



## **Pace of Play Policy (PoPP)**

### **Introduction**

Slow play frustrates golfers, spoils their game, and causes operational problems for a busy club. The Shoalhaven Heads Golf Club (SHGC) recognises the need to encourage a faster pace of play during competitions. A key aspect to achieving this goal is to communicate these expectations via a Pace of Play Policy (PoPP). It is expected that the policy will find a balance point between unenjoyable slow play and unpleasant overly rushed play.

The SHGC Match Committee prefers that players acknowledge that the PoPP is for the good of the vast majority of members and visitors enjoying their competition round and adhere to the policy requirements. It is not the preferred option to discipline players, but those players who disregard the requirements are at risk of penalties and sanctions.

### **The Basics**

All players are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this policy. Nevertheless, an acceptable pace of play, in any conditions, should be achieved if all players:

- Turn up on time:
  - Report to the Pro Shop at least 15 minutes prior to tee time
  - Be on your first tee at least 5 minutes prior to tee time.
- Maintain position in the field – just behind the group in front.
- Limit time in the clubhouse after 9 holes – don't wait around for food/drink, order them well beforehand.
- Play READY GOLF – forget honours!
- Be mindful of the Target Time (4h 20m)

### **Target Time – 4 hours 20 minutes**

The “target time” for a round of golf at SHGC is 4 hours 20 minutes. Some players/groups may be able to complete their round in significantly less time; however, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, no round of golf at SHGC should exceed the target time of 4 hours 20 minutes.

## **Tips for Speeding up Play – Ready Golf**

Below is a list of tips for speeding up play, most of which fall under the term “Ready Golf”. Players/groups struggling to maintain their pace of play should adhere closely to these tips.

- Be at your 1<sup>st</sup> tee well before your designated tee time.
- Dismiss all honours (except in Match Play).
- When 2 players have putted-out, move to the next tee immediately and tee-off.
- Each player should play when ready, as long as doing so will not interfere with others, especially on the tee.
- Shorter hitters can often hit first, especially on the tee.
- Proceed to your ball as quickly as possible.
- Play the ball as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Plan your shot while others are playing their shots.
- Ensure that you have located your ball before looking for any lost balls with your playing partners.
- If practicable, play your ball before assisting your partners to find any lost balls.
- When hitting an errant shot, watch the ball closely until it comes to rest.
- Play a provisional ball if you think your ball may have gone out-of-bounds.
- Do not search for balls that have entered no-play-areas, such as out-of-bounds and environmental protection areas.
- Do not search for any ball for more than 3 minutes.
- In Stableford and Par events, pick your ball up when you can no longer score points on a hole.
- Mark cards on the next tee, not on/near the green of the hole just played.
- Where practicable, leave carts/bags/buggies at the back of the green, towards the next tee.
- Order any food/hot drinks from the 9<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> tees – don’t hold up the field by waiting for food/drinks at the clubhouse. Better still, order your food/drinks before you play!
- Be mindful of the target time, especially after 9 holes – if you’ve taken more than 2 hours, you need to speed up play.

## **Enforcement**

We don't want to penalise you... but we will if you fail to comply with the PoPP and your behaviour is affecting the enjoyment of other golfers. We hope to achieve a satisfactory pace of play by raising awareness and educating players.

The Match Committee and Designated Officials (Course Marshals, Match Committee members, Pro Shop staff) will use the Simple Golf software to monitor slow play. Marshals may be used on course when available, to monitor breaches of the PoPP and to assist and advise groups on how to speed up their play.

Only a Designated Official (DO) can give a warning or apply a penalty. At no time will verbal or physical abuse towards a DO be tolerated. Any reported instance of this occurring will be investigated in accordance with SHGC's Code of Conduct policy.

The R&A Rules of Golf, Rule 5.6a states: "A player must not unreasonably delay play, either when playing a hole or between two holes". Penalties apply.

When a Course Marshal is available, they may apply penalties immediately whilst on course if players fail to comply after receiving a warning and being advised that they are "On the Clock".

The penalty for the first breach of Rule 5.6a is one penalty stroke and for a second breach, a general penalty (Loss of hole in match play, two-stroke penalty in stroke play). If a player breaches the Rule for a third time, he/she is disqualified.

However, because the SHGC cannot afford to have marshals on course most of the time, this scenario is most likely to occur only in a major event. Accordingly, slow play may be dealt with using historical data from the SHGC Pro Shop Data after players complete their rounds.