



COURTESY GUIDELINES

Suggested guidelines on courtesy use at the golf club.

The question of GCMA members being afforded Courtesy of a club's facilities does crop up from time to time. While there is no 'rule' on the subject, the following comments will hopefully clarify the position.

First of all some definitions need to be considered:

- ☛ Courtesy Round – a courtesy round is a round of golf granted to an individual by a club on the basis of his/her holding a particular office, or belonging to a particular Association relating to Golf and Golf Management.
- ☛ Practice Round – a Practice Round is a round of Golf played, by an Individual or a Team, prior to a specific competition. This round may be free, at a reduced green fee or at the normal green fee.
- ☛ Inter Club Courtesies – This is the Courtesy of the Course, offered to another Club when its course is unavailable to its Members (as in County Championships). These Courtesies may be a one off or organized on a regular basis by a number of clubs.

Courtesy Rounds

- ☛ GCMA membership does not give any member the right to access either the course or clubhouse of another golf club. It is normal, however, that on the odd occasion (eg holidays, special days out) courtesy is given to a 'visiting secretary' and generally speaking is accompanied by a warm welcome.
- ☛ Friends or spouses accompanying a 'visiting secretary' should expect to pay an appropriate green fee in the normal way. It may well be that in practice, the host secretary has the discretion to waive or reduce such charges. But this should not be taken for granted.
- ☛ In the case of any proposed visit to another golf club, a telephone call or preferably a letter in advance is the absolute minimum level of courtesy expected and at least 48 hours ahead, preferably much earlier. Not to do so would rightly be received as an act of rudeness. The person would be expected to make himself/herself known to the Secretary on arrival at the Club, and to either call in at the Office on completion of the round, or ring or write subsequently. This is especially important if the individual is playing in a bona fide society or a group.

- ☛ All clubs reserve the right to decline such approaches. Indeed many of the more 'famous' courses in the UK have a policy to decline due to demand. It is important that each Club responds fairly, for instance if their Captain expects a Courtesy elsewhere, they should grant other Captains Courtesy.
- ☛ For each club, Courtesy is normally granted on one occasion per person per year.
- ☛ The practice of 'courtesy' is normally applied to GCMA members, and at most clubs is extended to Greenkeepers (BIGGA Members), Professionals (PGA Members), Club Captains and possibly Club Presidents also. Members of BIGGA and the PGA have similar guidelines to the GCMA and are required to contact the Secretary (or Professional in the case of the PGA member) before arriving at the Club.

Practice Rounds

Practice Rounds are likely to be requested prior to Competitions. These may range from County Events through Club Open Competitions to National Events. It is essential that the Host Club agree with the Organisers (and the sponsors), what if any Practice Rounds are to be offered and whether any cost is involved. Some of the 'National' Competitions involving individuals or teams make it a condition of entry that no Green Fee is payable for the actual competition match, and that if a green fee is charged it should be shared. It is important that Secretaries ensure that their entrants to and qualifiers for these competitions are aware of the conditions and costs of any subsequent rounds.

Practice Rounds may be given as a Courtesy, at a reduced Green Fee or only for the full Green Fee depending on the competition and organizers.

Inter Club Courtesies

These are usually arranged on a reciprocal basis in the event of County Inter Club Competitions or when a Club is the host for an occasional particular event.

Summary

These guidelines should be regarded as a code of ethics necessary to safeguard the privilege of courtesies at all our golf clubs. Courtesy is indeed a gift and needs to be regarded as such for the occasional benefit of us all and it is at the discretion of the host Club/Secretary.

Golf Club Management: December 2006 (reviewed March 2012)

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