



HR 'Forward Red' Tees – Levelling the playing field?

The issue: ...The current GNK 'Forward Red' tee normal day settings create a very much shortened playing course than the true measured reds plates from which the official HR red slope stroke allowances are calculated. This forward placement, currently on ten of the holes at HR, shortens the playing course off these 'Forward Red' tees by about 510 yards in total. Our ladies, and some men now, play this much shorter course from these 'Forward Red' tees but still utilise the FULL red slope allowance for their playing handicaps.

This shortened course setup is done deliberately by GNK primarily to provide a more enjoyable experience for their visiting clients, who, in their large groups, provide a large proportion of the customer base and GNK income.. As we all know, a high proportion of these seasonal visitor clients that GNK now attract, and need to still attract, are primarily high handicap ladies and men whose golfing standard is relatively low in many, but not all, cases. The high degree of difficulty playing off the true red tee course on HR would be unsuitable for many of the golfers in these groups. It is a commercial decision by GNK, which we respect, but it does create issues for other golfing communities. GNK plan to continue this short 'Forward Red' course daily setup as their normal business strategy. The exceptions for HRGS being our annual honour-board competitions which will be played off the full measured red course Federated plates.

Playing off a shortened course, but with a full red slope allowance, also provides inaccuracies in the normal handicap increase/decrease calculations for players when these artificially higher posted red scores are being returned for handicap qualifiers.

The HRGS Admin position ... We believe that this anomaly of the FULL red tee slope allowance currently given to the 'Forward Red' tee players does not provide a level or fair playing field for our golfers in our mixed tee Monday HRGS games, and indeed any societies mixed comps. Nor does it accurately allow the handicapping to correctly operate in these instances.

Over the years we have considered many alternatives to resolve this issue for our members....but none have really been satisfactorily to permanently or correctly resolve this issue....

- We used to give ladies no slope at all to try to resolve...but is that really a balanced and accurate reduction to make across the large range of the ladies handicaps we have.
- We could have red blocks moved to the plates every Monday for our morning game only. However, GNK will not do this, and are only willing to do this for our honour-board comps
- GNK have suggested installing our own Society plates in the ground near the proper red plates for the ten holes in question and playing from them on a Monday. No blocks just a Society plate. But would everyone be happy to play off full red plates every Monday?
- We could have a separate red tee comp on a Monday...so all reds golfers play under same equal official, if incorrect, slope allowances conditions. But see the issue with inflated scores and the effect on handicaps mentioned earlier.

HRGS proposed solution....HRGS_would independently create our own ORANGE slope table for these 'Forward Red' tee positions. This effectively reduces the official red slope allowances by a pro-rate factor to reflect the course distance reduction. From our unofficial calculations, we consider the impact of the ORANGE slope allowances would be a further three or four strokes reduction, depending on handicap, than the current red slope stroke allowances. HRGS would still play from the GNK 'Forward Red' blocks but we would use our own ORANGE slope table stroke allowances for our HRGS Monday games rather than the official FULL red slope allowances..

VERY IMPORTANT : PLEASE NOTE

We have been discussing a 'proper' and 'permanent' solution to this issue with GNK since late last year. We have had a number of productive meetings. We maintained that a solution of the new Orange tee idea proposed by HRGS above would satisfy not only the business interests of GNK but also for the more capable golfers, provide a more challenging playing environment, still retaining the integrity of the great design of the HR golf course. GNK accepted that this solution would indeed work for them and agreed to take this away and discuss this solution internally. The initial response from GNK was very positive and said that they could potentially implement this solution in some format at both Hacienda Riquelme and Condado de Alhama, GNK's two most difficult red tee courses. They agreed to consult with the Spanish Federation on this potential solution.

Note: The full solution proposed would be to permanently create for HR (and CDA) a completely new set of ORANGE tees with all its associated requirements. This would entail having a new shorter course measured by the Spanish Federation for an ORANGE tee setup. This would have its own official ORANGE slope allowance table for these forward positions. A full set of ORANGE tee information would be added to the scorecard. New ORANGE plates would be installed where the current 'Forward Red' blocks are positioned today. New ORANGE blocks would be placed out. The red tee blocks could be permanently returned to their original and correct red plated tee boxes.

The HR course would then have five official sets of tees to play from...each with its own official slope table and associated stroke allowance to match its length.

We await developments.

******* Latest Update May 2020 *******

GNK have put forward proposals to the Spanish Federation for the additional ORANGE tee.

The Spanish Federation have responded and they plan, when they can under the current situation, to come down to HR to discuss the issue with GNK and potentially measure for the proposed new 'official' ORANGE course and slope allowances.

No timescales have yet been given,

Is there an end in sight to the problem?... It is very promising.... but we await further news.

However, we do propose holding off introducing our own HRGS ORANGE slope tables at this moment. We will monitor GNK progress with this issue over the summer period and review the HRGS position again in September.

HRGS Admin.