

Best Tees, Please — Playability for the Present (and Future)

(Impactful Golfer Experience Information for Golf Courses)

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Outline

- When golfers move up, and most should, they have more fun
- Forward Tees – are they a "Field of Dreams"?
- Best Tees – new USGA system based on 7-iron distance
- Hearts, minds & instincts
- Playability – what is this (is it important)?
- Why this matters to *your* golf course...
- Q & A



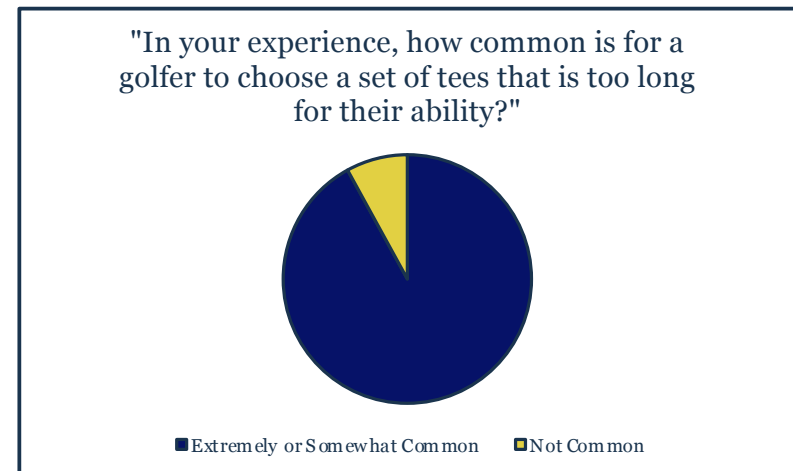
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When golfers move up, and most should, they have more fun

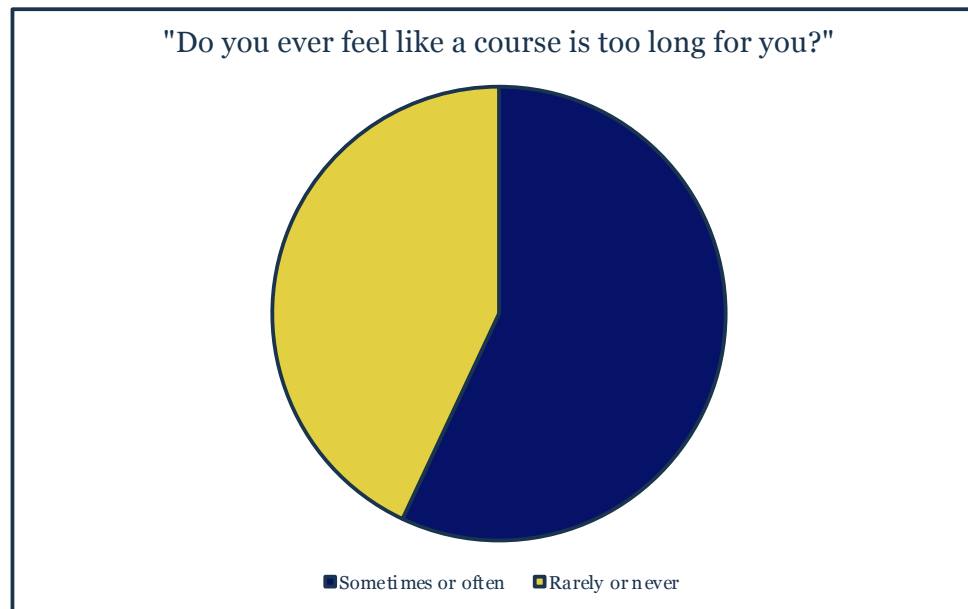
- USGA score posting data analysis and surveys have clearly established that most golfers play too long a course on a regular basis
- USGA Score Posting Data Analysis
 - ~ 50% of male golfers
 - ~ 75% of female golfers...regularly play too long a course

From USGA presentation on June 27, 2023



From USGA presentation on June 27, 2023

When golfers are asked directly, more than half admit to regularly playing too long a course



From USGA presentation on June 27, 2023



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When golfers move up, they do have more fun

The Biggest Proof Point: Playing Forward, Absent The Stigma, Is Universally Enjoyed And Appreciated, When Forced Upon Longitudinal Respondents



- Brings about new achievements and a “pro” experience for less skilled players
- Is replete with “shot making challenges” for better players
- Courses within courses

USGA sponsored research by Sports & Leisure Group in 2021



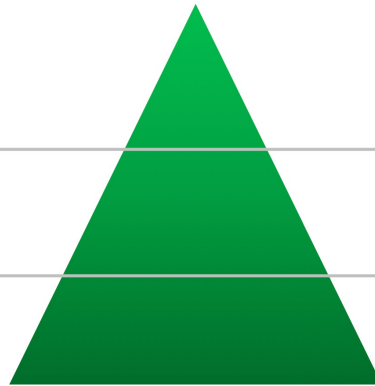
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But why don't golfers move up?

Foundational Inhibitors to Ability Based Tee Selection are Ingrained and Instinctive

- Ego
 - Peer pressure
 - Creatures of habit
-
- Gender/Age Stigmas
 - Overestimated Ability
-
- Lack of “Enlightenment”
 - Lack of Options



- Both Athlete archetypes and the more engaged Traditionalists and Sticks are reticent to deviate from norms and perceived “expectations”
- Less engaged/committed segments follow the crowd or don't know better

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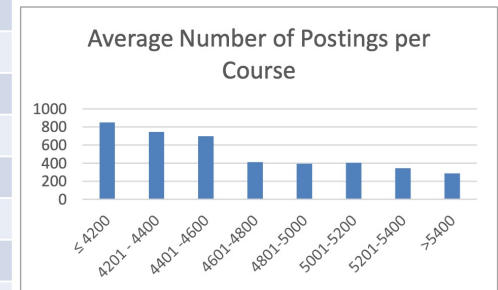
Forward Tees – are they a ”Field of Dreams”?

- USGA score posting data analysis has shown that more female golfers play a course with shorter forward tees

Female Scores Posted by Front Tee Length

As overall front tee length decreases, the average number of postings by female golfers increases

Front Tee Course Length (yds)	Scores Posted	Postings / Course
≤ 4200	1,799,884	850
4201 - 4400	587,395	746
4401 - 4600	791,312	699
4601-4800	676,323	412
4801-5000	987,697	394
5001-5200	1,134,335	405
5201-5400	670,126	345
>5400	419,783	286
Total	7,066,855	Avg = 517



From USGA presentation on February 3, 2022

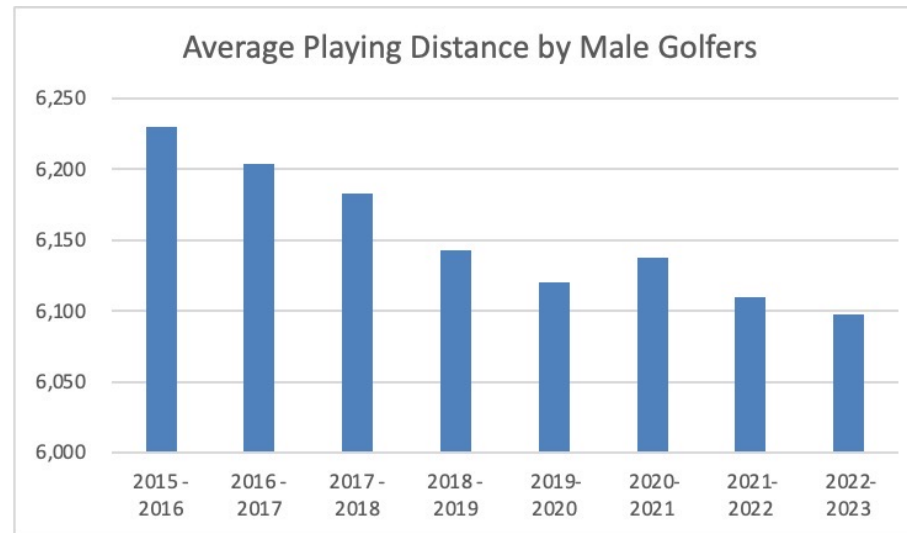


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Additional benefits of shorter forward tees

- Male golfers will move up - Rancho Murieta case study



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Building forward tees

- Building forward tees is relatively inexpensive, especially if they are in the fairway where a cart path, irrigation and regular maintenance already exists.
- Surveys show that forward tees should be raised, flat, accessible and be clearly identified with normal tee markers to maximize use.



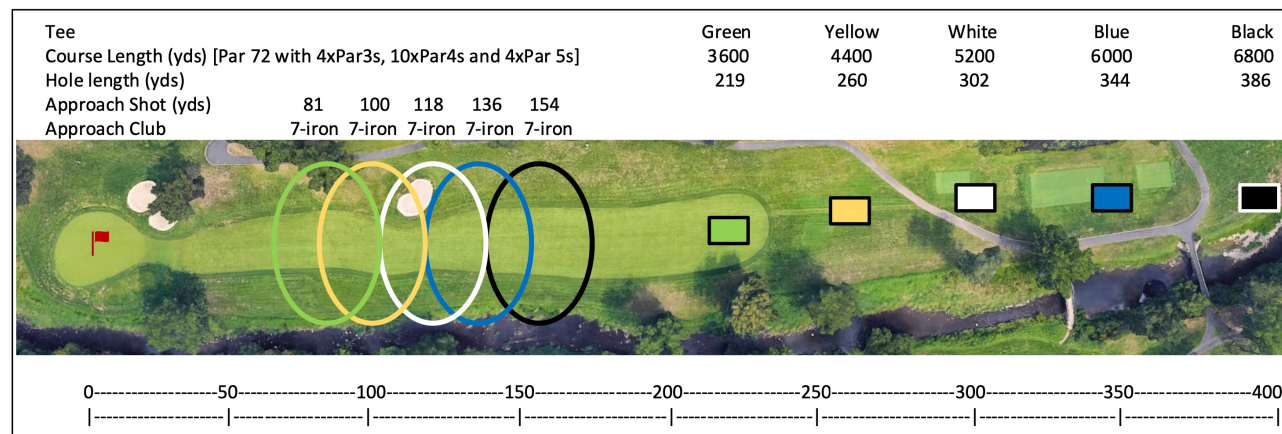
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How forward is forward enough?

- For the shortest hitting golfers, 3600 – 4000 yards is suggested

An Idealized, middle length, Par 4 using the template



From USGA presentation on October 3, 2023

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Best Tees – new USGA system based on 7-iron distance

- The USGA has developed and tested a new system to help golfers select the best tee for their round of golf.
 - Based on extensive golfer hole length preference survey data
 - Uses total 7-iron distance including bounce & roll, a less exaggerated club compared to driver
 - The factor is built up hole by hole so automatically adjusts for par and course configuration differences
- Golfer's can calculate their best playing distance on USGA.org
- SLRG gathered golf facility staff and golfer feedback in 2023



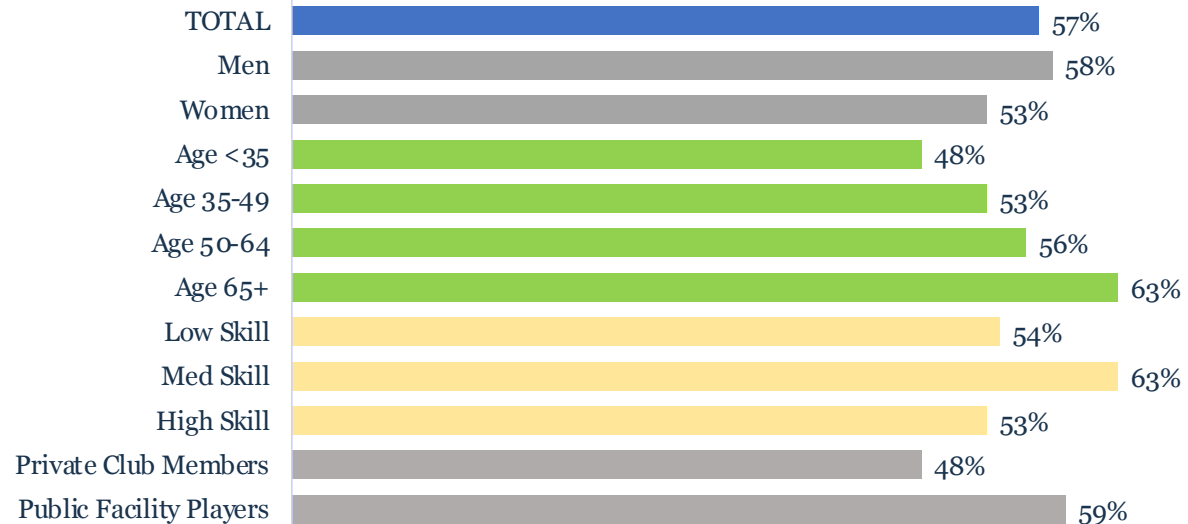
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More than Half of Beta Test Facility Golfers Would Use the Tee Selector

"I would be willing to accept these recommendations when choosing where to play from."

USGA SCORE BETTER, PLAY FASTER Use Your 7-Iron Distance to Select Your Tee	
TEXAS RANGERS GOLF CLUB	
TOTAL 7-IRON DISTANCE (Carry and Roll Yardage)	TEES
110 or less	Bronze
135 - 145	Silver
150 - 160	Gold
175 or more	Black

Top 3 Agreement

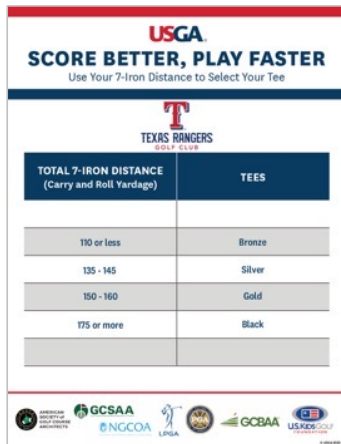


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Facility Operators Have Similar Conclusions About the Tee Selector

- The Tee Selector, 7-iron graphic chart was a home run
 - Simple
 - Easy to understand
 - Relatable
 - Makes “mathematical sense”
- It might be beneficial to put greater emphasis on this being customized for each course as not all realized this initially—stress personalization and science behind it



The graphic is titled "USGA SCORE BETTER, PLAY FASTER" with the subtitle "Use Your 7-Iron Distance to Select Your Tee". It features the Texas Rangers Golf Club logo. Below the title is a table with two columns: "TOTAL 7-IRON DISTANCE (Carry and Roll Yardage)" and "TEES". The table has four rows of data: 110 or less (Bronze), 125 - 145 (Silver), 150 - 160 (Gold), and 175 or more (Black). At the bottom, there are logos for various golf associations including GCSAA, NGCOA, LPGA, NGA, GCBAA, and USGA.

TOTAL 7-IRON DISTANCE (Carry and Roll Yardage)	TEES
110 or less	Bronze
125 - 145	Silver
150 - 160	Gold
175 or more	Black

We took the USGA graphic for the program with how far you hit 7 iron and we added some stuff to it on expected POP and that has generated conversation. The graphic is fantastic. It has helped.

NOT the driver. That's what we wanted to get away from it. And that's why this works because it takes the driver out of the equation, cause people exaggerate. 7 iron seems so neutral.

There's not a lot to read other than the yardage part which for me has worked out great. It's a nice conversation piece and I ask them how far they hit their 7 iron and its helped. This is the only thing being displayed.

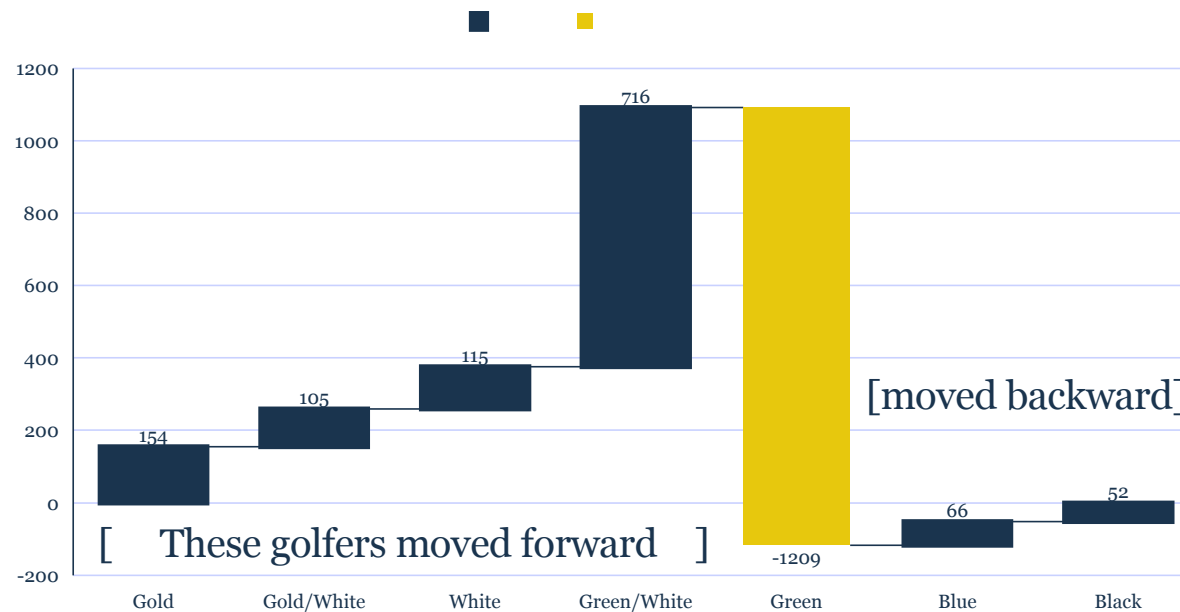


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The USGA's Best Tees system was tested at Erin Hills

Movement of Golfers in 2023 Compared to Normalized 2022 Baseline



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USGA Best Tees system benchmarks

- Average male playing length for a typical par 72 course is ~6100 yards
- Average female playing length for a typical par 72 course is ~4400 yards

HOWEVER, most golfers are *not* average!!



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Hearts, minds & instincts

- It's an uphill battle to influence and change behaviors
- There are ways to successfully attack the challenge



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The barriers are challenging

Social Concepts Towards Multiple Tee Box Selection Draw Mixed Reviews (Concept 2)



- Perceived barriers will be difficult to get past
 - Slow Play
 - Reduced Interaction
 - Inequity
 - Awkwardness

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How to start making progress

- Leadership by a champion matters - Rancho Murieta
- Colors and names of tees affect use - Brookside
- Who is in control and what is “fair”? - Cedarbrook



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Playability: what is this (is it important)?

- Course design and set-up affect playability
 - Green speed
 - Fairway width
 - Rough height of cut
 - Forced carries
- Playing options / number and playing distance of tees offered
 - Combination / blended tees can fill in the gaps between tees that are 500 or more yards apart
- Pace of play is affected too and is a top golfer satisfaction issue



Why this matters to *your* golf course...

- When golfers play the tees that best fit their hitting distance capability, they score better, they play faster and most importantly they have more fun.
- When golfers have more fun, they are more likely to play more golf.
- Although golf has experienced a resurgence, maximizing the number of golfers who can enjoy your course will build demand to help sustain your facility's positive momentum.
- If golf were 50% female..... potential to add >12 million golfers



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Q & A



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“Find your North Star to navigate a course
to delight golfers !!”



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