South Gippsland Golf Inc

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

1. A “Participant” bound by the Code performs an action that (if officially assessed) has the potential to be classified as a breach of the Code. [Note: A “Participant” in an event is someone who has engaged with that Event as any of the following: a competitor, a caddie (as defined in the Rules of Golf as approved by R&A Rules Limited), a family member or friend or supporter or associate of a competitor or caddie, a non-playing captain or manager, a team official or support official, a spectator, a person who comments digitally or otherwise in a public domain on an Event or on another Participant of an Event, and anyone else considered by SGG at its absolute discretion to be a Participant.]

2. The action is brought to the attention of SGG in any way. SGG will promptly determine whether it is appropriate to officially investigate the incident. SGG is not obliged to investigate.

3. If an official investigation is conducted, it is performed by an authorised SGG official/s. In most cases the investigation may be limited to consideration of brief verbal witness reports. In most cases there will be no requirement for the person who performed the action being investigated (ie the Respondent) to be consulted as a part of the initial investigation, although in some cases it may be useful to do so. (The Respondent will have the opportunity to present additional information should they decide to contest the initial assessment of the incident once it has been made.)

4. The findings of the official investigation will be reported to the SGG Golf Board, Respondent and Complainant Home Clubs. In most cases it will be appropriate that this report be a very brief written summary. The Disciplinary Panel should promptly consider and discuss the findings of the official investigation. This discussion may take place for example in person, or by phone, or text message, or email, or skype, etc.

5. If the Disciplinary Panel considers that a Minor Breach or a Serious Breach has been committed, it will promptly categorise the Breach, and assess and impose a Sanction. The Disciplinary Panel has the flexibility and discretion to assess sanctions on a case by case basis.

6. The evaluation of the Disciplinary Panel will be promptly communicated in writing to the Respondents Home Club, together with a description of the Respondent’s options and sanctions.

• The Respondent may choose to accept the evaluation of the Disciplinary Panel; OR

• The Respondent may choose to contest the evaluation of the Disciplinary Panel at a tribunal hearing. If they do and if the committee that hears the case decides to uphold the evaluation of the Disciplinary Panel, the Respondent will be subject to the full sanction. Once the matter has been determined by the tribunal hearing, it is concluded and neither party will have any further right of appeal.

Note 1: When a Respondent is sanctioned, there are the possibility of two concurrent penalties. First, they are suspended for the designated number of days from all SGG events; and secondly (for Breaches of the Rules of Golf) in consultation with the Respondents Home Club, their GA Handicap can be suspended for the period of time.

Note 2: In unusual cases, the Disciplinary Panel may at its absolute discretion decide that the most appropriate course of action is to refer a matter directly to a tribunal hearing. The committee that hears the matter will make an assessment. The Respondent may contest this assessment at a further tribunal hearing which will be handled by a different committee – in such a case, once this different committee makes its determination, the matter is concluded and neither party will have any further right of appeal.

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CATEGORIES OF BREACH

There are three levels of breach severity as follows:

1. Nominal Breach of the Code – A breach of the Code that does not warrant any further sanction against the Respondent, other than any sanction that might already have been imposed under the Rules of Golf, Local Rules, or Conditions of Competition.

2. Minor Breach of the Code

(i) Best Efforts: Playing in a manner (with no ulterior motive) that creates negative exposure for GA or the Event, or upsets or distracts fellow Participants.

(ii) Etiquette: Examples of actions that may warrant such consideration include but are not limited to any of: non-raking of a bunker, dropping litter on the course, lack of verbal warning when hitting a ball close to spectators.

(iii) General Misbehaviour: General abuse of Event, course, or golf equipment or the like, use of audible obscenities, minor incidents resulting from drunken or otherwise socially unacceptable behaviour by a Participant, repeated breach of practice regulations. A display of clear but minor abusive behaviour towards, or clear but minor disrespect of, another Participant or of an official of any of the following: SGG, the event, a venue club/facility, another participant. Repeated breach of dress, smoking, alcohol or other event policies. (Note: Any sanctions that may be applied to the player for causing damage to something which is not their own property should not preclude consideration of the player being invoiced for the cost of repairs.)

(iv) Injurious Conduct: Actions or comments that may harm or discredit officials, fellow Participants, sponsors, promoters, volunteers, third-party contractors, SGG, a venue facility/club, or the Event generally but which does not or is unlikely to create significant or long-term damage (reputational or otherwise) to any of the aforementioned entities.

(v) Failure to Report a Breach of the Code: A failure to report a breach of the Code by a fellow Participant or to fully and properly assist in an enquiry regarding such a breach.

(vi) Rules of Golf: A breach of the Rules of Golf which is found to be a careless or negligent infringement of the Rules of Golf and where it is considered that disqualification from the Event at which such breach has taken place is not a sufficient sanction on the Participant.

3. Serious Breach of the Code

(i) Best Efforts: Failure to give best efforts in an attempt to contrive a result.

(ii) Etiquette: An example of an action that may warrant such consideration is dangerous play leading to, or which could have led to, material third-party injury.

(iii) Significant Misbehaviour: Significant abuse of Event, course, or golf equipment or the like. Significant use of audible obscenities, material incidents resulting from drunken or otherwise socially unacceptable behaviour by a Participant. A display of significant abusive behaviour towards, or significant disrespect of, another Participant or of an official of any of the following: SGG, the Event, a venue club/facility, another Participant. Significant breaches of dress, smoking, alcohol, or other event policies. (Note: Any sanctions that may be applied to the player for causing damage to something which is not their own property should not preclude consideration of the player being invoiced for the cost of repairs.)

(iv) Injurious Conduct: Actions or comments that may harm or discredit officials, fellow Participants, sponsors, promoters, volunteers, third-party contractors, GA, a venue facility/club, or the Event generally and that does cause or is likely to cause significant or long-term damage (reputational or otherwise) to any of the aforementioned entities.

(v) Rules of Golf: A breach of the Rules of Golf which is found to be a deliberate infringement of the Rules of Golf or where the Participant's actions or omissions to act are reckless to the extent that they should have known that a breach of the Rules of Golf would occur.

The above list is for guidance and for illustrative purposes only and does not prejudice SGG's discretion to determine the seriousness of an alleged breach of the Code on a case by case basis in accordance with the relevant facts and evidence obtained.

SANCTIONS

1. Extension of Sanction Period Due to Eligible Prior Breach/es

Sanction penalties are extended (as set out in the below sanction tables) when a Respondent has an Eligible Prior Breach during the previous 18 months.

2. Sanction Periods

(i) **Nominal Breach of the Code.** The matter is completed, no further action is taken against the Respondent.

(ii) **Minor Breach of the Code.** The Respondent has two options. They can either contest the charge and have the matter resolved in a hearing, or they can accept the charge and sanction.

(iii) **Serious Breach of the Code.** The Respondent has two options. They can either contest the charge and have the matter resolved in a hearing, or they can accept the charge and sanction.

Note: If in its absolute discretion the Disciplinary Panel considers such action to be warranted, it has discretion to specify the sanction to be served. (Examples of actions that may warrant such consideration include but are not limited to any of: bullying or threatening behaviour, vilification on the basis of gender or race or sexual orientation, acts of violence against another person, seeking to manipulate the result of a competition, cheating, acting with considered intent to cause damage to the course or to equipment of the Event or the venue facility or the like, criminal acts or the like.)