

# Minthis Hills Committee

## HOW TO IMPROVE PACE of PLAY

This information sheet should tell you most of what you, as a golfer, need to know about pace of play.

*If each player in a 4-ball took just 5 seconds less for each shot, it would reduce the time to play their round by about half an hour!*

### Steps You Can Take To Speed Up Your Play.

#### Play "Ready Golf"

"Ready golf" is a term which indicates that players should play when they are ready, rather than adhering strictly to the stipulation of "farthest from the hole plays first" in the Rules of Golf. The whole group needs to agree to play "ready golf", not just one or two of the players, otherwise the other players could construe that they are not following correct golf etiquette. Please note that **this is not appropriate when playing matchplay competitions** and also that **players must act sensibly to ensure that playing out of turn does not endanger themselves or others.**

Examples of "ready golf" in action are:

- Hitting a shot when safe to do so if a player farther away faces a challenging shot and is taking time to assess their options;
- Shorter hitters playing first from the tee or fairway if longer hitters have to wait;
- Hitting a tee shot if the person with the honour is delayed in being ready to play;
- Hitting a shot before helping someone to look for a lost ball;
- Putting-out even if it means standing close to someone else's line;
- Hitting a shot if a person who has just played from a bunker is still farthest from the hole but is delayed due to raking the bunker. Alternatively you could rake the bunker for them while they put their club away, choose another and take their next shot;
- When a player's ball has gone over the back of a green, any player chipping from in front of the green or even putting on the green should play while the other player is having to walk to their ball and assess their shot;
- Promptly replacing the flag and leaving the green quickly after all players have holed-out;
- Marking scores upon arrival at the next tee, except that **the first player to tee off should do so immediately** and then mark their card afterwards.

#### Be Ready to Play

While waiting for others to play and **taking care not to distract other players or compromise safety:**

- Walk efficiently to your ball putting your glove on in the process;
- Assess the shot, including any calculation of distance, or line up the putt;
- Decide on club selection. If you have to leave your bag some distance away from where your ball lies make sure you carry a small selection of clubs to your ball. Don't get to your ball with a single club only to find it's the wrong one for the next shot, causing you to return to your bag for the correct one.

#### Keep Up With The Group In Front

If ground has been lost on the group in front, then **all of the players in the group should take responsibility** for making up that ground as quickly as possible.

## **Allow Faster Groups To Play Through**

If a group cannot keep its position on the course for whatever reason, and is delaying the group behind, then it should invite the group behind to play through so that group can play at the pace it is capable of.

## **Don't Imitate Elite Golfers**

It is generally unnecessary for most club golfers to prepare for their shots in the same way as the elite golfer does. The consequence of doing so is simply to increase the time taken to play each shot with no tangible benefit in performance. Therefore the futile mimicking of elite golfers should be avoided. Common examples of this to be avoided are:

- Determining precise distances for shots when approximate distances would suffice;
- Taking more than one or two practice swings before hitting the ball;
- Studying the line of putt from multiple angles, however, it may be beneficial to view the putt from both sides of the hole as this may increase putting accuracy and result in fewer putts;
- Marking, lifting and replacing a ball that is close to the hole before holing-out.

## **Position Bags, Trolleys and Carts Sensibly**

When players are approaching the green, golf bags, trolleys and carts should be positioned to allow for quick and efficient movement off the green towards the next tee.

## **If In Doubt, Play a Provisional Ball**

Delays can be minimised significantly if a player whose ball might be in danger of being lost plays a provisional ball.

## **Watch the Flight of the Ball Carefully**

All players in a group should make a conscious effort to watch each other's shots as carefully as possible to minimise the possibility of balls being lost.

## **Have You Ever Told Someone, Or Been Told "You Are A Slow Player"?**

There is a natural reluctance to tell a fellow golfer that he or she is slow for fear of confrontation or appearing rude but you would in fact be doing them a favour and so long as you do it in a polite way it should not cause offence.

Golfers don't often accuse other golfers of being slow players without good reason. Telling another player that they are a slow player will often only occur after a considerable period of frustration having observed that player causing pace of play difficulties and consistently failing to act in accordance with the guidance outlined below. Consequently, if you, on more than one occasion, have been told that you are a slow player it probably means that you are.

This does not make you a bad person, and it does not give someone the right to be impolite towards you. However, it does suggest that you should take some positive steps to do something about it so that the same accusation is not levelled at you again. You can do this by asking for advice from the players you play with on what it is that they believe causes you to be slow. It should then be relatively easy for you to make some minor adjustments to the way you play golf which will make you a quicker player, which will mean you are not negatively impacting on the enjoyment of other players on the course, and which in turn will make you a more enjoyable person to play with. You are then more likely to enjoy your golf without feeling the pressure of being scrutinised by your fellow players.

## **Acknowledgement**

Most of the information in this leaflet is reproduced from the excellent R & A publication "Pace of Play Manual" (<http://mhcommittee.elusien.co.uk/information/Misc/2016/2016-06-29+Paceof%20Play%20Manual/Pace%20of%20Play%20Manual.pdf>).

*Your Golf Committee*