



## Hough's It

# The End of Year Bash

We finished our annual calendar year with a flourish: great weather, and our course in spectacular condition, with all the Benriach, Glendronach and Glenglassaugh whisky and Heineken beer on offer after the games, plus the delicious **I Love Smoothies**, and the excellent Houghton braai to boot. Everyone had a great time. The singer, Jessie, added some great tunes in the background, and the vibe in the house was amazing, so thanks to all the members for a great day, and a good year, and we hope that the New Year will work out as good, if not better.

The winners were Moosa Seedat and his nephew Waseem, a wonderful young man who we've seen grow up here at Houghton, and who is about to qualify as a doctor. They've run close in other club comps, and Waseem won our Masters par 3 event this year, so they finally made it count, and they take home 2 of Titleist's great new TS2 and TS3 Drivers.



*Moosa and Waseem Seedat with their Titleist drivers*

They edged out Anthony Khoury and Ryan Nestadt, Jonny Kaplan and Stef Drue, and Adam Wiener and Michael Barnett, on a count-out, after all 4 Betterball pairings had finished on 45 Stableford points. Ladies Cappy Yvonne Johnston and Debbie Cloud were 5th on 44pts to round out the top 5.

I must make special thanks for our food and beverage guys, led by Jon Pillay, and ably assisted by our Head Chef Travolta Sibanda, and his team in the kitchen, for always being there for us when it comes to matters culinary. Their offerings are always spectacular, something I'm sure we too often take for granted.

The Houghton army definitely marches on its stomach, and these guys always produce!



*Jon Pillay and Travolta Sibanda*

## Knockout News

Lesley Solomon and Ricci Cloud clinched the Mixed KO after a tense playoff victory over Anne Hoffman and Muzi Kuzwayo over 21 holes on Sunday morning.



*2018 Mixed KO winners Ricci and Lesley*

## The New 2019 Rules of Golf

Robby, Scott and I attended a 2-day Golf RSA Rules Modernisation Seminar last week at Royal, under the auspices of the R&A, and I must admit that I was very surprised by the complete changes that we encountered.

I was expecting the few changes that we'd read about in the press and on social media, but the revamp was so much more complete than that, and the vocabulary has changed big time.

I think the changes are better, and it's certainly easier to negotiate the rules book, but it will take us all some time to get totally with it.

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So, I'll be trying to get the message through as best as possible in the next few weeks before the changes kick in on the 1st of January.

**Here are a few things:**

1. The five defined areas that make up the course:

- The general area (previously the fairways and the rough)
- The teeing area the player must play from in starting the hole he or she is playing
- Penalty areas (previously water hazards)
- Bunkers
- The putting green of the hole the player is playing

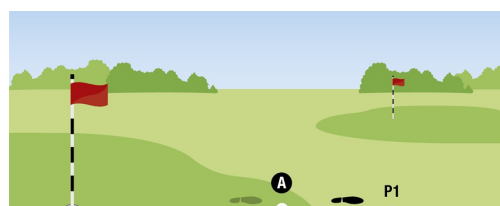
2. I'm sure we already all know about where we're going to have to drop from, but check this diagram below to fully understand knee height. Shorter golfers will have a slight advantage in this department! Your own knee-height, when you're in a standing position, is always the reference.

## 1 New dropping height



- The ball must be dropped straight down from knee height.
- "Knee height" means the height of your knee when in a standing position.
- You do not need to be standing when the ball is dropped.
- A drop does not count if the ball touches you or your equipment before hitting the ground.
- A drop does count if the ball accidentally hits you or equipment after it has already hit the ground.

3. Relief. Check out the wording 'complete relief'. You need to find a reference point (P1 below), and then your relief area is 1 club-length from that point. The difference here is that the shaded area is smaller, as you need to make sure that your stance is away from the condition that you're taking relief from. The diagram below shows a wrong green situation, but abnormal course conditions: ground under repair, temporary water (previously casual water), animal holes and immovable obstructions, have the same relief procedures.

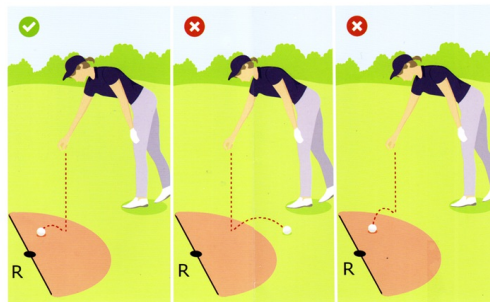




Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The nearest point of complete relief (P1)	One club-length from the reference point	The relief area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and</li> <li>• Must be in the same area of the course as the reference point</li> </ul>
<b>Player Notes:</b> You must take complete relief from all interference by the wrong green.		

4. As I said in point 3 above, the zone into which you can now drop is smaller, but remember that you'll be dropping closer to the ground, so in theory, the ball shouldn't move too much. The ball can no longer be dropped in the area and then bounce or roll out: it has to be dropped in the relief area, and then stay in the relief area. Also, it must hit the ground first, so if it strikes you, or your equipment first, then it hasn't been dropped. Lastly, if it - once it is dropped in the area - then rolls up against your club or your foot, then that's accidental, and there's no problem and the ball is in play. This 'accidental' theme runs throughout the new rules!

## 2 Dropping procedure: Ball must land in and come to rest in relief area



For your relief procedure to be completed, your ball must be dropped so it:

- First strikes the ground in the relief area,
- AND THEN comes to rest in the relief area.

5. Club length: The length of the longest club of the 14 (or fewer) clubs the player has during the round, other than a putter.

### GOLF'S NEW RULES: KEY CHANGES

The R&A and the USGA have released golf's new Rules, which will take effect on January 1, 2019. Here are five of the most significant changes.

#### How to Drop a Ball

You will drop your ball from knee height into the relief area.

#### Time for Ball Search

Three minutes will be the maximum allotted time to search for a ball, rather than the current five minutes.

#### Repairing Spike Marks

You will be allowed to repair spike marks and any other damage on the putting green caused by a person, an animal or maintenance practices.

#### Leaving Flagstick in the Hole

If you make a stroke from on the green and your ball hits the flagstick in the hole, there will be no penalty.



6. Placing on fairways: One of the major themes of the rules seminar was how we in SA have become way too

used to preferred lies, so much so that we 'demand' placing on a year-long basis, and the R&A and the USGA are trying hard to shift golfer's mindsets away from the expectation of a perfect lie every single time they're in the fairway. The mantra "play the course as you find it, and play the ball as it lies" has not changed.

And then, at the same time last week, a similar plea went out in the HNA handicap newsletter - which we all get - so I've pasted it in here for you to read.

There's no doubt that our fairways here at Houghton are good enough to not have preferred lies, even when it rains and the ball starts picking up some mud, which according to them, is no reason to 'play it up!' And playing from bad lies is just another skill in golf.

*"Placing on fairways is usually introduced by clubs or competition organisers when there has been a lot of rain and balls that land on the fairway get covered in mud. Players are then allowed to lift, clean and place their balls in the fairway."*

*In many other countries, scores made when placing on fairways is in use, are not allowed for handicapping purposes. In South Africa, these scores are permitted, so there is a tendency for golfers to expect that every lie on the fairway should be perfect and therefore request the clubs to allow placing.*

*Yet, you only have to watch golf on TV to see professional golfers having to play out of divots or other imperfections on the fairway. We need to change our expectations and accept that sometimes you will land in a divot or a bare patch. Obviously if there are very poor areas then the greenkeeper can mark these as GUR.*

*Placing not only gives golfers a better score, but it also slows down play. Please help us to fall in line with the rest of the world and only allow placing on fairways when there are mud issues affecting play".*

## Holiday Times

We will be open on the next 4 Mondays, namely the 10th, 17th, 24th (morning-only field) and 31st (also morning-only field) of December. The course and clubhouse will be closed on those 2 afternoons.

### **We will be closed on Christmas Day.**

On Boxing Day and New Year's Day, only the course will be open, to members only – your membership card will get you through security - and you have to make prior arrangements for your bag and/or caddie. There will be no clubhouse facilities available.

And we will be hollow-tying and sanding the greens from Wednesday the 2nd of January.

## Tour News

This week sees the tri-sanctioned, 2-course, 240-player field tee it up in the SA Open at Randpark!

Hope you enjoy it!

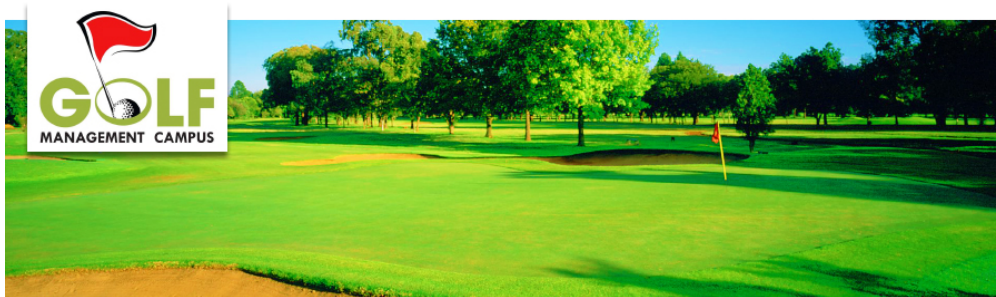
That's about all for this week.

Hope you have a good one.

**Kappy.**

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## The direction of technology

### Materials open up your opportunity

Adjustable drivers, while being main-stream, have until now come along with some compromises, especially with forgiveness.



By using weight strategically, designers have been able to extend the size of the hitting zone.

The leading 2018 drivers not only protect ball speed away from the sweet spot, they protect the launch conditions.

That means, despite a slightly off-centre ball strike, you still get the length of ball flight and distance you expected.

Originally, the weight required for adjustable hosels reduced the amount of weight available to the club designer.

That's not the case anymore. More than enough weight is available to the designer to allow them to develop a driver packed with forgiveness.



### The adjustable driver improvement

Now though, new manufacturing processes, new lighter but stronger materials, have provided the designers of adjustable drivers with enough discretionary weight to give you adjustability and forgiveness.

[Contact us >](#)

## Technology with real impact



### Srixon Z 785 and Z 585 Drivers

The new Srixon Z 785 and Z 585 both come with real performance improvements. We think these will make a big difference for many of our golfers.

[Here's why >](#)

## What motivates you?

### What are you most looking forward to, as you arrive?

We're trying to gain a better understanding of what's important to our golfers. Last week we had a simple question relating to social golf vs competitive golf. If you missed it and want to answer,

[Click here >](#)

This week we want to understand what you look forward to most as you drive to the golf club. Again a simple question. And again, to preserve privacy, your name is optional. So what inspires you?





Let us know

This is just one question. It might make you think though.

Let us know now.

[Click here >](#)

## Cleveland Golf RTX4 Wedges

The new Cleveland Golf RTX4 Wedges deliver ball-stopping spin and control, along with designs that offer you options.



If you haven't upgraded your wedge set in a while, the Cleveland Golf RTX4 Wedges and the number of options they offer you greenside should be an inspiration to improve your short game.

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