

Golf @ The Millbrook – The Coronavirus Way

Dear valued member

We have missed you!

Thankfully, we can resume playing golf as of Wednesday 13th May BUT we must all adhere to the following rules which will guard against any re-introduction of the lockdown and ensure we can continue playing the game we love.

Please remember, in the initial easing of lockdown, golf is only for exercise and an opportunity to meet with a friend, from a distance. Competition golf will return but until then, enjoy the game, enjoy the change of scenery and please respect your fellow members and the club staff. We will be operating with a skeleton staff, so please bear with us and respect social distancing rules at all times.

Due to course capacity, it will be necessary to restrict members to 9 hole golf in the first few days, possibly weeks. Please be mindful that 550 members will want to play golf this week, therefore **members cannot book on consecutive days** until we can establish how busy we are. I will send a daily update to members indicating course usage, availability for coming days etc etc.

Below is a list of measures put in place to ensure our members can play golf safely.

Please see the amended booking rules and on course changes below:

Bookings

- Members should book online wherever possible and only by telephone if necessary.
- Our online booking page has been adjusted. You can book on either the front 9 or back 9, viewed by clicking between the two, pay attention to which 9 you are booking.
- Golf will be played in 2-Balls or household groups only at 10-minute intervals. If playing in household groups please let faster players through, this will be policed.
- Please enter both members names when booking.
- The golf course will open at 7am and close when the last player finishes at approx. 8pm. The last tee time will be 6pm for the first few days. This is because we are required to have marshals and staff present to ensure social distancing, and the green staff need to prepare the course prior to a two tee start at 7am.
- Members can book 48 hours in advance, apart from on the opening day, which will be released at 11am Tomorrow.
- Members may be restricted to 3 loops of 9 holes in any week depending on the demand for tee times. We have 550 members all of whom will wish to play at some point. Andrew and I will keep an eye on the tee sheets and if necessary, implement the restriction by cancelling tee times. For instance, if we are fully booked and a member has already played three times in that week, he/she will be advised and the time will be made available to another member. **I sincerely hope this will not be necessary.**
- Key Workers or those classified as vulnerable by the government have priority for the first hour of each day off both tees. These times can ONLY be booked via telephone as per the rules above for online booking. (11am tomorrow for Weds/48hrs in advance)
- Flexible members can only book/play after 12:00 and will charged 10 credits for 9 holes
- Corporate members can book/play after 14:00

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Arrival and Waiting to Play

- The clubhouse, toilets and locker room facilities will be closed.
- We ask members to arrive at the club no more than 15 minutes before their tee time
- Please check in at the front door of the clubhouse, no more than 10 minutes before your tee time.
- A Marshall (volunteer) will show you where to wait and then ask you to approach the tee when it is your turn to do so.
- At this stage, only golfers are allowed on the course, until we can judge how busy we are, we will not be allowing family members to walk around / caddy.

On-Course Items

- All rakes and ball-retrievers have been removed.
- Ball washers have been covered up.
- Please do not sit on any Benches or use the on-course bins.
- Divot bags will be disinfected after each use but cannot be re-filled around the course.
- Stakes defining areas of the course can be treated as immovable obstructions.
- Our green keepers still need to work, do not approach them or touch their equipment, they have priority on the course at all times.

Hole and Flagstick

- Do not touch the Flagsticks.
- We have inserted a foam tube into the hole cups, meaning a ball will hit the flag but only fall a short distance into the hole, you can retrieve your ball without touching the flag or cup. We strongly urge players to take gimmies from anywhere inside the length of a standard putter, or longer!!

Practice Areas

- The warm-up area, chipping green, putting green and large practice area will remain closed during the initial opening period. This is to enable us to control the number of people coming to the club in the first few days / weeks.

During the Round

- Please keep 2 metres from other golfers at all times, paying special attention when on the teeing area, putting green, when walking to your ball, or searching for balls.
- Do not touch stray balls
- If your ball is on another fairway, the players on that hole take priority, play your ball once they have passed or when safe to play.
- Please leave the club immediately after your game

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Rules of Golf Related Matters

Until further notice, there will be no competition play. There is much for the competitions committee to decide once competitions are permitted and when we do resume, we will most likely follow the guidelines below:

Forms of Play and Scoring

- If competitive stroke play/stableford is played, a method of scoring needs to be used that does not require any handling or exchanging of scorecards.
- Committees may choose to allow methods of scoring in stroke play / stableford that do not strictly comply with Rule 3.3b, or do not comply with the normal methods used under Rule 3.3b.
- For example: Players may enter their own hole scores on the scorecard (it is not necessary for a marker to do it).
- It is not necessary to have a marker physically certify the player's hole scores, but some form of verbal certification should take place. It is not necessary to physically return a scorecard to the Committee provided the Committee can accept the scores in another way. (verbal communication from player to playing partner then pro-shop / office to confirm score)

Bunkers

- If golfers take due care when smoothing bunkers, there should be no need to provide a Local Rule for bunkers. But if the Committee feels that the enjoyment of the game is being significantly affected by there being no rakes, it may introduce preferred lies in bunkers and provide that a player may place a ball in the bunker within one club-length of the original spot and not nearer to the hole than that spot.

Flagstick

- Golfers are required to leave the flagstick in the hole at all times and not to touch it. It is a matter for the Committee to decide whether it establishes this policy by way of a Code of Conduct or Local Rule, and whether it provides a penalty under the Code of Conduct or for a breach of the Local Rule.

Hole & Hole Liner

- Due to changes to the hole / depth it is necessary to seek guidance from our handicapping authority, once golf resumes, asking for permission to play qualifying competitions based on our change to the hole.

As mentioned at the start of this document, our world has changed and therefore golf as we knew it has changed. Let us hope this is temporary and we can return to our normal way of life and 18 holes of golf with three friends sooner rather than later.

Looking forward to seeing you in the coming weeks.

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