



It's that time of year again for club championship matches to begin. Flights will be based on handicaps in the system through July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006 so please update any scores before then. As in past years all members with valid handicaps will be included in the championship tournament.

First round matches will begin the fourth week of July and will last through mid-September. Deadlines for each round will be posted with the tournament brackets. Matches must be completed by the deadlines in each round, failure to do so will result in elimination of both players.

#### **HCC Club Championship Rules**

- Each round between opponents will consist of an 18 hole match play event.
- Because the HCC is a nine hole course the players can decide the order of which tees are played first.
- USGA Match Play rules will govern play. ([www.usga.org](http://www.usga.org))
- Failure of one member to schedule a time to play prior to the deadline will result in disqualification, resulting in an automatic win for the other player.
- Any round played after the posted deadline date for that round is subject to disqualification of both players.
- The winner of Matches "All Square" after 18 holes, will be determined by a sudden death Match Play beginning on hole #1. (The first player to win a hole wins the match)

Brackets and any additional information will be posted on the HCC website at [www.hccgolf.net](http://www.hccgolf.net).

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USGA Match Play rules can be found at [www.usga.org](http://www.usga.org)

### **How Match Play Rules Differ from Stroke Play Rules**

<http://golf.about.com/od/beginners/a/matchplayrules.htm>

Golfers watching or, especially, playing match play need to be aware of the differences in the rules between match play and stroke play. Some of the differences are major, some are minor and some involve a different type of penalty when rules are broken.

Here is a rundown of some of the most important differences in the [Rules of Golf](#) for match play:

#### **The Way It's Played**

In this sense, match play is a whole different game than stroke play. In stroke play, golfers accumulate strokes over the course of 18 holes. The golfer with the fewest strokes at the completion of the round wins.

In match play, each hole is a separate competition. The player with the fewest strokes on an individual hole wins that hole; the player winning the most holes wins the match.

The stroke total for 18 holes simply doesn't matter in match play.

Stroke play is more a player vs. the course approach; match play is directly player vs. player, or side vs. side. There is one opponent you must beat, and that's the opponent you're facing in the match you're playing right now.

- [More on Scorekeeping in Match Play](#)

#### **Conceded Putts**

In friendly rounds of golf, golfers often ask for and give "[gimmies](#)," very short putts that one simply picks up rather than holing out. Gimmies, needless to say, are illegal under the Rules of Golf, but many recreational golfers use them anyway.

In match play, however, conceded putts are perfectly legal. Your opponent can concede a putt to you at any point, whether it's 6 inches from the cup or 60 feet. But conceded putts almost always come, of course, on very short putts.

Conceded putts should only be offered, they should never be requested. That's why in some match play matches you'll notice a golfer lingering over a very short putt - the golfer is hoping his opponent will tell him to just pick it up.

#### **Fellow-Competitor vs. Opponent**

This is a semantic difference. In stroke play, the golfers you are playing against are your "fellow-competitors." In match play, the golfer you are playing against is your "opponent."

## **Hit That One Again**

There are several scenarios in match play where a transgression might result in your opponent canceling your shot and requiring you to replay it; whereas in stroke play, the same transgression would result in a 2-stroke penalty or no penalty at all.

A few examples:

- **Playing out of turn:** In stroke play, order of play is a matter of etiquette. If you hit out of turn, it's a breach of etiquette, but there is no penalty. In match play, if you hit out of turn your opponent can require you to replay the shot in the proper order. And if your first shot was great one, you can bet that you'll be replaying.
- **Hitting from outside the teeing ground:** In stroke play, teeing off from outside the teeing ground (the teeing ground is between the tee markers and up to two club lengths behind the tee markers) results in a 2-stroke penalty. In match play, there is no stroke penalty, but your opponent can cancel your shot and require you to replay it.
- **Hitting an opponent:** In stroke play, if your ball hits a fellow-competitor or his equipment (if it is accidentally stopped or deflected by same), it's rub of the green. In match play, you have the option to replay the shot.
- **Hitting a ball at rest on the green:** In stroke play, if your putt strikes another ball on the green, you get a 2-stroke penalty. In match play, there is no penalty.

## **The Big Penalty**

In the rule book, just about every section concludes with a warning: "Penalty for Breach of Rule." If a golfer fails to follow the proper procedures set forth in the rules, he will incur a penalty in addition to any penalties set forth in that rule.

That penalty in stroke play is usually 2 strokes, and in match play is usually loss of hole.

Example: Let's say a player violates one of the tenets of Rule 19. There will likely be a penalty spelled out for that violation. But the golfer compounds his error by failing to follow the proper procedure for continuing play (maybe he doesn't assess himself the proper penalty; maybe he drops incorrectly; etc.) spelled out in that rule. The big penalty kicks in: 2 strokes in stroke play, loss of hole in match play.

## **Better Late than Never**

In stroke play, disqualification is the result if you miss your tee time. In match play, you can show up late and still play ... as long as you make your match by at least the second tee. You'll have forfeited the first hole, but you can pick up the match on No. 2. If you fail to make it by the No. 2 tee, you're disqualified.

The differences between match play and stroke play, where they exist, are elucidated in the [Rules of Golf](#). If there is a difference, that difference will be spelled out in the applicable section. So browse through the [rule book](#) to learn more about match play rules.