

Metro St Louis Seniors Golf Pace of Play - 2017 Results

The focus for 2017 was:

- Communication of Targets – 4:30 pace for all players
- Membership to practice Ready Golf
 - Stay aware and ready to play
 - Keep up with the group ahead
 - Use rules (eg max 9 strikes per hole) to speed play
- Improved measures for pace
 - Pace Logs Collected
 - Course, Division, Event, and Player Analysis
 - Publication of results
- Communication of results and status
- Enforcement starting June 2017
 - Enforcement lead by Division VP

2017 RESULTS

Overall Pace of Play (POP) for 2017 was GREAT! And a huge IMPROVEMENT. Our gross averages for all tee groups across all Divisions and courses was under 4:30, a 15 to 20 minute improvement as compared to 2016.

Although there were several complaints when we started, during the year we have received many positive comments about members appreciating the faster play. In discussions with courses for 2018 schedules, many acknowledged that they saw improvements.

The detailed data now shows that an overwhelming majority of our members can and do play at pace between 4 and 4:30. All ages and physical and golf abilities have been playing quickly. This reinforces that being ready to play and staying aware are far more important than skill, age or physical capabilities in pace of play.

Only 15% of our events had average play of 4:45 or more and over 1/2 of them were Reverse Shotgun starts.

After discussion with some of our slowest members, most have improved. There is still a very small minority of players and groups who are playing slower than our targets. Continued effort for these members and new members added for 2018 and beyond will be needed. Staying at pace requires continuous effort.

Each Division VP is the primary contact for his division's Pace of Play. If you have issues or complaints especially about a slow group or player, please talk with your VP. In most cases the problems are known and action is already underway. If you want more information, you can contact

START TYPE IMPACT

Start Type has a critical role in POP. Reverse Shotgun starts with multiple, consecutive A/B tee groups causes a big increase in pace. The first tee groups starting on #1 and #18 have open holes in front and play very quickly. Players back through hole #6 have to wait for each A/B group clears ahead.

2017 Tee Group Times by Start Type

Average Pace of Play			
Start	Front	Last	Average
Shotgun	04:02	04:54	04:30
Reverse SG	04:14	05:11	04:47
Split Tee	03:58	04:51	04:27

2017 DIVISION PACE

Average Tee Group Play Times							
Division	Avg Play	Min	Max	Avg	ST Only	SG Only	RSG Only
Div 1	73	04:08	05:00	04:35	04:28	04:35	04:53
Div 2	79	04:02	04:52	04:30	04:27	04:26	04:45
Div 3	95	04:03	04:49	04:28	04:27	04:26	04:52
Div 4	89	03:54	04:56	04:25	04:23	04:25	05:08
Div 5	87	04:03	04:54	04:31	04:29	04:33	04:48

ST = Split Tee, SG = Shotgun. RSG = Reverse Shotgun

For Split Tee Starts, all divisions had tee group average pace under 4:30. Shotgun starts are the same or a little slower than Split Tee starts, although weather and path only conditions may explain the differences. Reverse shotgun starts delayed tee groups the most.

For all starts, the last tee groups finishing were frequently 45 to 60 minutes slower than the first, fastest groups. The last groups in were usually 30 slower than the average for that event.

Division 1 shows a slightly longer pace than other divisions (5 to 10 minutes). Earlier analysis showed that the average gross score (and handicap index) for Division 1 is about 5 point higher than Div 2 – 5. So more strokes = more time. Plus Division 1 and 2 each had 5 of the significantly slower Reverse shotguns (vs only 1 each for Div 3, 4, 5)

Reverse Shotgun Starts showed a significantly longer pace across all divisions. 20 to 30 minutes longer for the “average tee group”. However the last tee groups finished at least 50 minutes longer than the fastest groups. Some groups lagged as much as 80 minutes later than the first finishing groups.

SLOWEST TEE GROUPS

We had 36 tournaments where at least one tee group finished over 5 hours. Reverse Shotgun starts made up about 1/3 of these.

19 of these 36 rounds had the slowest average times – 4:45 to 5:08. and 10 of these were Reverse Shotguns.

Weather or Path Only conditions were NOT a significant factor. Only 3 of the rounds noted rain and only 4 had Path Only conditions. The fastest groups for most of these events were finishing between 3:30 to 4:10 indicating that conditions were pretty good.

The the slowest groups had most impact on the event when they were in early or starting groups. Simply put, the slowest group delayed everyone behind and increased the play time for everyone.

COURSE DIFFICULTY – A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR

Most of the slowest rounds (23) were concentrated in a small number of courses (6).

- Bear Creek – 5 Events – All Division – Reverse Shotgun
- Emerald Greens – 4 Events – Div 1,3 4,5 (Split Tee)
- Far Oaks – 5 Events – Div 1,2 (Reverse SG), Div 3,4,5 (Split Tee)
- Florissant – 3 Events – Div 1,3,5 (SG) – New, several blind shots
- Spencer T Olin – 3 Events – Div 1,2,5 (SG)
- Stonewolf – 3 Events – Div 1,2 (Reverse SG), 5

We feel strongly that challenging courses must be a part of our schedule. These courses feature tighter fairways, water, blind shots, and during some portions of the year challenging rough.

We will encourage members to move to forward tees to better balance the challenge with their abilities.

In addition lost ball searches for these courses can be a big problem. Balls are cheap, our time and patience are not. Metro Seniors lost or OB ball policy is very generous. Spending time looking for a hopelessly lost ball is a waste of everyone's time, patience, and reduces the fun for you, your group, and everyone behind. Take your penalty and drop faster and everyone will appreciate it. Encourage your tee group to do the same.

Courses Over 4:45 Average Tee Group Pace

DIV	Course	Start	Date	Players	Min Time	Max Time	Avg Time	Temp	Precip	Carts
2	Bear Creek	SG R	08/25/17	84	04:13	05:23	04:55	75s	Dry	90D
3	Bear Creek	SG R	05/25/17	94	04:17	05:29	04:52	80s	Dry	90D
4	Bear Creek	SG R	05/18/17	107	04:30	05:54	05:08		Dry	90D
5	Bear Creek	SG R	08/31/17	99	03:59	05:14	04:48		Dry	90D
1	Belk Park		05/12/17	82	04:35	05:26	04:55		Dry	90D
3	Crystal Springs		07/27/17	38	04:38	04:55	04:46	80s	Rain	PO
1	Eagle Springs	SG R	09/22/17	75	04:35	05:03	04:47	60s	Dry	90D
3	Emerald Greens		09/07/17	101	04:25	05:09	04:49	75s	Dry	90D
5	Emerald Greens		05/09/17	87	04:20	05:02	04:46	65s	Dry	90D
1	Far Oak	SG R	09/08/17	77	04:40	05:17	04:59	75s	Dry	90D
2	Far Oak	SG R	08/11/17	91	04:23	05:13	04:54	75s	Dry	90D
3	Far Oak		08/31/17	112	04:20	05:13	04:53	75s	Dry	90D
4	Far Oak		08/17/17	82	04:10	05:45	04:45		Dry	
5	Far Oak		08/24/17	77	04:08	05:21	04:51		Dry	90D
1	Florissant	SG	06/09/17	84	04:30	05:54	05:00	70s	Dry	90D
3	Florissant	SG	08/24/17	102	04:28	05:20	04:55	85s	Dry	90D
1	Landings @ Spirit	SG R	05/26/17	88	04:28	05:02	04:48		Dry	90D
1	Stonewolf	SG R	08/25/17	66	04:31	05:14	04:59	80s	Dry	90D
2	Stonewolf	SG R	09/01/17	70	04:01	05:22	04:54	80s	Dry	90D
5	Stonewolf		08/17/17	88	04:40	05:10	04:54		Dry	PO

2017 DATA COLLECTION and ANALYSIS

The Pace of Play Logs were pretty successful. Most event results were available to Committee and Divisions VP within a few days of the event. Some VP used the raw data for immediate action where a problem tee group was identified. We started using USPS mail to distribute the Logs. By the end of the season, we were using electronic distribution (smartphone pic/scan and texting) to get the data faster and cheaper.

The current forms will be modified for 2018 use. Especially on the Shotgun starts for easier analysis.

We may also test out Mobile Data Entry to enter Pace Log data directly using smartphone APP or a webform. This will be faster and more accurate – eliminates bad handwriting and bad member ID.

PACE OF PLAY FOR 2018

This will be a continuing process for many years. For 2018:

- Continue Pace Log measurements
 - Improve forms and data entry
 - Test Mobile Data Entry with smartphones at course
 - Faster event results
- Continue member education and encouragement
 - Pace results reporting to members, monthly to every 6 weeks
 - Communicate Ready Golf Tips, website, posts, VP emails
 - Encourage member testimonials
 - New member education, indoctrination
 - Special communications
 - Division “mentors”
 - Encouragement and Remediation for chronic “slow” members
- Change Weekly Tournaments for Improved Pace
 - Eliminate all Reverse Shotgun Starts (done for 2018)
 - Get Starters / Scorers on the course earlier
 - Split Tee Registration Time reduced to 1 hour after first start time
 - 7:30 AM for a 6:30 AM first start
 - 8:00 AM for a 7:00 AM first start