

A silhouette of a golfer in mid-swing, positioned on the right side of the frame. The golfer is wearing a cap and has a ponytail. The background is a vibrant sunset with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow across the sky. The text "It Is Time to Move Forward" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

It Is Time to Move Forward

WOMEN HANDICAPPED BY MEN'S COURSES

This is the first of a series of six articles written exclusively for Golf Illustrated by the Lady Champion

By ALEXA W. STIRLING

WHAT would happen to the bold member, who at a meeting of the executive committee of the United States Golf Association, might be foolish enough to propose that the men's tournaments should henceforth be played over courses some 7,500 yards long, trapped without reference to the science of their game and with a par well over 80? And yet he would be proposing just such a set of conditions for the men as have hitherto generally applied to the golf of women.

Even in these days of female munitions workers, farm

green which is approached by a full iron shot is not trapped so severely because it is a recognized fact that it is hard to drop a full iron shot within a limited area, and have the ball stay there. A green which can be reached only with a wooden club is left still more open. The traps on the sides of the course and in the fairways also play a most important part and must of course be scientifically placed so as to catch bad shots and let good ones escape.

All this is done for the game of men. When we put a woman on a man's course, this scientific, well-thought out

Men —Up to 225 yards= Par 3.

Women—Up to 175 yards= Par 3.

Men —From 225 yards to 425 yards= Par 4.

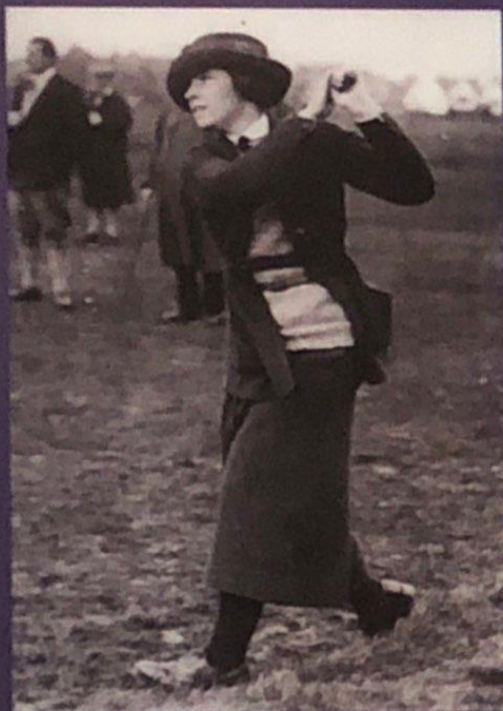
Women—From 175 yards to 325 yards= Par 4.

Men —From 425 yards to 600 yards= Par 5.

Women—From 326 yards to 450 yards= Par 5.

Men —From 600 yards *up* = Par 6.

Women—From 451 yards to 575 yards= Par 6.



Alexa Stirling, ca. 1920
(USGA Museum)

Alexa Stirling, "Women Handicapped by Men's Courses"

Golf Illustrated, January 1917

As one of the top amateur golfers of the 1910s and 1920s, Alexa Stirling was well acquainted with the disadvantages women faced on courses specifically constructed for men. Stirling wrote that such courses could never truly be of equal quality for women, but that proportional tee placement could minimize the unavoidable differences.

USGA Museum

The Big Three complaints about golf

1. “It’s too slow!” or “It takes too much time!”
2. “It’s too hard!”
3. “It costs too much!” or “We aren’t attracting or retaining enough players!”

The above impact the Big Three issues facing the game:

1. Pace of play
2. Player enjoyment (Fun Factor)
3. Economic sustainability

And the simple answer for all of these is...



Properly placed forward tees to give all skill levels a good experience

Question – what do you hit from 140 yards to a green?

1. Take out every club in your bag longer than this club
2. Go to the first tee and play the markers you normally play
3. At the end of the round, was it fun?
4. Was it too hard?
5. Was it a positive experience to make you want to play again?

For those of you with an average male swing speed of 81-90 or above, welcome to golf with a 60 MPH swing speed!

Question - Is there a way to calculate where players should play based on their swing speed? There is now!

Tee Calculator

- Based on data derived from the PGA and USGA from thousands of players
- Based on player handicap
- Swing speeds for both genders are determined
- Once yardage on your golf course is entered into the tool, the results are eye-opening
- Provides every golf course a chance to see if they are providing a good golf experience for players of all skill levels

Course Name: OGA Course

Female Tee: Forward Tee

Swing Speed: Average

Male Tee: Blue

Swing Speed: Average

Female - Scorecard Distance from Forward Tee		
Hole	Par	Length
1	4	303
2	4	334
3	3	112
4	5	420
5	5	433
6	3	129
7	4	308
8	3	110
9	5	465
10	4	312
11	5	449
12	4	359
13	3	111
14	5	443
15	4	317
16	4	349
17	3	102
18	4	342
OUT	36	2614
IN	36	2784
TOT	72	5398

Male - Scorecard Distances from Blue		
Hole	Par	Length
1	4	347
2	4	405
3	3	176
4	5	475
5	5	482
6	3	171
7	4	375
8	3	150
9	5	496
10	4	361
11	5	505
12	4	413
13	3	160
14	5	508
15	4	357
16	4	400
17	3	143
18	4	383
OUT	36	3077
IN	36	3230
TOT	72	6307

Female Handicap to Swing Speed Reference		
Handicap	Pro	= >85
	0-5	= 81-85
	6-10	= 76-80
	11-15	= 71-75
	16-20	= 66-70
	21-25	= 61-65
	26+	= <60

MPH

Male Handicap to Swing Speed Reference		
Handicap	Pro	= >110
	0-5	= 101-110
	6-10	= 91-100
	11-15	= 81-90
	16-20	= 71-80
	21-25	= 61-70
	26+	= <60

MPH

These tables offer a reference for matching the correct handicap to swing speeds. It is important the model primarily relates to swing speed because all distance data is dependent on this information

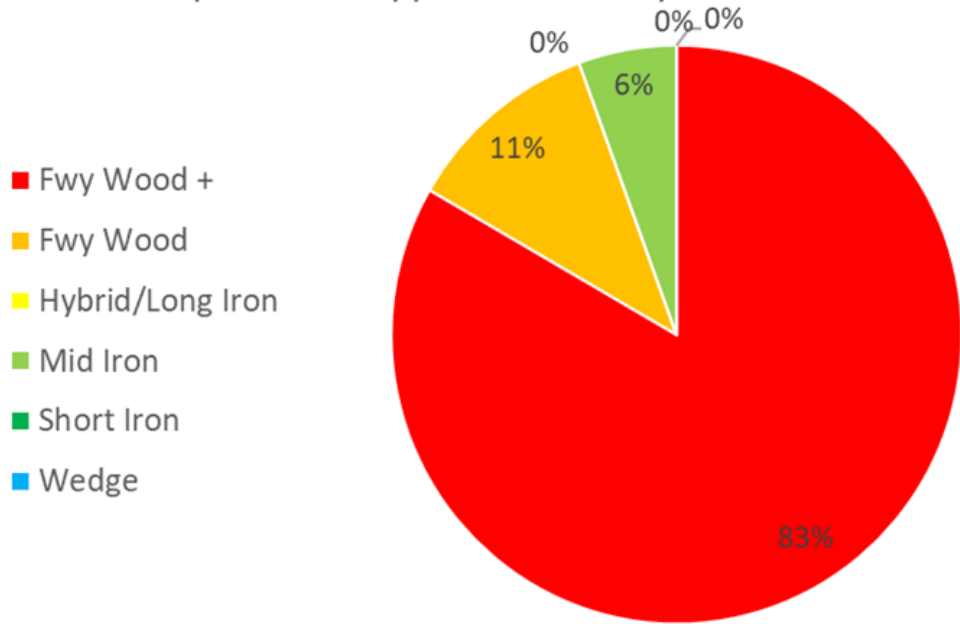
Female Golfers - Forward Tee						
Handicap - 25			Swing Speed - 60 MPH			
Hole	Par	Length	Yards Over		Est. Approach	
			Rec.	Max.	Shot Distance	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4	303	✗	43	163	Fwy Wood+
2	4	334	✗	74	194	Fwy Wood+
3	3	112	✓	--	112	Fwy Wood
4	5	420	✗	40	160	Fwy Wood+
5	5	433	✗	53	173	Fwy Wood+
6	3	129	✓	--	129	Fwy Wood+
7	4	308	✗	48	168	Fwy Wood+
8	3	110	✓	--	110	Fwy Wood
9	5	465	✗	85	205	Fwy Wood+
10	4	312	✗	52	172	Fwy Wood+
11	5	449	✗	69	189	Fwy Wood+
12	4	359	✗	99	219	Fwy Wood+
13	3	111	✓	--	111	Fwy Wood
14	5	443	✗	63	183	Fwy Wood+
15	4	317	✗	57	177	Fwy Wood+
16	4	349	✗	89	209	Fwy Wood+
17	3	102	✓	--	102	Hybrid/Long Iron
18	4	342	✗	82	202	Fwy Wood+
OUT	36	2,614	✗	274		
IN	36	2,784	✗	444		
TOT	72	5,398	✗	718		

Male Golfers - Blue Tee						
Handicap - 14			Swing Speed - 81-90 MPH			
Hole	Par	Length	Yards Over		Est. Approach	
			Rec.	Max.	Shot Distance	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4	347	✓	--	137	Mid Iron
2	4	405	✗	5	195	Fwy Wood+
3	3	176	✓	--	176	Fwy Wood
						Wedge
						Wedge
						Fwy Wood
						Hybrid/Long Iron
						Hybrid/Long Iron
						Wedge
						Hybrid/Long Iron
						Short Iron
						Fwy Wood+
						Hybrid/Long Iron
						Short Iron
						Hybrid/Long Iron
16	4	400	✓	--	190	Fwy Wood+
17	3	143	✓	--	143	Hybrid/Long Iron
18	4	383	✓	--	173	Fwy Wood
OUT	36	3,077	✓	--		
IN	36	3,230	✓	--		
TOT	72	6,307	✓	--		

The clubs listed in these columns represent the club needed to reach the green given the current yardage and selected player handicap and swing speed.

“Fwy Wood+” indicates the green is beyond the distance of the golfers longest club, a fairway wood.

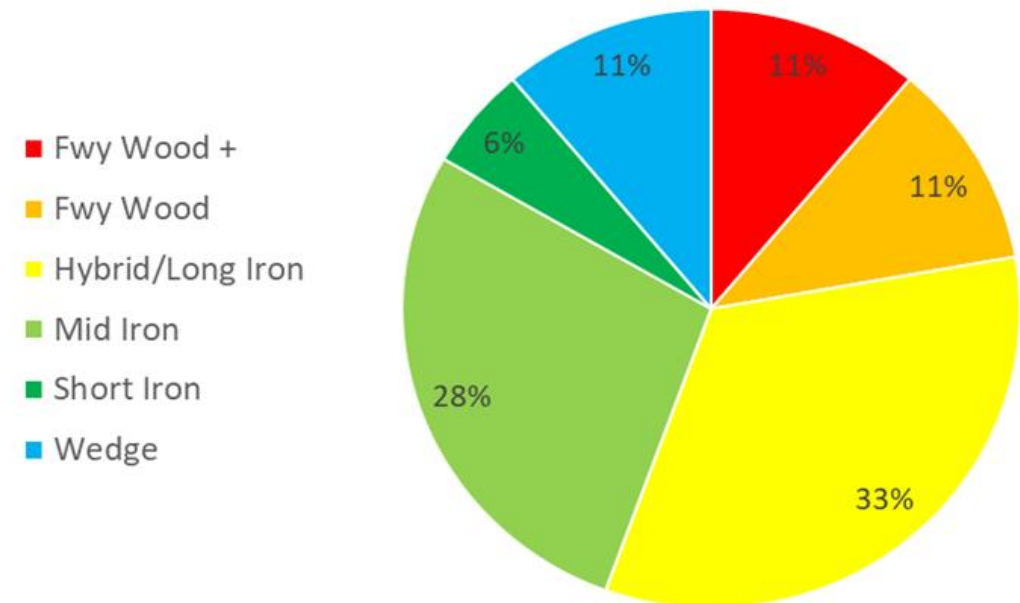
Proportion of Approach Shots by Club for Female Golfers



83% do not reach green in regulation
 11% reach green with fairway wood
 0% reach green with short iron/wedge

89% reach green in regulation
 11% reach green with fairway wood
 17 % reach green with short iron/wedge
 63% reach green with hybrid-mid iron

Proportion of Approach Shots by Club for Male Golfers



What if you want to match clubs hit into greens in regulation?

Female Golfers - Forward Tee						
Handicap - 25			Swing Speed - 60 MPH			
Hole	Par	Length	Yards Over		Est. Approach	
			Rec.	Max.	Shot Distance	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4	239	✓	--	99	Mid Iron
2	4	265	✗	5	125	Fwy Wood+
3	3	119	✓	--	119	Fwy Wood
4	5	319	✓	--	59	Wedge
5	5	319	✓	--	59	Wedge
6	3	119	✓	--	119	Fwy Wood
7	4	244	✓	--	104	Hybrid/Long Iron
8	3	104	✓	--	104	Hybrid/Long Iron
9	5	319	✓	--	59	Wedge
10	4	244	✓	--	104	Hybrid/Long Iron
11	5	339	✓	--	79	Short Iron
12	4	273	✗	13	133	Fwy Wood+
13	3	104	✓	--	104	Hybrid/Long Iron
14	5	339	✓	--	79	Short Iron
15	4	244	✓	--	104	Hybrid/Long Iron
16	4	260	✓	--	120	Fwy Wood+
17	3	104	✓	--	104	Hybrid/Long Iron
18	4	259	✓	--	119	Fwy Wood
OUT	36	2,047	✓	--		
IN	36	2,166	✓	--		
TOT	72	4,213	✓	--		

Male Golfers - Blue Tee						
Handicap - 14			Swing Speed - 81-90 MPH			
Hole	Par	Length	Yards Over		Est. Approach	
			Rec.	Max.	Shot Distance	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4	347	✓	--	137	Mid Iron
2	4	405	✗	5	195	Fwy Wood+
3	3	176	✓	--	176	Fwy Wood
4	5	475	✓	--	75	Wedge
5	5	482	✓	--	82	Wedge
6	3	171	✓	--	171	Fwy Wood
7	4	375	✓	--	165	Hybrid/Long Iron
8	3	150	✓	--	150	Hybrid/Long Iron
9	5	496	✓	--	96	Wedge
10	4	361	✓	--	151	Hybrid/Long Iron
11	5	505	✓	--	105	Short Iron
12	4	413	✗	13	203	Fwy Wood+
13	3	160	✓	--	160	Hybrid/Long Iron
14	5	508	✓	--	108	Short Iron
15	4	357	✓	--	147	Hybrid/Long Iron
16	4	400	✓	--	190	Fwy Wood+
17	3	143	✓	--	143	Hybrid/Long Iron
18	4	383	✓	--	173	Fwy Wood
OUT	36	3,077	✓	--		
IN	36	3,230	✓	--		
TOT	72	6,307	✓	--		

Female Golfers - Forward Tee						
Handicap - 25			Swing Speed - 60 MPH			
Hole	Par	Length	Yards Over		Est. Approach	
			Rec.	Max.	Shot Distance	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4	312	✗	52	172	Fwy Wood+
2	4	324	✗	64	184	Fwy Wood+
3	4	297	✗	37	157	Fwy Wood+
4	3	123	✓	--	123	Fwy Wood+
5	5	458	✗	78	198	Fwy Wood+
6	3	123	✓	--	123	Fwy Wood+
7	4	325	✗	65	185	Fwy Wood+
8	5	466	✗	86	206	Fwy Wood+
9	4	331	✗	71	191	Fwy Wood+
10	5	432	✗	52	172	Fwy Wood+
11	4	274	✗	14	134	Fwy Wood+
12	3	130	✓	--	130	Fwy Wood+
13	4	340	✗	80	200	Fwy Wood+
14	3	119	✓	--	119	Fwy Wood
15	4	298	✗	38	158	Fwy Wood+
16	5	460	✗	80	200	Fwy Wood+
17	4	282	✗	22	142	Fwy Wood+
18	4	348	✗	88	208	Fwy Wood+
OUT	36	2,759	✗	419		
IN	36	2,683	✗	343		
TOT	72	5,442	✗	762		

Male Golfers - White Tee						
Handicap - 13			Swing Speed - 81-90 MPH			
Hole	Par	Length	Yards Over		Est. Approach	
			Rec.	Max.	Shot Distance	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4	339	✓	--	129	Mid Iron
2	4	353	✓	--	143	Hybrid/Long Iron
3	4	335	✓	--	125	Mid Iron
4	3	147	✓	--	147	Hybrid/Long Iron
5	5	469	✓	--	69	Wedge
6	3	156	✓	--	156	Hybrid/Long Iron
7	4	339	✓	--	129	Mid Iron
8	5	520	✓	--	120	Mid Iron
9	4	352	✓	--	142	Hybrid/Long Iron
10	5	515	✓	--	115	Short Iron
11	4	301	✓	--	91	Wedge
12	3	169	✓	--	169	Hybrid/Long Iron
13	4	404	✗	4	194	Fwy Wood+
14	3	157	✓	--	157	Hybrid/Long Iron
15	4	365	✓	--	155	Hybrid/Long Iron
16	5	470	✓	--	70	Wedge
17	4	319	✓	--	109	Short Iron
18	4	378	✓	--	168	Hybrid/Long Iron
OUT	36	3,010	✓	--		
IN	36	3,078	✓	--		
TOT	72	6,088	✓	--		

Female Golfers - Forward Tee						
Handicap - 11-15			Swing Speed - 71-75 MPH			
Hole	Par	Length	Yards Over		Est. Approach	
			Rec.	Max.	Shot Distance	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4	303	✓	--	131	Hybrid/Long Iron
2	4	334	✓	--	162	Fwy Wood
3	3	112	✓	--	112	Mid Iron
4	5	420	✓	--	83	Wedge
5	5	433	✓	--	96	Short Iron
6	3	129	✓	--	129	Hybrid/Long Iron
7	4	308	✓	--	136	Fwy Wood
8	3	110	✓	--	110	Mid Iron
9	5	465	✓	--	128	Hybrid/Long Iron
10	4	312	✓	--	140	Fwy Wood
11	5	449	✓	--	112	Mid Iron
12	4	359	✗	22	187	Fwy Wood+
13	3	111	✓	--	111	Mid Iron
14	5	443	✓	--	106	Mid Iron
15	4	317	✓	--	145	Fwy Wood
16	4	349	✗	12	177	Fwy Wood+
17	3	102	✓	--	102	Mid Iron
18	4	342	✗	5	170	Fwy Wood+
OUT	36	2,614	✓	--		
IN	36	2,784	✓	--		
TOT	72	5,398	✓	--		

Male Golfers - Gold Tee						
Handicap - 14			Swing Speed - 81-90 MPH			
Hole	Par	Length	Yards Over		Est. Approach	
			Rec.	Max.	Shot Distance	Est. Approach Shot Club
1	4	347	✓	--	137	Mid Iron
2	4	405	✗	5	195	Fwy Wood+
3	3	176	✓	--	176	Fwy Wood
4	5	475	✓	--	75	Wedge
5	5	482	✓	--	82	Wedge
6	3	171	✓	--	171	Fwy Wood
7	4	375	✓	--	165	Hybrid/Long Iron
8	3	150	✓	--	150	Hybrid/Long Iron
9	5	496	✓	--	96	Wedge
10	4	361	✓	--	151	Hybrid/Long Iron
11	5	505	✓	--	105	Short Iron
12	4	413	✗	13	203	Fwy Wood+
13	3	160	✓	--	160	Hybrid/Long Iron
14	5	508	✓	--	108	Short Iron
15	4	357	✓	--	147	Hybrid/Long Iron
16	4	400	✓	--	190	Fwy Wood+
17	3	143	✓	--	143	Hybrid/Long Iron
18	4	383	✓	--	173	Fwy Wood
OUT	36	3,077	✓	What swing speed matches the current forward tees?		
IN	36	3,230	✓			
TOT	72	6,307	✓			



Pro ▼

Equipment ▼

Rankings

Courses ▼

College ▼

More ▼

Amateur ▼



Let them score: How misguided course setups are holding back women's golf

Golfweek

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QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND INSIGHTS FOR EVERYONE INTERESTED IN THE BUSINESS OF GOLF

GOLFERS

The Female Factor in Golf:

Lessons we can learn from countries with high percentages of women golfers

by Erik Matuszewski