



# Introduction to Match Play

LEARN HOW TO PLAY MATCH PLAY

# The Basics

- In match play, the player and their opponent play against each other hole by hole. Each hole is a separate competition.
- The lowest score on a hole wins that hole.
- You score differently
  - If you win the hole your score is +1
  - If you lose the hole your score is -1
  - If you tie the hole, then your score is square  also known as “halved”
- The match is over when one player leads by more holes than there are still to play. For example, if one player is +4 and there are only 3 holes left to play then the game is over.

# The Basics

- Most of the rules of stroke play apply in Match Play but certain rules apply only in match play (e.g Loss of hole, playing a stroke again, concessions).
- Match Play can be a scratch competition (no handicaps) or a handicapped competition (where handicap strokes are applied)
- A player may concede a stroke, a hole or the match at any time before the opponent's next stroke is made.
- A player may practice on the course before a round or between rounds of a match play competition.
- A player should always show consideration by keeping quiet while others have their turn, being honest and applying all rules and penalties and playing at a prompt pace.
- A player must not play out of turn, even on the green. Playing out of turn may result in your opponents asking you to replay your shot.
- As soon as you reach the point where the match is won **you must leave the course. Do not play any more holes.**

# Order of Play

- On the first tee the player with their name first on the draw will have the honour. If there is no draw then the honour can be decided by agreement or by another fair means (e.g a toss of a coin).
- From then on, the player who wins the hole will have the honour on the following hole.
- If the hole is tied (squared) the player who won the previous hole will retain the honour and play first on the next hole.
- From the tee through the green the player with the ball furthest from the hole must always play first. **Exception:** Playing out of turn **by agreement** to save time.
- You should not ask or give your opponent advice

# During the Match

- The honour must be observed at all times. If the wrong player tees off first their opponent can ask them to play their shot again.
- While your opponent is playing their shot be respectful and stay silent.
- Try to not walk ahead of your opponent but watch their shot so that no time is wasted looking for a lost ball.
- If a ball is played out of turn, there is **no penalty**, but your opponent may ask for you to play the shot again.
- Once you both reach the green you should always confirm how many shots each of you have had.
- Don't putt until both you and your opponent are on the green.
- Don't move or stand behind your opponent while they are putting.
- After each hole the players should confirm the score for that hole.

# Resolving issues During the Match

- During a round the players in a match may agree how to resolve a rules issue.
  - The agreed outcome is conclusive so long as the players did not deliberately agree to ignore any rule or penalty.
  - A referee can be called and the referee must rule on any issue and the players must follow that ruling.
  - In the absence of a referee and, when the players cannot agree, a ruling can be requested by notifying your opponent that a later ruling will be sought when a referee is available.
  - Notifying your opponent that you are making a ruling request must be made before either player makes a stroke to begin another hole.

WHO PLAYS  
FIRST

PLAYER A  
OR PLAYER B



PLAYER A



PLAYER B



# WHAT IS CONCEDING

- In match play when a player's ball is very near the hole, and you are fairly confident that she would make the next putt you can tell her to pick up her ball. **This is called conceding a putt.**
- In this example, let's say you have completed the hole with **7 shots** and your opponent's ball is near the hole for **6 shots**. **You decide to concede the putt.**
- Who would be the winner of this hole?



# Conceding a hole or putt

- In match play a hole may be conceded at any time from tee to green provided the ball is at rest.
- You can concede a close putt if you are almost certain your opponent will make it. They **must add a stroke for the conceded putt.**
- A player can also concede a hole or the entire match in match play
- When the concession is made, the ball is considered holed and the golfer whose shot was conceded is finished playing that hole. Once a stroke or match is conceded, **the concession can't be refused or withdrawn.**

# Match Play with handicaps

- The player and opponent should tell each other their handicaps before the match and work out the holes where strokes are given.
- If a player declares a **handicap that is too high**, and they do not correct the mistake before the opponent makes his or her next stroke: The player is **disqualified** if this affects the number of strokes the player gets. If it does not, there is no penalty.
- If the player declares **a handicap too low**. There is no penalty, and the player must play off the declared lower handicap.
- Holes Where Handicap Strokes are Applied. Handicap strokes are given by hole, and the lower net score wins the hole.
- If a tied match is extended, handicap strokes are given by hole in the same way as in the round

# How do I work out where to give shots

- In handicapped matchplay, the difference between two players' handicaps is the number of strokes given by one player to another. These strokes are taken at different holes according to the Stroke Index or Rating of each hole on the course.
- On the back of the card at the bottom of the local rules there is a chart which will help you work out where the shots are given/received.
- For example, if you need to give **5 shots to your opponent**, they would be given on holes **7, 5, 1, 16 & 4**

| PENALTY FOR BREACH OF LOCAL RULES                         |   |   |   |    |   |    |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Match Play – Loss of Hole; Stroke Play – Two (2) strokes. |   |   |   |    |   |    |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Strokes given                                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4  | 5 | 6  | 7 | 8 | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| Holes                                                     | 7 | 5 | 1 | 16 | 4 | 17 | 8 | 2 | 13 | 9  | 11 | 10 | 15 | 6  | 18 | 12 | 14 | 3  |

# Match Play Rules

- If a player plays a ball from outside the teeing area, or from the wrong set of tees.
  - **There is no penalty, but** the opponent may cancel the stroke and ask the player to play again from the correct tee.
  - This must be done promptly before either player takes another stroke. When the opponent **cancels a stroke it cannot be withdrawn.**
  - If the opponent does not cancel the stroke, the stroke from the wrong tee counts and the ball must be played as it lies.

# Match Play Rules

- If a player plays out of turn (**there is no penalty**) but the opponent may cancel that stroke and ask the player to play again.
- If the player **plays a wrong ball** the penalty is **loss of hole**.
- If the player and opponent play each other's ball during the play of the hole, the first to make a stroke at the wrong ball gets the penalty (**Loss of hole**).
- If it is not known which wrong ball was played first then there is **no penalty** and the players play out the hole with the exchanged ball.

# MATCH PLAY RULES & PENALTIES

| NORTH RYDE GOLF CLUB                                                    |                                                                         |               |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| PROBLEM                                                                 | PROCEDURE/RELIEF                                                        | PENALTY       | RULE       |
| Ball moved by player                                                    | Replace ball                                                            | 1 stroke      | 9.4        |
| Breach of local rule                                                    | See local rules                                                         | Loss of hole* | Score card |
| Temporary Water                                                         | (A) then (B)                                                            | Nil           | 16         |
| Embedded ball anywhere but not bunkers or PA                            | (A) & (K)                                                               | Nil           | 16.3       |
| GUR * white stakes                                                      | (A) & then (B)                                                          | Nil           | 16         |
| Hitting outside tee markers or playing out of turn without permission   | May be asked to replay                                                  | Nil           | 6.1 & 6.4  |
| Hitting own equipment or self                                           | (H)                                                                     | Nil           | 11.1       |
| Lost ball                                                               | (D)                                                                     | 1 stroke      | 18.2       |
| Failure to mark lifted ball that is to be replaced                      |                                                                         | 1 stroke      | 14.1       |
| (A) Nearest point of relief                                             | (F) Where ball last crossed penalty area                                |               |            |
| (B) 1 club length no nearer the hole                                    | (G) play as it lies no penalty                                          |               |            |
| (C) 2 club lengths no nearer the hole                                   | (H) Play the ball as it lies                                            |               |            |
| (D) Go back and play from original spot                                 | (K) Drop the ball                                                       |               |            |
| (E) Go back as far as you like keeping flag and spot in a straight line | (L) Drop 2 club lengths laterally from point of entry into penalty area |               |            |
|                                                                         | (M) If ball moved except on green or tee                                |               |            |

# MATCH PLAY RULES & PENALTIES

| Match Play COMMON RULES & PENALTIES                                         |                           |              |                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| PROBLEM                                                                     | PROCEDURE/RELIEF          | PENALTY      | RULE           |
| Obstruction/movable                                                         | Remove obstruction        | Nil          | 15.2           |
| Obstruction/immovable*                                                      | (A) then (B)              | Nil          | 16             |
| Paths*                                                                      | (A) then (B) or play it   | Nil          | 16             |
| Putting on green and hitting other balls                                    | (H)                       | Nil          | 11.1           |
| Loose impediments, ball moved                                               | (M)                       | 1 Stroke     | 15.1           |
| Out of bounds white/black stakes                                            | (D)                       | 1 Stroke     | 18.2           |
| Unplayable lie                                                              | (D) or (C) or (E)         | 1 Stroke     | 19**           |
| Penalty areas Yellow                                                        | (D) or (EF) or (G)        | 1 Stroke     | 17.1           |
| Penalty areas Red                                                           | (D) or (EF) or (G) or (L) | 1 Stroke     | 17.1           |
| Playing wrong ball/place                                                    |                           | Loss of hole | 6.3c +<br>14.7 |
| Loss of hole = "general penalty" or 2 Stroke penalty                        |                           |              |                |
| Drops: 2 club lengths = 1 penalty stroke & 1 club length = free drop        |                           |              |                |
| * If you take relief it must be COMPLETE relief, if not = loss of hole R.16 |                           |              |                |
| ** See Rule 19.3b for bunkers                                               |                           |              |                |