

Comprehensive Pace of Play Proposal

PREFACE –Success in the fight against slow play cannot be left to the golfer “seeing the light” and voluntarily picking up the pace. It must be a team effort involving everyone on the staff, committed on a daily basis.

At least one group must be playing slowly to cause a backup. The answer is not just “volume”. Simply find the slow group and move it along.

We should not be afraid to offend slow golfers. KEEP IN MIND—THEY ARE RUINING THE DAY'S ENJOYMENT FOR ALL OF THE GROUPS STACKED UP BEHIND THEM!

I. Recommendations for course setup

Responsibility: Green Committee and the Director of Golf Course Properties
To be completed as possible over this season.

- A. Clear leaves and other loose impediments in certain areas to decrease ball search times.
- B. Modify height of rough on certain holes to help keep some balls from rolling all the way down the hill into leaves or brush. (ex. #12)
- C. Provide easily visible yardage markers, provide guidance on “blind shots” (ex. #2,5,9 etc.) and check sprinkler heads for missing numbers.
- D. Signage or lines painted on cart paths showing best places to park carts around greens to promote walking off the back of the green.
- E. Monuments, ball washers, waste bins and card/pencil boxes should be located next to each other at each hole—one stop.
- F. Water stations should be located in places easily accessible to all tees on that hole. (consider moving station on #5 –golfers have to go out of their way or stop on the way to their second shot.)

II. Implementation of Player Assistant Flag Policy

Responsibility: Pace of Play Committee and the Director of Golf

To be implemented this year as soon as materials can be acquired and staff trained.

- A. Change title of Ranger to Player Assistant. Purchase “PLAYER ASSISTANT” signs for their carts.
- B. Player Assistants will carry RED & GREEN flags in their carts. As they perform their usual patrols they will display the GREEN flag. When approaching a group out of position, they will display the RED flag before communicating with the group. (see training program below for details)
 - 1.) Player assistant will inform the group it is out of position, that they must pick up the pace and that he will return in about 10-15 min. to see how they are doing.
 - 2.) Upon returning, if the group is still out of position, the Player Assistant should stay with the group (with RED flag), observe, try to determine what is causing the problem and offer friendly advice. Once again inform them he will return in about 10-15 min.
 - 3.) Upon returning, if the group has not shown improvement, they will be asked to pick up their golf balls and move to the next position.

- C. Implementation begins at the *Starter Shack* – Starters will call to the attention of each group a sign on the shack explaining the new policy. Signs will be placed on all club bulletin boards.
- D. Cards explaining the policy will be displayed in all carts along with a few suggestions for improving pace of play
- E. Player Assistant “starter list”—easily identifies groups playing slowly or out of position.

III. Player Assistant Training Program

Responsibility: Pace of Play Committee and the Director of Golf

To be instituted as soon as materials are acquired.

- A. The main function of the Player Assistant is to monitor, manage and assist golfers. They are the main source of customer contact on the course.
- B. Player Assistants must be formally trained with “people skills” to be polite, firm and insistent on proper pace of play.
- C. It is recommended that a mutually agreed upon “elevator” or standard speech be drawn up to be used when approaching slow groups. (see below)
- D. Early detection of a group out of position is imperative so that the situation is not so out of control as to make correction difficult.
- E. Player Assistants must patrol the course in reverse order of holes, keep moving, be visible. A golfer should see a Player Assistant at least every half hour.
- F. Player Assistants should enforce all course regulations concerning ropes, carts, etc.
- G. Player Assistants should be patrolling the course all the time they are on duty unless the Director of Golf or Head Professional has requested their presence elsewhere. While patrolling they could help establish good will by helping locate tee shots while waiting to proceed.
- H. Player Assistants need to be trained to identify special situations and not “blame a group for slow play” when there is an open tee time or a group that has waited on many holes and then gets behind temporarily because of a ball search.
- I. Create a list of Player Assistant duties and monitor them for compliance.

Suggested “elevator” or standard speech

“Ladies/Gentlemen, I just want to bring to your attention that you are 1,2, etc. shots behind the group in front of you. We will need you to pick up the pace of play. I will return in 10/15 min.to check on your progress. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping pace with the group in front of you.”

“Please play 'ready golf' and hit your shot instead of waiting for your 'turn'. This will help you to keep up with the group in front of you.”

“We would like to see all the groups behind you finish their round of golf while there is still enough light available.”

Bottom Line – While being firm and insistent, Player Assistants must be friendly and polite. They should contribute to making the golf experience enjoyable. They should stress how pace of play is important to the entire course.