

## SCGA TEAM PLAY PACE OF PLAY

Slow play is a recurring problem in Team Play. Unfortunately playing out of turn is not permitted in match play, thus eliminating many opportunities for ready golf. Nevertheless, each player should manage his/her time efficiently between shots and be ready to play when it is his turn. All groups should keep pace with the group in front of them. If they fall off that pace, players should make every effort to regain position behind the group in front of them. Team Captains and all team members should be aware of USGA Rule 6-7 which states that all players shall play without undue delay.

**First: Understand the Pace of Play for the day.** How much time is allowed to play the stipulated round and how much time is allowed for each hole. If this is a morning shotgun, there are going to be other players waiting for your group to clear the course in a timely way. The host club or host Team Captain should establish the expected time each group should finish each hole and the entire round and relay this information to each player. When setting an expected pace you should take into consideration the difficulty of the course set up, the layout of the course (especially the distance from greens to tees), whether carts are being used, etc.

**Second: Wear a watch.** If you don't wear a watch, keep one in or attached to your golf bag and refer to it frequently. Pace of Play is your responsibility. Check your pace coming through the 9<sup>th</sup> hole to see where you stand relative to the expected pace.

**Key #1:** If you cannot see the group AHEAD of you, YOU ARE THE PROBLEM! Immediate action needs to be taken.

**Key #2:** Since this is match play, READY GOLF IS NOT AN OPTION, but you must always be ready to play as soon as it is your turn.

**Key #3:** Decision 2-1/1.5 allows players to halve a hole during the play of the hole. Tee off, agree to halve the hole, pick up your balls and move to the next tee. If your match is now back in position continue your match in a normal way and stay focused on playing efficient golf. If your group still has a hole open, tee off again, agree to halve the hole and again pick up your balls and move on to the next tee. To be in compliance with the Rules of Golf players must not agree in advance to use this decision, but knowing it exists, players can tee off **and then** agree to halve the hole.

**Key #4:** If one side or player is in trouble and will obviously lose the hole in both matches, that player or those players should concede the hole allowing the match to proceed to the next tee. There is absolutely no reason to hold up the field just to have the experience and practice of playing a hole.

**Key #5:** Concessions are a part of match play. Remember to be ready to concede an opponent's short putt. Staying focused saves time.

**Key #6:** If carts are restricted to the cart path only, select the club you think you will use for your next stroke plus at least one on either side and walk to your ball. You can be penalized for undue delay if you walk out initially with no or only one club and have to return to the cart for a club, thus holding up play.

To prepare for your matches read Rule 2, Match Play and Rule 30, for Four-Ball Match Play. Knowing the expected Pace of Play is part of the Rules of Golf. Playing efficient golf makes you part of the Pace of Play solution.

### **Recommendations for Improving Pace of Play**

- Modified shotgun format instead of tee times (possibly holes 1-4 or 17,18, 1, 2)
- Have a buffer between public/member play and the first team play group.
- Send lower handicapped players off at the start of the field.
- Be ready to play when it is your turn (have distance calculated and your club selected)
- Pick up if you're out of the hole.

- Lead group needs to be the pace setters. Each subsequent group needs to keep up with the group in front of them. They need to recognize when there is a gap in front of them and make an effort to catch up and get back into position.
- The Team Captain should ensure that his players are aware of the expected pace and playing without undue delay.
- Have golf shop staff or volunteer marshals assisting with enforcing pace of play, ensuring that groups that fall behind make an effort to get back into position. Marshals should also be used to get groups through difficult holes or holes that have blind shots or frequent lost ball searches.
- **WALK FAST**
- Know where your group is in relation to the group in front of you – don't worry about the group behind you.
- Get your yardage before it is your turn to play. Be ready to play before it is your turn.
- Walk ahead when another player has to wait.
- When any shot heads toward rough, a water hazard or trees all players should watch closely as to where the ball lands.
- Read your putt before it is your turn to play.
- Recognize when someone will need the flagstick tended or your ball marked.
- Place golf bag or golf cart off the putting green near the next teeing ground.
- If your ball might be lost outside a water hazard or out of bounds, play a Provisional Ball (Rule 27-2).

**The following SCGA Pace of Play Policy may be used if the club has staff or marshals capable of enforcing it.**

#### **MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE TIME**

The host club or host Team Captain should establish the maximum allowable time each group should finish each hole and the entire round. When setting an expected pace you should take into consideration the difficulty of the course set up, layout of the course, whether carts are being used, etc.

#### **DEFINITION OF "OUT OF POSITION"**

The first group to start will be considered out of position if, at any time during the round, the group is behind its maximum allowable time. Any following group will be considered out of position if it (a) is taking more than its maximum allowable time to play and (b) reaches the tee of a par-3 hole and the preceding group has cleared the next tee; reaches the tee of a par-4 hole and the putting green is clear; or reaches the tee of a par-5 hole when the preceding group is on the putting green. **Both (a) and (b) must apply for a group to be out of position.**

#### **GROUP OUT OF POSITION AND TIMING**

If a group is out of position, a member of the tournament committee will alert the group, issue them a pace of play warning, and indicate that their group will be timed. Each player in the group is then expected to play any stroke within 40 seconds after timing of the player's stroke begins. Timing of a player's stroke will begin when he has had a reasonable opportunity to reach his ball, it is his turn to play and he can play without interference or distraction.

#### **PACE OF PLAY PENALTIES**

The following are the penalties, in sequence, for any player in a group being timed who takes more than 40 seconds to play a stroke after timing of the player's stroke begins.

- One bad time exceeding the allotted time – warning.
- A second bad time – loss of hole penalty (this penalty only applies to the player with a second bad time).
- A third bad time – loss of hole penalty (this penalty only applies to the player with a third bad time).
- A fourth bad time – disqualification of the side