

At the last fall banquet members completed a questionnaire. One of the issues tallied in the comments section was slow pace of play. After many board meeting discussions to find a fair and competitive solution, an adjustment to last year's pace of play 20 minute rule has been adjusted. Please understand, from last year's statistics, even though most all foursomes finished within the 20 minutes, our tournaments took 5+ hours to complete, and 1/3 of the foursomes finished between 17-20 minutes. That is not acceptable. Currently, Wellshire Golf Club Professionals have been generous to our tournament needs. Let's maintain that generosity with responsible pace of play. Therefore, the following guidelines have been adjusted for this year's tournaments.

USGA Rules of Golf, Section I - Etiquette; Behavior on the Course, Pace of Play

'Players should play at a good pace. The Committee (defined as the governing body that must establish the conditions under which a competition is played) may establish pace of play guidelines that all players should follow.'

The USGA leaves enforcement of pace of play rules to governing bodies of local competition. The administration of amateur golf tournaments can deal with slow play by placing competitors **"on the clock."** This happens if a golfer is guilty of slow play that results in their group being **"out of position,"** which is often defined as **being at least one hole behind the group in front but can be based on criteria set by the tournament's ruling body.** Golfers **"on the clock"** who do not speed up their play can be assessed a two-stroke penalty.

Based on the USGA etiquette rules of golf; pace of play, the following guidelines have been determined for the 2016 WMGC season by the Board of Directors.

1. Due to the slow play of previous years, the Board of Directors are implementing a 16 minute rule for finishing behind the foursome ahead for the 2016 season. In years past, the applied rule was 20 minutes.
  - a. This rule coincides with a foursome being **"on the clock"**.
    - i. During WMGC tournaments, a foursome is **on the clock** from the moment they tee off on their starting hole until they putt out on the finishing hole, hence the 16 minute finishing rule.
  - b. Being **"out of position"** basically requires a WMGC tournament foursome to apply pace of play procedures to **"close the gap"** with the foursome ahead immediately (**do not wait till the back nine**).
2. Application of the rule:
  - a. A two (2) stroke penalty shall be applied to each member of the foursome, each team within the foursome, or the foursome as a team for finishing 17 or more minutes behind the foursome ahead.
    - i. It is the responsibility of all players in the foursome to ensure a good pace of play to meets these guidelines. Therefore all players within the foursome shall be held accountable.
  - b. A letter of warning shall be sent to each player in the foursome to improve their pace of play.
  - c. If a player receives a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) warning, sanctions may be applied after an inquiry as determined by the Board of Directors.
    - i. The player(s) may choose to attend or not attend the inquiry. The player may invite others in his behalf.
    - ii. Sanctions shall be determined by a majority quorum of Board of Directors.
    - iii. Players have up to 30 days to appeal a final decision by the Board of Directors.

Each foursome tees off in 10 minute increments. Proper pace of play procedures should easily meet this 16 minute window. Use casual rounds to work on improving your pace of play prior to the WMGC's first tournament.

I would hope that all members would choose to play by a standard representative of the Wellshire Men's Golf Club; a club that adheres to the etiquette of pace of play. Our away tournaments provide the ability to demonstrate that etiquette so that we may be invited to return to those golf courses we choose for away tournaments.

Please review the recommended pace of play procedures. Use them and test them during casual rounds to improve your pace of play.

Sincerely,

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Wellshire Men's Golf Club 2016  
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# **WELLSHIRE Men's Golf Club**

## **2016 WMGC Pace of Play Recommendations**

### **Ready Golf is the Theme**

1. Rounds can easily be played without rushing if players simply are mindful of efficient pace of play measures.
2. **PAY ATTENTION TO THE PACE OF THE FOURSOME AHEAD OF YOU AND MATCH IT.**
3. **Do not wait to close a gap until the back 9. 'Out of position' requires attention no matter what hole you are on. When a gap is identified at any point in the round, close it!**
4. **Learn this WMGC local rule on lost balls to help speed up play. Be mindful of time spent searching for lost balls**
  - a. Rule 16: If a ball is lost within the confines of the golf course (e.g. in the trees between holes 3 and 12), a ball will be dropped as close as possible to that point where the ball was lost (agreeable by players in the foursome) – one stroke penalty. Do not return to the tee box to hit a provisional.
5. **Biggest mistakes searching for lost balls:**
  - a. **Players take longer than 5 minutes because they do not time the search.**
  - b. **Other players in the foursome assist longer than they should and delay hitting their shots.**
    - i. **Limit time spent searching for lost balls to 2 minutes for the players within the foursome whose ball was not lost. Get to your ball and play ready golf.**
  - c. **Proper procedure for lost ball searches; a person in the foursome needs to start timing the 5 minute search from the moment the search starts.**
6. **If a ball is hit in the direction of an out of bounds perimeter, then a provisional ball should be played from the tee box or from the spot of the original shot. Don't waste time by having to walk back to the tee box or spot of the original shot.**
7. **Pay attention and watch other players' shots; all of the time. Lost ball searches can be to a minimum if all players watch shots.**
8. **Don't walk in packs and socialize. Get to your ball and prepare to hit**
9. **Using golf carts.**
  - a. When sharing a cart, take your cart mate to his ball first, or drop yourself off to your ball and give the cart to your cart mate.
  - b. When in a cart with walkers in the foursome, you should be hitting first when it's clear to hit.
  - c. When in a cart with walkers, go identify the walkers' balls for them to save time. Use a head cover, hat or towel to mark the spot.
10. **Play ready golf on most all shots! If you're ready, hit. If it's your turn, be ready to hit!**
11. **When on the green, start reading your putt before it's your turn. Just be courteous and don't distract the player putting.**
  - a. **Learn and practice to putt out instead of marking your missed putt as long as you don't stand in the line of another player's putt. This saves time!**
  - b. **If your foursome is out of position, after holing out your putt, inform the group you are going to the next tee to tee off. Then swing away. This is a good tactic to "close the gap"**
12. **Plan your shot as you are heading towards your ball. Get an initial idea on what you want to do.**
13. **Practice getting yardages from markers while you are walking or driving to your ball. DON'T wait until you get to your ball to look for yardage markers.**
14. **Your pre-shot routine should be in motion even when it's not your turn to hit.**
15. **Limit your time over the ball to 20 seconds. The more time you take over the ball cuts down on the time others in your foursome have when maintaining pace of play positioning. Be courteous to your foursome.**
16. **Limit to 1-2 practice swings.**
17. **Pick up if you are out of the hole.**
  - a. There are quite a few WMGC tournaments that allow you to pick up. Do so and save some time.
    - i. Match Play, Stableford, two man and four man best balls, and scrambles.
  - b. ESC Handicap Index

0-9 Handicap	max score	double bogey
10-19 Handicap	max score	7 (no matter what par is)
20-29 Handicap	max score	8 (no matter what par is)
30-39 Handicap	max score	9 (no matter what par is)
40+ Handicap	max score	10 (no matter what par is)

**A reminder! It is the responsibility of all players in the foursome to ensure a good pace of play to meets these guidelines. Do not shy away from peer pressure. Do not be afraid to address the pace of play. After the round, report a player who refuses to adhere to pace of play and is not courteous to the others in the foursome. All players within the foursome shall be held accountable, so be a good team player, acknowledge, and then act on your foursome's pace of play.**

## The following are tips are provided by the USGA.

**USGA: \*\*\*Playing at a better pace is not about hurrying up or rushing around the course. It is simply about being more efficient with your valuable time, as well as everyone else's. Adopting this mindset – and not being afraid to share it with your fellow players – will ultimately add enjoyment to your golf experience. \*\*\***

**USGA: Minimize your time on the tee**  
on the tee it is usually acceptable for players to “hit when ready.”

**USGA: Plan your shot before you get to your ball**  
once you are off the tee, think ahead. Determine your yardage and make your club selection before it is your turn to play. Very often, you can do this while others are playing, without disruption. If you take your glove off between shots, have it back on before it is your turn to play. Even a small step like this saves time.

**USGA: Keep your pre-shot routine short**  
Pick your line of play once and trust yourself. Try to take no more than one practice swing, then set up to the ball and play your shot. Most importantly, be ready to hit when it is your turn. Be efficient after your shot too. Start moving toward your next shot promptly.

**USGA: Aim to play in 20 seconds**  
from club selection to pre-shot routine to execution, strive to hit your shot in 20 seconds when it is your turn to play. Help keep play moving at a brisk pace.

**USGA: Develop an eye for distance**  
you don't have to step off yardage for every shot. If you need to determine precise distance, try to find a yardage marker before you reach your ball, then step off the yardage on the way to your ball. Or, consider investing in an electronic range-finder or global positioning system for golf and use it when permitted by Local Rule.

**USGA: When sharing a cart, use a buddy system**  
don't wait in the cart while your cart mate hits and then drive to your ball. Get out and walk to your ball with a few clubs. Be ready to play when it is your turn and then let your cart mate pick you up. Or, drive to your ball after you drop your cart mate off and then pick him or her up after you hit.

**USGA: Be helpful to others in your group**  
Follow the flight of all tee shots, not just your own. Once in the fairway, help others look for their ball if you already know the location of yours. Volunteer to fill in a divot or rake a bunker for another player if needed. Be ready to attend the flagstick for others.

**USGA: Keep up with the group in front of you**  
your correct position on the course is immediately behind the group in front of you, not immediately in front of the group behind you. Arrive at your next shot just before the group in front leaves the area in front of you. If you are consistently not able to keep up and a gap opens in front of you, invite the group behind you to play through, irrespective of the number of players in the group.

**USGA: Be efficient on the putting green**  
Mark your ball and lift and clean it when you arrive at the putting green so you will be ready to replace it when it is your turn to play. You can usually line up your putt while others are putting, without disturbing them. Leave your clubs on the side of the putting green closest to the next tee, and leave the green promptly after holing out. Wait until the next tee to record your score.

**USGA: Remember that picking up your ball is permitted by the USGA Handicap System**  
If not in an individual stroke play competition, it is generally OK to pick up your ball and move on to the next hole if you are “out” of a hole and want to maintain pace of play. This applies in match play and many forms of stroke play, including Stableford and best-ball play.