MENUMENU

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BURSLEM GOLF CLUB: Pace of Play Policy 2018

**Introduction**

This Pace of Play policy has been adopted to ensure competition rounds and visitors’ rounds are played in an appropriate interval of time to make golf more enjoyable for everyone, by:

* Ensuring players keep pace with the group ahead;
* Establishing 4 hours as the target time for a 4-player group to complete an 18-hole competition round from the Back Tees
* Introducing, educating and enforcing Ready Golf standards;
* Highlighting timesaving hints;
* Monitoring of play and enforcing R&A Rule 5.6

**The Rules of Golf 5.6.b ((3) Committee Pace of Play Policy:**

*To encourage and enforce prompt play, the Committee have adopted a Local Rule setting a Pace of Play Policy.*

*The Policy may set a maximum time to complete a round, a hole or a series of holes and a stroke, and it may set penalties for not following the Policy.*

Unreasonable Delay: *A player must not unreasonably delay Play, either when playing a hole or between two holes.*

From Rule 5.6b Prompt Pace of Play:
*A round of golf is meant to be played at a PROMPT PACE. Players are encouraged to allow faster groups to play through.*

**Target Time – [Course Pace Time e.g. 4 Hours]**

It is expected that all 4-ball competition rounds should be completed within 4 hours.  A significant responsibility lies with early groups to ensure they ‘lead’ the field at a suitable pace to achieve the target time. From time to time circumstances may negatively influence the actual time taken; yet all efforts should be made to meet the target time of 4 hours.

**Target Interval – Tee-interval time Par 3 –8mins, Par 4 –12mins, Par 5– 16mins**

The starting interval time between groups is typically 10 minutes.  It is expected that all groups will maintain an interval time of 10 minutes with the group ahead throughout the round. From time to time because of the design of the course circumstances (e.g. Par 3 holes) may cause the interval time to exceed 10minutes; yet all efforts should be made to catch up with the group in front.

**Target time to Make a Stroke – 40 seconds**

It is recommended that a player makes a stroke in no more than 40 seconds after s/he is (or should be) able to play without any interference or distraction. A player should be able to play more quickly than that and is encouraged to do so.

**Ready Golf**

Rule 6.4b (2): Playing out of Turn in a Safe and Responsible Way (“Ready Golf”)

*Players are both allowed and encouraged to play out of turn in a safe and responsible way, but a player SHOULD NOT PLAY OUT OF TURN TO GAIN AN ADVANTAGE OVER OTHER PLAYERS.*

Also, if a group is not keeping pace with the group ahead, it is expected that they will adopt Ready Golf until they have ‘caught up’ with the players ahead.

Quite simply, Ready Golf is a common-sense approach to play the ball when ready:

* Dismiss all honours;
* Don’t wait for others before approaching the tee and hitting;
* Proceed to your ball as quickly as possible;
* Play the ball as soon as it is safe to do so.

Some golf rules and etiquette address the order of play and which player has the “honour”. Observance of the honour came about as a show of politeness to one’s playing partners.  But out of politeness to ALL the golfers behind, the slow play problem requires that honours be abandoned if a group does not keep pace with the group ahead.  Each player should play when ready, if doing so will not interfere with others, especially on the tee. Shorter hitters of the ball can often hit first, especially from the tee.

Please note that Ready Golf will not apply to Match Play Competitions, although under Rule 6.4a players may agree to play out of turn to save time.

**Monitor & Enforce**

Competition players at Burslem Golf Club are required to sign-in on the computer before the start of their competition and to enter their score as soon as possible on finishing the competition. These times will be checked and monitored by the Competition Committee to identify excessive finishing intervals in the field.

From time to time, authorised Match Committee representatives/Course Marshals will conduct Pace of Play monitoring. Using a Timesheet and/or Group Monitoring Sheet, the representatives/marshals will observe, calculate and record as much of the following information as possible:

* Actual tee time.
* Actual finishing time at the 18th hole.
* Names of every player observed in each group.
* Calculate the interval times between each group.
* Calculate the Actual Round Duration of each group.

It is considered a player’s responsibility to be attentive to their pace of play.

*A player(s) consistently disregards these guidelines during a round or over a period of time to the detriment of others, it is recommended that the Committee considers taking appropriate disciplinary action against the offending player. Such action may, for example, include prohibiting play for a limited time on the course or in a certain number of competitions. This is justifiable in terms of protecting the interest of the majority of golfers who wish to play in accordance with these guidelines.]*

The process for dealing with members or visitors who breach Rule 5.6 is as follows:

1. **a) STAGE 1 – LETTER TO REQUEST CO-OPERATION**

Each player in any group that finishes 17 minutes or more behind the group ahead will be sent a notice. The notice will request the player’s co-operation to improve their pace of play by being aware of the situation and, if necessary, modifying their behaviour and/or their group’s behaviour.

1. **b) STAGE 2 – REPORT TO COMMITTEE, MONITORING/SUSPENSION**

If a player is repeatedly identified to be in “slow” groups, they may be requested to attend a Match Committee meeting to explain their actions. The Match Committee will not impose any penalties until the member can meet with the Committee to discuss the issue.

Failure to meet with or contact the Committee will result in a penalty automatically being applied. The Stage 2 penalty will be determined by the Committee and may include:

1. For each future infringement, over a further two week period, the player will receive a 2-shot penalty (or a loss of hole in Match Play, or a 2-point deduction in Stableford) in the competition of the day.
2. The player will not be able to book on the time-sheet for two (2) weeks.
3. The player will be asked to help monitor the Pace of Play for two (2) sessions (approximately 2 hours each) which may help the player experience first-hand the cumulative effect of slow play on the field.
4. The player is also put on a twelve (12) week probationary period. Two (2) further offences in that time will be penalised in accordance with Stage 3.
5. **c) STAGE 3 – SUBSEQUENT OFFENCES, REPORT TO COMMITTEE – SUSPENSION**

If a player is identified in a slow group during the probationary period detailed in Stage 2, and as such is considered to have consistently disregarded the Policy, the player will again be requested to explain to the Match Committee.

The player may be “suspended” from competition play for two (2) or more weeks. At the Match Committee’s discretion, extended suspensions may apply for multiple breaches.

1. **d) IMMEDIATE PENALTY – SEVERE BREACH DURING COMPETITION**

As a further deterrent to slow play, any group that is identified as finishing their round 17 minutes or more, with appropriate allowances for gaps in the field, etc, behind the group ahead AND with a round duration of over 4 hours 20 minutes, will receive an immediate penalty. The penalty shall be 2 strokes (stroke event), 2 points (Stableford) or loss of 1 hole (in Match Play) in the competition of the day.

15 minutes is considered to be sufficient time to play any par-4 and par-5 holes at the Burslem Golf Club and the group would be considered to be more than one hole behind the group ahead.

The decision of the Committee or its authorised representative is final.

**Examples of Penalties that may be imposed:**

**For Members:**

* Suspension from play on the course for a period of time
* Being required to play at the end of a field in competitions for a specified period of time
* Displaying the names on the club Notice board of members or Groups who without good reason, have taken longer than the stipulated time to play
* A combination of the above

**Time-saver Hints**

**Always be ready to play**

* Be on the First tee 5 minutes before your allocated tee-time
* **DO NOT** Tee-off **BEFORE OR AFTER** your tee-time Rule 5.3a
* Proceed directly to your own ball.
* Plan your shot and select your club when approaching your ball.
* Only take one (1) practice swing, and prepare yourself while others are hitting.
* When in doubt, notify your marker and hit a provisional ball.
* If necessary, encourage your playing partners to maintain a good pace of play.
* Know the Rules of Golf and [Golf Club] Local Rules, including those about out of bounds, penalty areas and lost balls.

**Don’t waste time**

* Even if starting after a gap in the field.
* Never record scores on or near the green. Count strokes and write scores at the next tee.
* Don’t leave a cart/bag in front of the green. Leave it to the side towards the next tee.
* Carry extra tees, balls and ball markers in your pocket.
* If safe to do so, encourage players on incorrect fairways to play through.
* Quickly purchase food/drink. If out of position, do not stop for a conversation.
* Do not give lessons/instruction on the course. Reserve that for a practice session.

**On the tee**

* The first player ready to play should do so as soon as it is safe.
* Encourage your playing partners to tee off as soon as they are ready. Except in Match play
* Other players should wait right next to the tee markers.
* All players should watch other shots to help pinpoint the position of the ball.
* After hitting, each player should return to their clubs and be ready to proceed to their ball.

**On the green**

* Park clubs/cart beside the green in line with the next tee.
* Study the line, slope, grain, etc before it is your turn.
* Leave Flagstick in the hole.
* Encourage your playing partners to putt, if they are ready to do so. Except in Match play
* Follow continuous putting rules until holed out, unless restricted by another player’s line.
* When the first player is finished putting, they should proceed to the next tee (without disturbing the other players yet to putt).  There is no point three people standing around doing nothing when the group needs to catch up.



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