



Talking in the 19th Hole

DRIVER. While professional players know their strengths and weaknesses with precision, amateur players are unaware of them or have unrealistic ideas. To play the best they can, golfers have to know their game. You must study yourself and know the limits of your own game. A self-aware player is a better player.

The player must take an inventory of his game, his strengths, and his weaknesses. Knowing your game is the first stage to be able to handle it. It is not enough to know the score. It is vital to understand why you are obtaining that score because you can take the appropriate actions to improve by identifying the weaknesses and strengths. The player can know and measure his game using game standards or golf statistics.

The categories in which an amateur player can keep his statistics are:

- Scoring average. It is obtained by adding the score of the rounds played between the number of rounds played.
- Driving distance. The average number of yards per driver.
- Driving accuracy percentage. The percentage of times a tee shot is on the fairway, regardless of the club used. As a reference, let's see how many tee shots on average the players put on the fairway about their handicap:

HANDICAP	FAIRWAYS PER ROUND (FROM 14)
36	0 – 3
18	4 – 5
9	6 – 7
4.5	8 – 9
0	10 – 11

- Greens in regulation percentage. The percentage of times a player was able to reach the green in regulation. The stroke for the green in regulation is determined by subtracting 2 from the par (first stroke on a par 3, second on a par 4, third on a par 5). As a reference, let's see the greens in regulation that a player achieves about his handicap:

HANDICAP	GREENS IN REGULATION PER ROUND
36	0 – 2
18	3 – 5
9	6 – 8

4.5	9 – 10
0	11 – 13

- Up & down. The percentage of times a player made two strokes or less from around the green, regardless of score (except from the bunkers). As a reference, let's see the percentage of up & down that a player achieves about his handicap:

HANDICAP	% UP & DOWN
36	0 – 20
18	20 – 30
9	30 – 50
4.5	50 – 60
0	60 – 70

- Sand saves percentage. The percentage of times a player was able to make two strokes or less from a greenside bunker, regardless of the score. As a reference, let's see the percentage of sand saves that a player achieves about his handicap:

HANDICAP	% SAND SAVES
36	0 – 5
18	5 – 10
9	10 – 20
4.5	20 – 40
0	40 – 60

- Putts per round. The average number of putts per round played. For reference, let's look at the number of putts per round that a player achieves about his handicap:

HANDICAP	PUTTS PER ROUND
36	36 – 42
18	33 – 35
9	31 – 32
4.5	30
0	28 – 29

More categories measure professional players, and some of those mentioned are measured differently.

Other categories that would be very useful for amateur players are:

- The handicap. It is the number of "strokes" or advantage strokes that a player receives from a specific teeing area of the course to be played to balance and adjust the player's level of play to a "scratch" player zero handicap. The player can measure his progress with his monthly handicap.
- Par threes in regulation. Par 3s are opportunities for amateurs because they face an approach with a flat lie and a ball on a tee.
- Average putts after a shot from around the green.
- Three putts per round.
- Putts missed per round by distance.
- Putts that are short per round.
- Putts made per round by distance.
- Penalty strokes per round. Know how you got them.
- Number of times approach shots come up short.

- Mental errors per round. The player must be very honest about this.

This data is useful because it allows the player to see which areas of the game need to work more. The player must know in which categories of the statistics improve, stays, or worsens. Statistics accurately show the player's strengths and weaknesses. **FORE.**

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