



Hough's It

Houghton Club News

I hope by now you're relaxing, winding down, or better still, chilling on the beach somewhere, organising golf for tomorrow morning with mates who you've bumped into as your kids or grand kids are messing around in the surf.

Things are still quite hectic around the club as we show off our wonderfully-conditioned course to all the members who are still here and who chose to hang in Jozi, where there's no traffic, and no queues to get anywhere, except to our 1st tee before 6:20am.

We're also seeing lots of visitors through our very successful early-morning 9-hole Sunrise golf offering, as well as from the many golfers taking advantage of the reciprocal arrangements between most of our neighbours that is normal for this time of the year.

Our course is still in pristine condition, a direct result of better quality water, and the availability thereof, compared to this time last year and in previous years, as well as some better and refined water usage practices, that have allowed us to remove placing on our fairways.

It has been very hot and dry though, as per the recent El Nino predictions forecast of higher temps and less than normal rain until mid-Jan, so obviously some late arvie Highveld thundershowers would be most welcome, but there will be a few dry patches starting to show up here and there on the course.

We did get a welcome 20mm in the storm on Friday evening, but more of that would be much appreciated.

Remember that we'll be doing our annual hollow-tyning and top-dressing from the 2nd of Jan, so the greens won't be at their best for another week or 2 before they start recovering.

At the same time, we'll be re-marking the blue tees (previously the Ladies tees) and the red tees (prev the Seniors) to get into line with the recommendations by the SAGA and the handicap authorities, so Ladies be aware that you'll be playing the red course from next year on, and the Seniors will be blue.

A Last Bit on The Rules Before Jan 1

From the USGA'S website, here is another summary of some more of the major changes about to happen. These great links are to videos and explanations of the changes, plus the reasons for them.

1. Caddy standing behind a player

[Watch now.](#)

2. Distance measuring devices

[Watch now.](#)

3. Repairing damage on the putting green – I'm concerned here about the time issue!

[Watch now.](#)

4. Standard for deciding why a ball moved

[Watch now.](#)

5. No penalty for a ball moving on the green

[Watch now.](#)

6. Ball moved during search

[Watch now.](#)

7. Loose impediments in a bunker – just make sure not to test the surface and/or prepare the lie for your next shot.

[Watch now.](#)

NB: The thick rough area around the pump-house and its surrounds on the right of the 5th hole will be marked as a penalty area from Jan 1, so any ball ending up in that area - ringed by red lines – can either be played as it lies, or you could take back on the line relief, but now – and only if it's known or virtually certain that the ball is lost in

there - you have the option to drop out laterally at 2 club-lengths from the point where the ball entered the area.

That's far better than going back to where you last played from under the stroke and distance rule, and this is one of the changes to the Rules that will definitely help in speeding up play.

Here's Looking At Next Year

Things to look forward to in golf in 2019.

1. The Race To Simola
2. The Houghton Hunt
3. Club Champs: Ladies and Men's C Div – Sat 23 & Sun 24 Feb
4. Club Champs: Men's A & B Divs – Sat 2 & Sun 3 March
5. Can Tiger win a Major???
6. The Players: Mar 14-17 Sawgrass
7. The Masters: April 11-14 Augusta
8. The PGA Champs: May 16-19 Bethpage Black
9. The US Open: June 13-16 Pebble Beach
10. The Open Championships: July 18-21 Royal Portrush
11. Ernie turns 50 in October!!!
12. Presidents Cup: Dec 13-15 Royal Melbourne

That's about all for this year.

I would like to thank all the Houghton members, customers in the shop, and also the others on this database, for all their help and support in 2018, and wish you all happy holidays, Merry Xmas, and a wonderful New Year.

Hope you've had a good one, and are making big plans for your golf in 2019.

Kappy.

The direction of technology

The golf ball has changed

Despite being the most regulated piece of golf equipment, the golf ball improved again in 2018.



There are some that are troubled by golf ball improvements.

There's sometimes a hysteria about the subject.

But what about this from Golf Illustrated in 1910: "If the carrying power of golf balls is to be still further increased, all our golf courses will be irretrievably ruined as a test of the game."

Wow, a 100 years ago they were worrying about the golf ball.



So, how easy do you find the challenge of golf? Even with over a hundred years of ongoing improvement in the golf ball, has the game become easy?

All golf balls are better now

The latest innovations we have seen have allowed all golf balls to feel softer at impact, creating a better feel, while still maximizing ball speed. Each golf ball model does perform differently though. Some will work better for you than others. Have you ever had a "golf ball assessment?"

[Contact us >](#)

What motivates you?

The summary and what happens now

In the last three weeks, we've asked questions about what you most want out of your golf.



What is most important to you:
the social, recreational
experience or the sporting
competition?



As you drive to the
golf course, amongst
all the important things
you want to be right,
what is the most important?



There are so many
formats in golf. Which
do you prefer the most
and which do you least enjoy?

Let us know

If you haven't answered these simple questions, and want to help, then we've combined them into one easy

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[Click here >](#)

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