

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MATCH PLAY

The match play format is used in all Interclub competitions throughout Canterbury as well as in our home clubs to determine our Club Champions and many other cup winners. It is also played in some inter-provincial tournaments and national events.

1. What is Match Play (Rule 3.2)?

In match play the game is played by holes.

A match consists of one "side" playing against another over a stipulated round.

A hole is won by the side that holes its ball in the fewer strokes.

In a handicap match, the lower net score wins the hole.

2. Definition

Outside Influence - An Outside Influence in singles Match play includes your team mate, your opponent's team mate and their caddies. It does not include your opponent and their caddie.

3. Duties of a Referee

In match play only, unless a referee is assigned to accompany the players throughout a match, he has no authority to intervene in a match other than in relation to **a) Rule 20.1b(2)** (asking for a ruling), **b) Rule 1.2** (breach of player conduct), **c) Rule 1.3b(1)** (players agree to ignore a rule or penalty), **d) Rule 5.6a** (unreasonably delay play), **e) Rule 5.6b** (prompt pace of play), **f) Rule 5.3** (player arrives late to their starting point, or **g) Rule 5.6a** (a player's search for a ball reaches three minutes). It is a matter for the opponent to decide if he wishes to make a claim. The referee's presence on the course is solely to assist players in the event of a claim.

4. Unreasonable Delay; Prompt Pace of Play (Rule 5.6)

It is extremely important to play within the Pace of Play guidelines established by the committee. These guidelines may include maximum time limits to complete a round, hole or stroke. Always keep up with the players ahead of you. Penalty for undue delay/ slow play is **one stroke** for the first offence, **Loss of hole** for second offence and **Disqualification** for the third offence unless modified by the committee.

5. Handicaps (Rule 3.2c)

In handicap competitions it is important for players to determine each other's handicaps before starting a match. There is no penalty if players fail to do this, but if the players fail to apply or mistakenly apply handicap strokes on a hole, the agreed result of the hole stands, unless the players correct that mistake in time (see Rule 3.2d(3)). However, if a player begins a match having declared a handicap higher than that to which he is entitled **and** this affects the number of strokes given or received, **he is disqualified**; otherwise, the player must play off the declared handicap.

Example: A player declares a handicap of 11 when in fact he has a handicap of 10. If the player has not corrected his mistake before their opponent plays their next stroke, or first stroke at the start of the match, the player is disqualified. If, on the other hand, a player declares a handicap of 14 when in fact he has a handicap 15, they must play off the declared handicap of 14.

How to determine the number of strokes given or received in singles handicap match play? Your handicap is 8 and your opponent's handicap is 10. Your handicap goes down to zero and your opponent gets one stroke on stroke holes 1 & 2 only.

6. When to Start Round (Rule 5.3a)

A player must start at (and not before) their starting time. All players **MUST** be at the teeing ground and ready to play before their official start time. If you arrive at your starting tee late but within 5 minutes of the official starting time, you lose your first hole. If you arrive at the tee more than 5 minutes late, you are disqualified.

If a player and their opponent both arrive late but within 5 minutes of their tee time, both lose the first hole and in equity the hole is considered halved and the match will resume at the next hole. (Clarification 5.3a/5). If exceptional circumstances have prevented a player from arriving to the tee on time, the committee may waive the penalty of loss of hole and/or disqualification. There is no penalty if both play the first hole to get to the teeing area of the second hole.

7. Order of Play (Rule 6.4a)

The *side* that has the *honour* at the first *teeing ground* is determined by the order of the draw. In the absence of a draw, the *honour* should be decided by a random method such as a coin toss.

The *player* that wins a hole takes the *honour* at the next *teeing ground*. If a hole has been halved, the *player* that had the *honour* at the previous *teeing ground* retains it. After both balls are in play, the ball farther from the *hole* is always played first. There is no penalty for playing out of turn but if you do, your opponent may immediately require you to cancel the stroke and replay the stroke in the correct order. This claim must be made before your opponent has played their stroke.

8. Playing from outside the Teeing Ground (Rule 6.1b)

In match play, there is no penalty if a player puts a ball into play from outside the teeing ground. However, the opponent may choose to ignore the stroke played from outside the teeing ground or the opponent may immediately require the player to cancel the stroke and play a ball from within the teeing ground. If an opponent requires a player to cancel and replay the stroke, this claim must be made before the opponent has played their stroke from the teeing ground.

9. Concessions (Rule 3.2b)

A player may concede **a match** at any time prior to the start or conclusion of that match.

A player may concede **a hole** at any time prior to the start or conclusion of that hole.

A player may concede his opponent's **next stroke** at any time before the next stroke is made. provided the opponent's ball is at rest. The opponent is considered to have holed out with his next stroke, and the ball may be removed by either side.

A concession made while the **ball is in motion**, applied to the opponent's **next stroke** unless the ball is holed.

There is no need for a player to finish the hole by holing out. A **concession** may **not** be declined or withdrawn. A caddie is not permitted to make any concession.

If your opponent concedes your short putt and you decide to putt out and miss the hole, it has no effect on the concession and you are considered to have holed out with the conceded putt. There is no penalty if you putt out after having your putt conceded.

10. Advice (Rule 10.2a)

During a stipulated round, a player must not give advice to anyone in the competition playing on the course other than his partner.

In Canterbury, most of our interclub competitions are singles match play where one single player in a team plays against a single player from another team. It is very important to note that your other team member in your group is **not** a partner and therefore you **may not** give or receive any advice from them. **Penalty is loss of hole.**

When playing in a foursomes match however, you may give and receive advice from your playing partner only.

Team members and Team managers must familiarise themselves with the Conditions of Competition and know exactly who may and may not give advice during a competition.

An Advice Giver may not give advice to any other team member while playing in a competition. (Rule 24.4b)

11. Penalties

Generally-

One stroke penalty in Stroke Play = **One stroke penalty** in Match Play

Two stroke penalty in Stroke Play = **Loss of Hole** in Match Play

Exception: i) If you purposely touch your opponent's ball or cause it to move, except while searching for it, in match play, there is a **one stroke penalty** whereas in stroke play there is no penalty.

ii) The other exception is when putting from the putting green and your ball is deflected or stopped by another ball also on the putting green, there is no penalty whereas in stroke play there is a two stroke penalty.

12. Rules Issues in Match Play (Rule 20.1b)

While playing in a match you may come across a situation where you are not sure of the rule or how you should proceed. In match play, you are **not** permitted to play a second ball. So what do you do?

You have to resolve the issue without delay. If no referee or committee member is available within a reasonable time, you may make a claim and must notify your opponent;

1. That you are making a claim and want a ruling, and
2. The facts upon which the claim or ruling is to be based.

The claim must be made;

1. Before any player in the match plays from the next teeing ground, or
2. In the case of the last hole, before the result of the match is final as decided by the committee rules.

Note 1: A player may disregard a breach of the Rules by his opponent provided there is no agreement between the two to waive a Rule (Rule 1.3b(1), in which case the penalty is **Disqualification of both players**.

If you see your opponent breaking a rule and you decide to disregard it, you must not mention the breach of the rule to your opponent until after either you or your opponent has played a stroke from the next teeing ground. If you do mention the incident during the play of the hole where the breach occurred and you still overlook the breach, both players are disqualified under Rule 1.3b(1) for agreeing to exclude the operation of any rule.

13. Wrong Ball (Rule 6.3c)

If a player plays a wrong ball in singles match play, he loses the hole. If a player and an opponent exchange balls during the play of a hole, the first to make a stroke at a wrong ball loses the hole but when this cannot be determined, the hole must be played out with the balls exchanged.

14. Ball lifted or moved by Outside Influence (Rule 9.6)

If your ball or ball marker at rest is moved by an outside agency, there is no penalty and the ball or ball marker must be replaced.

15. Ball lifted or moved by Opponent in Match Play (Rule 9.5)

If your opponent, his caddie or his equipment deliberately touched your ball at rest or causes it to move, your opponent gets **one stroke penalty**. However, if your ball was moved while searching for it then there is **no penalty** to your opponent. In both cases the ball must be replaced. If the exact position is not known, the position must be estimated, and the ball replaced.

16. Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Person or Outside Influence (Rule 11.1)

There is no penalty if your ball is accidentally deflected or stopped by your opponent, his caddie or his equipment. If your ball was played from anywhere except the putting green, play the ball as it lies. If the ball was played from the putting green, see Rule 11.1b(2) to determine if the ball is played as it lies or if the stroke must be replayed.

17. Ball in Motion Deflected or Stopped by another Ball (Rule 11.1a)

As in stroke play, in the general area, if a ball in motion is deflected or stopped by another ball, the ball that was in motion is played from where it comes to rest whereas the ball that was at rest must be replaced on the spot from where it moved.

However, in match play **only**, if you play your ball on the **putting green** and it hits any other ball on the putting green, there is no penalty and you must play your ball from where it comes to rest whereas the ball that was at rest must be replaced on the spot from where it moved.

18. Playing From a Wrong Place (Rule 14.7a)

If you play your ball from a wrong place you lose the hole.

19. Wrong Information (Rule 3.2d)

1. If you incur a penalty that has not been observed by your opponent you must inform them as soon as reasonably possible practicable. If you are close enough to the opponent in order to inform them of the penalty and fail to do so before your opponent makes their next stroke or gives a concession, you lose the hole.
2. If you give wrong information to your opponent during play of a hole regarding the number of strokes taken and you do not correct that mistake before your opponent makes their next stroke or gives a concession, you lose the hole.
3. If you give wrong information to your opponent regarding the number of strokes taken to complete a hole and this affects the opponents understanding of the result of the hole, you lose the hole unless you correct the mistake before either of you plays from the next teeing ground.