) is an evaluation of the probability of missing the fairway landing zones and the green, and the difficulty of recovering if any are missed. It is calculated by the Green Target obstacle value (to see how difficult it is to hit the green) and the average rough height throughout the golf course. This measurement is taken on measuring day and captains will confer with club staff and/or the superintendent to ensure midseason accuracy. Adjustments are made for things such as mounding and abnormal rough heights.

Bunkers is an evaluation of how bunkers come into play and how difficult they are to recover from. It is calculated from the green target value (of how difficult it is to hit the green) and the portion of the green's circumference that is closely bordered by bunkers. Adjustments are made for bunker depth, as well as factors relating to fairway bunkers along the line of play.

Crossing Obstacles consist of penalty areas, extreme rough (including desert), and out-of-bounds which are carried to play the hole. Crossings require the measuring and rating teams to establish a point at which the player(s) safely carry a crossing obstacle, standardized as ten yards past the obstacle. The distance from the tee or landing zone preceding the crossing to the safe carry point is measured or calculated from pre-recorded data and input to the tables.

Lateral Obstacles consist of penalty areas, extreme rough (including desert), and out-of-bounds when they come into play laterally on the hole. It is calculated from the distance from the center of the landing zone or green to the obstacle and the distance of the hole segment preceding the landing zone. Again, shot dispersion is a critical component of the table design. Adjustments are made for playability, bounces towards and away, and stroke and distance situations.

Trees are an evaluation of the overall impact of the trees, and their recoverability, on the play of the hole. They are evaluated through seven factors that measure the impact of trees on scoring and adjustments are made for obstructions and chutes.

Green Surface is an evaluation of the difficulty of chipping and putting on each hole. It is calculated through a measured average green speed on the golf course and the slope, contouring, and tilt of each green. The measurement of green speeds with a stimpmeter is taken on measuring day and captains will confer with club staff and/or the superintendent to ensure midseason accuracy.

Psychological is an evaluation of the cumulative effect of obstacles on a player's score. This obstacle value is calculated by the computation software following data entry and is comprised of the cumulative impact when three or more obstacle values of five or greater exist throughout the other nine obstacles.

After the Rating

Making the next score count, accurately.

Will your KGA/USGA/WHs issued Course Rating remain relevant?

Will your golfers' Handicap Indexes travel accurately?

When a course is rated by a KGA rating team using the WHs Course Rating System™, there are important things to remember about how this rating works, and how it will impact golfers at your club. The purpose of the rating was to measure the difficulty of the course under normal playing conditions in order to determine a Course Rating and Slope Rating unique to your course. Course Ratings are meant to be effective for 10 years (new courses have a five-year rating).

Before doing the fieldwork for your rating, we ask that the course be set up as it would be on an average day of play. This principally applies to tee locations but also may include course conditions such as; Fairway Width, Green Size and Speed, Rough Height, and Bunkers. These are the fundamental attributes your Course Rating is based on. If the usual conditions of the course during the midseason are inconsistent with what is present on measurement or rating day, the rating team must know so they can make appropriate adjustments for what the course plays like during standard midseason conditions.

Per the *Rules of Handicapping*, it is the responsibility of the Handicap Committee and management at every golf course to: “Maintain their golf course in a manner consistent with the Course Rating...”

When golfers' Handicap Indexes “don’t travel well” it is often due to changes to the golf course such that it no longer plays as it was rated. If changes are made to the golf course that makes it more difficult and the Course Rating goes unchanged, the golfer’s handicap may be overstated. Contrarily if the changes make the golf course less difficult the golfer’s handicap may be understated.

The practices of your maintenance staff can have a significant impact on your Course Rating. Increasing green speeds or rough height can adversely affect the accuracy of your Course Rating. For example, increasing the green speed from 9’5” to 10’5” will increase the Course Rating by .2 strokes and the Slope Rating by one point. Increasing rough height from 2 ½” to 3 ½” on all 18 holes can add .7 strokes to the Course Rating and 5 points to the Slope Rating.

Ultimately, the most critical component of your Course Rating is the effective playing length of your golf course as was measured for each tee location on rating day. Tee locations should be balanced day-to-day as is reasonably available from a maintenance standpoint and overall yardage should remain as consistent as possible. Failing to do so can impact your golfers’ handicaps. For example, placing tee markers 10-yards behind the measured location on each hole adds 180 yards to the effective playing length and would in turn increase the Course Rating by up to .8 for men (1.0 for Women) and can raise the Slope Rating by 3 points. Greater increases in yardage will have an even larger impact. It is most important to maintain the effective playing length of your golf course to maintain the accuracy of your Course Rating and your golfers’ handicaps.

Changes to the golf course and/or its setup may adversely affect the Handicap Indexes of your golfers. If you are in doubt as to the impact of course changes to your Course Rating you are strongly advised to contact KGA staff (Alec Bahnick - abahnick@kygolf.org) to assess the need and/or options for a full or partial re-rating.