



RATER HANDBOOK
2009 – 2010



GOLFWEK'S BEST
Golf Course Rater Handbook

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1. Overview

The following is a brief orientation of the *Golfweek* process and procedures for rating golf courses.

The principal goal of the rating panel is to determine the top golf courses from each of two eras: Classic (opened before 1960) and Modern (opened 1960 or after).

We also use the same database to determine the top residential golf courses, the top resort courses, the best public-access courses in the U.S., the best casino courses and best courses in the Caribbean & Mexico, Great Britain & Ireland, Canada and Asia & the Pacific Rim.

There are currently 500 *Golfweek* raters, drawn from all 50 states, who make up the *Golfweek's* Best national rating panel. We are also building teams of 50-100 raters from various overseas areas as well. Raters are expected to visit and play candidate golf courses and submit numeric evaluations (ratings) for all courses visited. Results of all ratings are compiled and published annually in *Golfweek* and on *Golfweek.com* as *Golfweek's* Best golf courses.

In 2009, there were approximately 16,000 golf courses in the U.S., about 9,500 Modern and 6,500 Classic. Of these courses, 2,200 layouts (about 1,700 Modern and 500 Classic) have been selected (top 14 percent of U.S. courses) for consideration for the *Golfweek's* Best lists, making them automatically among the elite of all golf courses in the U.S. Those that make the top 100 in each category occupy a very lofty position – with those on the Classic list among the elite 1.5 percent of their genre and those on the Modern list among the elite 1 percent of their type.

In compiling these lists since 1997, *Golfweek* has distinguished itself from all other publications in terms of the depth of its rating criteria, the integrity of the process and the extent to which it has developed a community of raters through educational workshops and national meetings. *Golfweek* was the first golf publication to convene such meetings.

2. Classic and Modern

The *Golfweek's* Best program virtually transformed the golf course ratings process and had a powerful influence on the perception of golf course design when *Golfweek* initiated two parallel lists: one recognizing Classic (pre-1960) courses and the other acknowledging Modern (1960 and after) courses. *Golfweek* believes there are good reasons for this split list:

At the heart of *Golfweek's* Best course rating system is the distinction between Classic and Modern courses.

Classic

Golfweek defines Classic courses as those opened for play prior to 1960. This includes 6,500 of the existing 16,000 courses, or 41 percent. Many of these layouts debuted during an unprecedented era of creativity in golf course design called the Golden Age of Architecture. This era, running from 1919 to 1939, saw the introduction of 70 of the 100 courses on *Golfweek's* Best Classic list. During this era, design visionaries like Charles Blair Macdonald, Alister MacKenzie, Seth Raynor, George C. Thomas Jr., Donald Ross and A.W. Tillinghast were at their peak creative powers.

This Classic style of architecture was basically naturalistic, with intimate routings that enabled holes to cling to native landforms. These designers were not afraid to utilize dramatic vertical slopes or

to sculpt their bunkers into artistic shapes, but they did so by enhancing the given features of the land. Earth scraping was minimal, and what little was undertaken was carried out by draft animals, not by mechanized earth movers deployed on a large scale.

Greens were built from native soil that was pushed up and shaped. This gave designers of the Classic era enormous freedom to build oddly-shaped putting surfaces with more contour than was the case in the Modern era of cored-out, sand-based greens.

With respect to site selection, the greater abundance of buildable land in those days gave architects tremendous creative freedom as well. If they didn't like one site, they could easily move down the road to another empty parcel for consideration. For better or worse, they were also unhindered by the regulatory process. There was no such thing as a wetland in the 1920s; they called it a swamp back then, and if it posed a design problem, they would either fill it or drain it. Many of the great old courses could not be built these days because contemporary regulations now prohibit what used to be the commonplace practice of using low-lying wet areas.

Nor did designers have to worry about maximizing home lots on the golf course. And they couldn't rely upon paved cart paths to resolve their routing problems. If they wound up with too long a walk from a green to a tee, they headed back to the drawing board to reroute the entire course until they got it right.

Courses didn't have to be perfect on opening day. They evolved slowly, were often tweaked and improved upon in their early years and only gradually did they acquire a reputation.

But that reputation could often last for decades and still does. The premier courses on the Classic list are today a roll call of architectural tradition and greatness: Cypress Point (No.1); Pine Valley (No. 2); Shinnecock Hills (No. 3); Pebble Beach (No. 7); and Augusta National (No. 9).

Modern

Golfweek considers all courses opened after 1960 to be Modern. This comprises 9,500 of the existing 16,000 courses, or 59 percent. In the last four plus decades, there has been a phenomenal growth of the game, in part spurred by the recreational needs of a rapidly expanding suburban community. The growth of golf in the Modern era of design starts with its popularization, the appeal of Arnold Palmer and the consequences of bringing the game into the homes of television audiences, especially with the widespread adoption of colorized tournament telecasts in the mid-1960s. Additionally, popular glossy magazines – increasingly featuring luscious color photographs of golf courses – played no small role in making golf and golf course architecture matters of public interest.

Mass access to golf travel also bridged the distance gap, making previously out-of-the-way places and exotic resort sites well within reach of avid golfers. This helped cultivate an awareness of golf's great courses and brought home, to both architects and students of the game, the value of fine architecture.

It wasn't just the market that changed. Design and construction techniques for courses shifted fundamentally after 1960. Mechanized earth moving became standard, with many sites requiring 500,000 to 1 million cubic yards of earth to be moved in the construction process. The USGA developed sophisticated methods for sand-based greens built as perched water tables. This required extensive planning, documentation and meticulous excavation. The advent of new, high-performance bentgrasses meant better quality conditions, but the quicker putting speeds meant that greens could not be built with the same dramatic slope as had been the case before. As mowing heights on greens came down from the quarter-inch of the Classic era to one-eighth of an inch and now to one-tenth of an inch today, Modern architects came to enjoy little margin of error when building and draining their courses. These were the skills of professionally trained landscape

architects, not just creative golf visionaries. Gradually, the profession shifted and became more technically oriented, with architects spending less of their time designing in the field and more time designing on paper so that the project could be bid out to a contractor.

As the economic and technical requirements got more complicated, so did the regulatory process. Plans had to be submitted well in advance and were subject to scrutiny by local, state and federal authorities. Nowhere was the regulatory process more evident than when it came to wetlands and increasingly stringent requirements by the Environmental Protection Agency. Moreover, golf was now part of ever-more complicated land plans involving such mixed uses as residential homesites and commercial real estate.

While golf architects had to be skilled landscape designers, they also had to be gifted salesmen. Robert Trent Jones Sr. ushered in the era of public relations as an essential to course architecture. Indeed, architects became golf celebrities in their own right, and as a few designers (Tom Fazio, Pete Dye) established themselves as big names, others sought to cash in on their PGA Tour fame by marketing themselves as well. At least some would-be designers (Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer) were smart enough to create technically qualified design shops and hire skilled architects.

At the same time, some Modern designers went back to basics and adopted a more retro-Classic approach, spending time on the ground, designing and working mainly in the field. Among its many unique features, the *Golfweek's* Best Modern Courses list can be credited for discovering and publicizing the seminal works of such designers as Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw, Tom Doak, Jim Engh, Gil Hanse, Brian Silva, Steve Smyers and Mike Strantz.

Collectively, these designers represent an amazing proliferation of talent. Their work, especially since the mid-1990s, has resulted in what may be termed a Second Golden Age of Architecture.

The work tends to be technically brilliant, with flawless construction standards and impeccable grooming to ensure that the courses are in perfect shape on opening day.

The leading courses on *Golfweek's* Best Modern list are impressive achievements, both strategically and aesthetically: Sand Hills (No. 1); Pacific Dunes (No. 2); Whistling Straits (No. 3); Pete Dye Golf Club (No. 4); Bandon Dunes (No. 5); and Friar's Head (No. 6).

3. Editorial Program: Lists, Reviews and the Book

Of all the publications doing national or local course ratings, *Golfweek* has by far the greatest editorial commitment. That editorial focus includes:

- Dedicated issue of *Golfweek* in March
- Lists of top Classic and top Modern courses
- Lists recognizing architects, major renovations and superintendents
- List of best public-access courses by state (more than 400 courses listed, best 5/10/15/20 per state)
- Lists of best real estate courses, best resort courses, best new courses and best casino courses
- Lists of best courses in Caribbean & Mexico; Canada, Great Britain & Ireland; and other overseas lists being developed
- Monthly "Rater's Notebook" course reviews in *Golfweek*
- Monthly architecture column in *Golfweek*
- Ongoing, updated e-mail communications to all raters
- Book, published Spring 2004
 - Title: "A Walk in the Park: *Golfweek's* Guide to America's Best Classic and Modern Golf Courses"
 - Published by Sports Publishing L.L.C.; 180 pages; \$39.95
 - Top-50 Classic and top-50 Modern
 - Analytical essays and color photography of each course
 - "Best of" *Golfweek* writing from staff on course design, development and play

4. Criteria of Evaluation

Golfweek asks its team of raters to evaluate golf courses on the basis of 10 criteria. By adhering to these standards, raters learn not to evaluate on the basis of how well or how poorly they play. Instead, *Golfweek* has developed a sense of judgment so that all courses can be rated on a comparative basis.

- 1) Routing
How well the holes individually and collectively adhere to the land and to each other
- 2a) Integrity of design (Classic courses)
The extent to which the existing holes either conform to the original design intent or, for those courses that have been renovated, extent to which the holes embody a character that is cohesive rather than fragmentary
- 2b) Quality of shaping (Modern courses)
The extent to which course construction creates design elements that fit in well and provide a consistent look or sensibility
- 3) Overall land plan
Ease of integration of all built-out elements, including course, clubhouse, real estate, roads and native topography and landforms
- 4) Greens and surrounds
Interest, variety and playability of putting surfaces, collars, chipping areas and greenside bunkers
- 5) Variety and memorability of par 3s
Differentiation of holes by length, club required, topography, look and angle of approach

- 6) Variety and memorability of par 4s
Range of right-to-left and left-to-right drives and second shots required, as well as spread of length, topography and look of the holes
- 7) Variety and memorability of par 5s
Variety of risk/reward opportunities on tee shot; how interesting the second shots are; variety of third shots required
- 8) Tree and landscape management
Extent to which ornamentals, hardwoods, conifers and other flora enhance the design and playability of a course without overburdening it or threatening strategy and agronomy
- 9) Conditioning
Overall quality of maintenance, discounting for short-term issues (weather or top dressing)
- 10) “Walk in the park” test
The sense of the place as worthy of spending four hours on it

Overall vote (not cumulative): 1.5 . . . 9, 9.5, 10. This is the only vote that counts for the ratings.

5. Rating by the Numbers

The key to a credible rating list is having adequate votes per golf course. The greater the number of votes per golf course, the more reliable and the more stable are the results. In 2008, *Golfweek's* 500 raters cast a total of 45,000 ballots. The average current rater cast 75 ballots, with one rater (likely unemployed, if not retired) casting a high of 1,010 votes. The average score cast was 5.67, with the average Classic vote being a 5.97 rating and the average Modern vote registering at 5.56.

There is stiff competition for *Golfweek's* Best Courses standing, with tremendous grade compression and small differences accounting for statistically enormous differences in ratings. Thus, raters need to vote carefully. Small changes can have enormous consequences. The only way to reduce the statistical variability is to have a large number of votes per course.

Votes for the top Classic courses tend to be higher than votes for the Modern courses. By No. 80 on each list, the crossing point, there is virtually no difference; thereafter, the Modern votes tend to be higher. The qualifying mark for the 2009 *Golfweek's* Best ranking was close but noticeably different. The 100th ranked Classic course, Sunnehanna CC in Pa., was 6.61. The 100th ranked Modern course, Ravenna GC in Colo., was 6.73.

Below that, grades for Modern courses are consistently higher than votes for Classic courses. This suggests that the quality of mid-range Modern courses surpasses the quality of mid-range Classic courses. And beyond the top-100, there is incredible grade compression, with the difference between the No. 100 and the No. 200 courses being less than the differences between the No. 1 and the No. 5 courses.

A general ratings guideline is provided below:

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Classic rank</u>	<u>Modern rank</u>
10	1-5	1-5
9	6-15	6-15
8	16-50	16-50
7	51-100	51-100
6	101-200	101-300
5	201-500	301-1,000
4	501-	1,001-2,000

The average ratings for the 1st, 100th, 200th, 400th, 600th and 800th courses are listed below.

<u>Ranking</u>	<u>Classic rank</u>	<u>Modern rank</u>
1	9.54	9.38
100	6.61	6.73
200	5.83	6.43
400	5.14	5.91
600	–	5.63
800	–	5.38

To assure statistical reliability, *Golfweek* insists that a golf course not be listed among the top 100 Modern or Classic courses unless it has a minimum of 15 ballots. For other categories of rating (residential, resort, real estate), the threshold is eight votes. All raters are carefully monitored. Those who do not perform up to standard or whose votes are dramatically out of line are asked to re-evaluate their overall approach to voting. *Golfweek* does not dispute individual votes on courses but does examine closely trends and biases that might become evident with raters.

All raters are asked to visit at least five “Priority” courses annually (those courses with fewer than 20 ballots submitted). We also expect raters to attend one multi-day *Golfweek* raters meeting every second year.

Remember that the scale is not linear. Scores of 7-10 are reserved for top 100 golf courses. Scores of 4-6 are reserved for the next approximately 500 courses. Scores of less than 4 are reserved for the lower 80 percent of courses in the country and indicate that the rater believes that the course does not belong on the ballot. The overall vote is not an average of the individual criteria ratings. A rater could, theoretically, give all 5s to the individual rating categories and a 7 to the overall course score.

6. The Raters

At the core of the *Golfweek's* Best program is a group of 500 raters nationwide, drawn from every state. *Golfweek* has a diverse group in terms of playing ability, career profile and social background. Fewer than half of *Golfweek's* raters are single-digit handicappers. Seven percent are women. Many are couples who travel and play golf together. There are a handful of raters who own their own airplanes and some who travel around the country in their RVs. Among *Golfweek's* raters are the (former) head of the American Medical Association and a UPS truck driver. *Golfweek's* rater pool also includes golf writers, course designers, superintendents and golf course management executives, as well as pharmacists, attorneys, school teachers and 25 dentists. Alongside the green chairman of a recent U.S. Open course are daily-fee golfers who line up and pay their green fees at municipal facilities.

In recruiting raters, *Golfweek* looks for people who:

- Love golf and are seriously enthusiastic about looking at different golf courses.
- Handle themselves well and represent *Golfweek* with the utmost professionalism.
- Play quickly and without emotional outburst.
- Are able to rise above their own golf score in examining a course and be objective about a series of detailed architectural criteria.
- Have the time and willingness to get around and see courses they have never played before.
- Are willing to study, read and look behind the scenes, as well as ask good questions of established professionals in the field.
- Are willing to turn in their ballots on a rolling basis throughout the year.

- Have the ability to cast their ballots online.
- Are willing to attend and participate in *Golfweek* rater educational events.
- Are not members of any other national publication's course rating staff. (On several occasions, raters have resigned from those panels to join the *Golfweek* rater program.)

7. Rater Cups and Other Programs

Golfweek is unique among all publications for the range of community events it sponsors throughout the country.

They include:

- Annual Rater Cups:
 - 1998: Daufuskie Island, S.C.
 - 1999: Bandon Dunes, Ore.
 - 2000: Reynolds Plantation, Ga.
 - 2001: French Lick & Evansville, Ind.
 - 2002: Kiawah Island, S.C.
 - 2003: Reynolds Plantation, Ga.; Las Vegas, Nev.
 - 2004: Chicago, Ill.
 - 2005: Phoenix, Ariz.; Hilton Head, S.C.
 - 2006: Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Tucson, Ariz.; Bandon Dunes, Ore.; Naples, Fla.
 - 2007: Scotland; Palm Springs, Calif.; Kona & Kauai, Hawaii; North Dakota; Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.
 - 2008: Pinehurst, N.C.; Tacoma, Wash.; Northern Michigan; Vail & Denver, Colo.; San Antonio-Houston, Texas
- Rater Retreats (periodically involving raters and avid *Golfweek* readers):
 - 2001: Sea Island, Ga.
 - 2002: Pinehurst, N.C.

- 2003: Bandon Dunes, Ore.
- 2004: Mauna Lani, Hawaii; Pebble Beach, Calif.;
Tarpon Springs, Fla.
- 2005: Sandestin, Fla.; Atlantic City, N.J.
- 2006: Kohler, Wis.
- 2007: Orlando, Fla.
- 2008: Dominican Republic; Kohler, Wis.; Kiawah Island, S.C.

- One-Day Rater Events:

- 2002: Atlantic GC, N.Y.
- 2003: Beverly CC, Ill.; Portsmouth Abbey, R.I.
- 2004: Hudson National GC, N.Y.
- 2005: Briggs Ranch GC, Texas
- 2006: Lake of Isles GC, Ct.
- 2007: Glen Club, Ill.; Biloxi, Miss.
- 2008: Rainmakers GC, N.M.

8. Code of Conduct

Golfweek expects and demands that its raters act like ladies and gentlemen in conducting course visits for the purpose of ratings.

Card-carrying raters function in the field as representatives of *Golfweek* and thus are held accountable for their demeanor. If questions arise from courses as to the terms of a rater's visit, *Golfweek* makes immediate inquiries and settles the issue as quickly as possible. In the vast majority of cases, the presumed incident turns out to have been a misunderstanding or failure of communication and is amicably resolved. To prevent such incidents from developing, *Golfweek* urges all raters to follow a standard set of procedures in the course of their rating activity.

Golfweek expects its raters to participate because of their love of the game and not for any commercial gain. *Golfweek* retains strict

control over the roster of raters and their e-mail addresses and does not publicize, promote or sell the identity of its raters. That way, courses, architects, publishers or promotional firms can't directly solicit raters. Nor may raters use their contacts as raters for such purposes.

Raters are allowed to vote on their home courses, but raters may not vote on any course in which they have an ownership stake or an ongoing commercial, consulting or design relationship.

Raters serve at the will of *Golfweek*. The magazine reserves the right to terminate, without prejudice, any raters for any violation of the standards generally established in this document.

Contacting a candidate course and making arrangements

The general procedure for contacting a candidate (ballot) course is as follows:

Select any of the *Golfweek* ballot courses you want to visit or are assigned to rate. Call the head professional, director of golf, general manager or superintendent of that course and identify yourself as a card-carrying *Golfweek* rater. (An excellent resource to find names and phone numbers of course officials, as well as directions and other info, is www.GolfCourse.com.)

Tell the club official you are interested in visiting their course and ask what the course policy is on receiving raters. Arrange tee times to visit and play the candidate course at a time least disruptive to the course. At times, a club will require you to play with a pro, assistant or club member during your visit. It is suggested that after talking to the club official, you follow up by mailing or faxing the club a letter, along with a photocopy of your rater ID card, thanking the official for their time and confirming the arranged tee time.

Raters are asked to concentrate their efforts on courses from the

assignments list, new courses and courses from the lower half of the current *Golfweek's* Best lists (courses ranked 50-100) that they haven't played before. The top 50 courses on each of the *Golfweek's* Best lists have all had ample visits by raters and don't need additional ratings. If you want to play these, you cannot do so as a *Golfweek* rater.

Course visit guidelines:

- a) Initiate the inquiry well in advance, at least two weeks ahead and ideally a month ahead. Introduce yourself as a rater for *Golfweek* and indicate your willingness to fax a copy of your rater ID card or present it upon arrival. Unless you are a salaried employee of Turnstile Publishing Company (which most of you are not), do not identify yourself as "an employee of *Golfweek*" or someone who is "working for" the magazine.
- b) Expect to pay a green fee, whether it's the rate for unaccompanied guests, the normal daily-fee rate or the professional courtesy rate. Do not ask for any discount. If you are traveling and in the company of another golfer who is not a rater, let the club know and ask to pay for the guest as well as yourself. Do not attempt to bring more than one guest under any circumstances. This is an absolute no-no.
- c) Don't expect to play on weekends, certainly not on the mornings of Saturday, Sunday and holidays during valued tee times. Confine your visits to quieter times of the week and the calendar.
- d) Raters are subject to the same rules as any guest at the club. You must abide by all rules for tee times, cart policy, dress code, etc.
- e) Dress code: dress like you're working, which you are. That means dressing conservatively. Shorts are fine, unless the course has a dress code prohibiting them. If at a private club or resort, do not change your shoes in the parking lot; ask to use the locker room or to leave your things in the

pro shop. Under no circumstances are you to use a cell phone on the course or near the clubhouse.

- f) If you are playing golf with club staff or members, play a friendly game and limit any wagering to very modest sums.
- g) Tip. Don't be afraid to show some gratitude to the bag boy, locker room attendant, etc. The only time you should not tip is if club policy absolutely prohibits it, but those cases are extremely rare.
- h) Don't linger in the pro shop as if you're looking for free merchandise. Better yet, buy a hat or shirt.
- i) Don't expect to be granted access to these clubs. Many clubs and facilities have exclusive policies prohibiting raters from playing as raters. If that is the case, thank them and move on to another facility. Clubs are under no obligation to accommodate you.
- j) Be prepared to explain the procedure. Read this handbook carefully, familiarize yourself with *Golfweek* policy and rating criteria and, if needed, give a concise account of *Golfweek's* methodology.
- k) At the end of the round, you can have general discussions with facility staff members about your overall views of the golf course, but you may not discuss specific ballot numbers. And please do not play "golf course critic for the day" by telling them exactly what you think about their course. Don't lie, but be polite and diplomatic and spare them any "tough love" lectures.

Rating a golf course is the core function of a *Golfweek* rater. As a knowledgeable evaluator, each rater is expected to make a serious and professional effort to assess the strategic and aesthetic merits of the candidate course. While a rater will develop his or her own personal style of evaluating a course, some basics should be common to all ratings. A

fair and unbiased assessment of the architectural features of the course being rated is critical; given the close grade compression of so many golf courses, your individual rating will have an impact on the course you are evaluating.

As you play the course, keep notes of your observations, impressions and preliminary 1-10 ratings for each of the 10 rating categories. The category rating numbers are subjective and should be based on other courses you've seen. The same rating scale, as outlined above, should be used to determine category scores.

Follow up and “thank you” notes

Within a few days following your rating, send the candidate club (pro, director of golf, superintendent, etc.) a “thank you” card, note or letter. Don't e-mail or send a form letter. Type one out – better yet write it out in long hand – and post it directly.

9. Administration

Assignments

To improve the statistical integrity of the rating database, *Golfweek's* goal is to have all courses on the ballot visited by a minimum of 20 raters. Based on the results of the 2009 balloting, there are about 800 of the initial ballot courses that need more *Golfweek* raters. To help accomplish this, each *Golfweek* rater will be asked to visit and rate at least five of these low-visited “Priority” courses during each calendar year. In addition, any of these under-visited courses can qualify as an assigned course.

All raters are expected to rate a minimum of five “Priority” courses each year that they have never played/seen before. They are also expected to see and rate additional courses that they have not previously evaluated. This is a basic responsibility of being a rater. A list of these “Priority” courses and your assignments

can be determined by accessing the rater Web site (www.GolfweekRaters.com/Raters). These five assigned courses are considered a minimum performance requirement for each rater. Above and beyond these five assigned courses, you are encouraged to visit and rate any of the courses on the annual ballot. Any additional efforts to play and rate these low-visit courses are appreciated.

All raters are also expected to attend at least one multi-day rater function every second year. The camaraderie, common basis of experience and opportunity to listen to industry experts make these events valuable experiences and help improve the overall ratings process.

Dedicated *Golfweek's* Best Web site: www.GolfweekRaters.com

A dedicated *Golfweek* rating panel Web site has been developed. This private Web site serves as the central clearing house for all panel business and is restricted to current *Golfweek* raters and *Golfweek* personnel. *Golfweek* raters are required to have Web access. No paper balloting will be allowed. All ratings are continually posted to the Web site, which eliminates any need for polling the raters at year's end. You can log on to the Web site at www.GolfweekRaters.com.

Periodical updates

Along with ballots, the raters Web site includes:

- Lists of established courses needing raters
- Lists of established courses welcoming raters
- Lists of newly opened courses
- Features on raters' experiences and rater profiles
- Explanatory essays on elements of design and rating
- Information on upcoming special rater events

Adding/deleting courses

Any rater who feels that a candidate course should be added to the *Golfweek* ballot is encouraged to recommend the course. A simple

process to add new courses (or Classic courses that have undergone significant modifications) to the *Golfweek* ballot is as follows: A course should be recommended if a rater feels that the new course is a potential top 5-10 percent course in the U.S. (i.e., of the 16,000 total courses in the country, the candidate course is top-1,500). A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself, “Do I feel that the course I am recommending is better than other courses on the current ballot? Would I be doing a service to a fellow rater if I sent them on a road trip to play this facility?” If you are convinced the course is worthy, simply send an e-mail to BKlein@Golfweek.com stating the course’s full name, city, state, architect(s) and year of opening. Also indicate the facility type, classified as one or more of the following: public access, private membership club, real estate, resort, municipal, casino, military and/or university. Recommendations will be collected and periodically presented for consideration.

Except for unusual circumstances, such as the layout being plowed over, *Golfweek* does not eliminate courses from the ballot.

Rater roster

A roster is kept for all raters on the rating panel. Each rater is expected to keep current with *Golfweek* regarding your full name, mailing address, phone, fax and e-mail address. Please contact DMuratore@Golfweek.com and BKlein@Golfweek.com to update your personal information. While we keep the names of the raters to ourselves, we are working on a system of intranet communications whereby raters can voluntarily agree to make their names available to other raters on a social networking basis for golf and golf travel.

I.D. cards

Individual rater I.D. cards are issued annually and are good for one year. Each rater is required to have a current rater I.D. card in order to participate in the *Golfweek* ratings program and often will be asked to present it as part of the request to rate and play a golf course.

10. Rater Certification

A rater’s responsibilities are clear:

- Conduct oneself honorably in representing *Golfweek*.
- Evaluate new and “Priority” courses.
- Turn in ballots on an ongoing basis at www.Golfweek.com/Raters.
- Participate in the community of *Golfweek*’s Best raters through various meetings and educational programs, including at least one national Rater Cup meeting every other year.

11. For more information

Turn in ballots at:

www.Golfweek.com/Raters

For more information about course rating:

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Questions?

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