

RESTART OF GOLF AT OLDMELDRUM GOLF CLUB

Subject to any further changes next week, you will doubtlessly be aware that the Scottish Government has announced an easing of the pandemic lockdown which opens the door for golf to be restarted on **Friday 29th May**.

Great news for all of us and we will begin to execute the phased plan which the council has developed over the past few weeks, in line with the recommendations and guidance from the R&A and Golf Scotland. From these, we have established a set of OGC Rules for Safe Golf which, if we individually and collectively follow, will keep us all safe.

We understand that, after a long absence from the course, all members will be eager to get out there and reacquaint themselves with the game, and for that purpose, the BRS system will be opened up 3 days before we start (**Tuesday 25 May**) and golf will continue to be booked a maximum of 3 days ahead for the time being. No visitors will be allowed until further notice.

Initially, golf will be restricted to **casual rounds for members only**, with a further review some weeks down the line to introduce competitive golf, and visitors/members guests if appropriate. Also, **tee times will be restricted to 2 ball pairings at intervals of 10 minutes, starting from 8 am until 6 pm midweek and 7 am to 6 pm at weekends**. Any member wishing to play on his or her own for health or safety reasons are asked to book in the quieter spells. The usual reserved tee times for men, ladies, and junior competitions are suspended until further notice.

We also understand therefore that there will be many members competing for fewer places so we ask for patience and thoughtfulness at this time to ensure that our key workers and those who have been working throughout the pandemic have an opportunity to play golf when they are most able. For others who have a bit more time to play then please look for the slots that are traditionally less busy. We would appreciate a fair and equitable spread across all of our members.

To ensure an element of fair play, our club office will review the bookings over the early days and make contact if appropriate. Also, to help maximise the number of members who can play at an early opportunity, there will be a restriction of **2 rounds per week** on all members.

However, after reserving your advanced 2 tee times, you are free to book further slots ON THE DAY when they are available.

In view of the situation, we ask that you respect these decisions and bear in mind that circumstances are unique and we look for everyone to be flexible in the range of tee times selected.

As to playing, here are the essential OGC rules for safe golf that you **MUST** follow.

1. Only players who pre-book on BRS will be allowed on the course. This is now compulsory whether for a full round or part round.
2. Any member without access to BRS should continue to contact our professional or the admin office to book on their behalf but within the 3-day rule.
3. Anyone showing symptoms of Covid-19 should not visit the club.
4. Follow the signs at the carpark, and make sure you can keep the 2m social distance at all times and don't park too close to any other car.
5. Change in the car park. Locker rooms and toilets (including on-course) will be closed until further notice. Please ensure any clubs and trolleys are removed from the locker rooms ahead of the restart by contacting the admin office.
6. Make your way to the club around 10 minutes before your start time.
7. The practice range, as well as the internal practice area, will remain closed until further notice.
8. You will have priority for a few minutes on the practice putting green before you head off. Please be careful of touching the cups.

9. Only 1 person is permitted in the professional shop at any one time. Hand sanitiser and face masks will be made available if required. Scorecards will also be available but you are encouraged to download and print your own copy from the club website.
10. Only 1 person per buggy for those individuals requiring one. Our professional has agreed to ensure they are fully sanitised after each use. No trolleys will be available for hire.
11. **Observe the 2m social distancing at all times and at all points on the course including on tees and greens.** Course marshals will be on the course to support us on this critical requirement.
12. Do not share or exchange equipment, food or drink with other players during your round.
13. Do not touch the flagsticks.
14. Do not pick up stray balls and clearly mark your own.
15. First player putting on green putts to a conclusion followed by playing partner.
16. On finishing your round, social distancing remains the norm
17. Leave the course by the rear of the Pro shop and through the gate adjacent to buggy store to avoid contact with players coming on to the course. Proceed to the carpark and leave immediately after changing.
18. There must be no "cutting in" anywhere on the course, nor "joining up" of groups.
19. Lastly, be tolerant of your fellow members.

It's absolutely critical that we all follow the simple rules of safe golf. The consequences of falling short could set us back many months and the loss of the season altogether. So please, please keep safe and play safe. As things progress, we will be reviewing constantly and will advise of any changes to come.

Lastly, Janice and Craig have done an amazing job maintaining the course during these extraordinary times. They should be highly commended for what they have achieved.

However, members should not expect the course to be in the condition expected at this time of year. Again, we ask for understanding, common sense and patience to bear with us until we come out of the other end.

LOCAL RULES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Bunker default is that players can lift, smooth area with club or feet, place within one club length but no nearer the hole without penalty.

Distance marker poles and OOB and hazard stakes are deemed to be immovable objects so ball can be dropped within a club length and not nearer the hole, without penalty.

If a ball is deemed to be lost and no provisional has been played then players should not return to the tee but must drop at the nearest point where ball crossed the margin of the fairway and rough. The ball may be dropped on the fairway side.

Finally, I thank every member for their support during this extraordinary episode in the history of this golf club. We may have thought it difficult times at this time last year but little did we know.

I pray that we can all stay safe and maybe now that we're back on the course, play that one immaculate shot that will bring it all back and let us forget the traumas of covid-19. At least for a short time.

Play well, keep well.

Dave Cowling

Club Captain

