

Bedfordshire Golf Club Ladies Section

Girls Just Want to Have Fun!

We want you to get the most out of our club, making new friends and improving your golf, but most of all having fun - so here is some useful information to help you get started at the club.

Joining a new Golf Club can be a bit daunting, whether you are just starting golf or even a seasoned player. The most important message from us is that you should feel free to ask any members for help or advice. We all remember the feeling of being new and we are here to give you a warm welcome.

The committee will ensure that all new members are provided with a 'buddy' who will show you around, answer your questions and introduce you to the club.

Below are some tips and some information to help you settle in:

Playing Times

- Tuesday - Ladies Competition Day, morning & afternoon tee times
- Saturday - Roll up at 8:30am prompt to draw playing partners
Alternative competition day or social golf
- Thursday - Roll up at 10:30am prompt
- Friday - Roll up, meet at 9:15am prompt to draw playing partners

Sub-sections and Social Groups

The ladies section also has a number of informal, social groups including: Senior ladies golf (aged 50+); Book Club; Bridge Club; Pilates. See the Ladies section of the website for more details.

What is a handicap and how do I get one?

The handicap system allows golfers of differing degrees of skill to compete against each other. A golf handicap is a numerical measure of a golfer's ability to play golf. Essentially, a golf handicap is calculated as the average number of

strokes above par a player is likely to score for any given round. In stroke play, at the end of a round of golf, each player subtracts their individual golf handicap from their gross score, to produce a net score.

A Player with a golf handicap of zero or less is known as a scratch golfer. Golf handicaps do not apply in professional golf.

CONGU competition handicaps are required to be eligible to play in all competitions and inter-club matches. A handicap is gained and subsequently maintained by playing 3 qualifying competitions throughout the calendar year

- New members without a current handicap normally need to play three rounds with a current member with a handicap
- If you joined from another club, your handicap moves with you

Trophies & Competitions

Entering competitions is a great way to get to know other members of the club, to improve your golf and get more variety. Above all, they are fun. Bedfordshire Ladies Section plays a wide range of competitive golf formats ranging from fun competitions amongst ourselves to serious matches against other clubs. There are opportunities for mixed golf and participation in county, regional and national events. All club competitions and trophies are listed in the Club Diary, provided free in the clubhouse at the beginning of each year.

Ladies qualifying competitions (i.e. for handicap purposes) and most fun ones are played on Tuesdays or Saturdays.

Competition tee times are displayed on the notice board in the Ladies' locker-room about a month in advance. Sign the sheet to play at a time that suits you.

IMPORTANT - On competition day, whether Tuesday or Saturday:-

1. Sign your name in the blue folder on the desk.
2. Put the competition fee (usually £2.50) in an envelope writing your name, the date and the competition title on the front and put it in the box.

3. Arrive at the first tee at least 5 minutes before your tee-off time.
4. At the end of the round, make sure your card is signed by yourself and your marker, dated & your handicap displayed. Examples are shown in the ladies' locker room.
5. Post your results on the computer and put your card in the box

All Competition results are displayed on the Notice Board and online via Master Scoreboard. Cash prizes for winning competitions are automatically paid into your account in the Pro shop.

Types of Competition Format

Some popular formats used by the ladies' section are:

- **Medal** - Stroke play, all strokes must be counted. Subtract your handicap from the gross score to get your nett score. The winner has the lowest nett score.
- Stableford - Point scoring based on your handicap; the fewer shots you take the more points you get. You pick up your ball when you run out of scoring shots on a particular hole.
- **4BBB – four ball, better (or best) ball**. Pairs competition, best point score in the pair taken per hole
- **Foursomes** - Pairs competition using one ball per pair. One player drives the odd numbered holes and the other drives the even numbered holes. After driving off, players take alternate shots.
- **Greensomes** - like foursomes, but both players drive off, and then select the best one to play thereafter.
- **Matchplay** - pits players against each other, rather than one against the field as in stroke play. Opponents compete to win individual holes and the player or pair who wins the most holes wins the match.
- Other popular formats used in our fun competitions include: Texas scramble, yellow ball, flag, waltz, eclectic etc.
- **'Shot guns'** Everyone starts their game at the same time, but on a different hole. A shot gun, or more usually a rocket or flare is fired to signify the start of the competition

Special Trophy Days and Events

Here are a few examples of some of the great days we enjoy together during the year to whet your appetite! In addition there are trophy competitions that run throughout the season. Sign-up sheets and the final draw are displayed on the ladies notice board. Listed below are some examples of key events in our year:-

- Coffee Morning and Golf begins the qualifying season
- Adams Trophy
- Ladies Championship
- Ladies Members Day
- Lady Captains Day
- Ladies Invitation Day

Club Matches

The club participates in a range of inter-club matches, including:

- Shield & Friendly Matches
 - You need an a handicap to play
 - Sign up on the match sheet on the notice board
 - Team kit is: Pale blue polo shirt and jumper with club logo and navy trousers, shorts or skirt (available in Pro shop.)
- Mixed
 - You need a handicap to play
 - Sign up on the match sheet on the mixed notice board in the entrance hall of the Club.
- Scratch
 - These are for low handicap players
 - There is no handicap allowance
 - You will be invited to join the squad

County Ladies & Open Competitions

Bedfordshire Ladies' County Golf Association (BLCGA) web site contains information about County Events, fixture lists, entry forms & results from the previous year. Some clubs host Open Competitions. Enter as many of the events as you can; it is a very enjoyable way to play another course, meet ladies from other clubs and have a good day out for a very low cost.

Handy Tips - Etiquette

Golf is a game based on a principle of good manners and consideration for others; golf etiquette and club rules promote this ethos:

- Avoid Slow Play by:-
 - Be ready at your ball to take your shot
 - Keep your bag with you so you are ready to move on promptly and do not impede those playing behind you.
 - Mark score card whilst waiting to tee off at the next hole, so the green is cleared for players behind you
- If you sign up to play with someone it is polite to let her know.
- Let your playing partners know if you cannot play
- If you have no-one to play with just turn up and you will be accommodated.
- Be aware of the speed of your play
- On the 1st tee it is customary to tee off in handicap order, unless playing with the Ladies Captain when you should allow her to tee off first regardless of handicap.
- After teeing off, the ball furthest from the hole is played first, however our club adopts the **READY GOLF** play format where the person ready to play takes their stroke providing it is safe to do so irrespective of distance from the hole.
- Rake over the sand in bunkers when you get out
- Repair fairway divots and pitch marks on the greens
- Keep quiet and avoid distracting movements when others are taking their shots
- Golf wear must be worn at all times on the course

- Restrict mobile phone use to the car park except in emergencies
- Stay safe by keeping behind the ball being played
- Cover you head if you hear someone shout Fore! Do not look round.
- When you have finished your round, thank the other players in your group and then come in and enjoy a drink together in the bar (nineteenth hole).

Handy Tips – where to look

It can be really daunting when you first arrive at a club, so here are a few tips for finding the information you need:-

- Check the notice boards regularly.
- Check your handicap on the list in the locker room corridor **BEFORE** you play.
- If you need a new handicap certificate sign on the list for it and it will be placed in the letter rack in the Locker Room.
- Local rules are on the back of the score card.
- Remember to check when winter rules start and finish
- Unsure of a rule? In a stroke-play competition play a second ball on that hole and check when you come in. (Look at Rule 3-3 for the full procedure to be followed)
- Need a locker? Contact the Hon Secretary of the Ladies Committee.
- Hole in One Fund. You may be lucky! Sign up and pay a small fee each year.
- Score a **'birdie'** add a label to the birdie tree in the locker room
- 3 rounds dots of different colours are placed outside the Pro shop to signify the state of the course and what equipment may be used:
 - **Green**=No restrictions;
 - **Blue**=winter wheels, no buggies;
 - **Red**=carry bags only
- Don't be shy. Sign up to play with anyone, everybody plays GOLF and we all want to get to know new members.
- If in doubt, just ask; people are only too happy to help and we want all members to enjoy themselves

Where Can I Find Ladies Contact Numbers?

Your first port of call is usually the Club Secretary who is usually in the office on the ground floor. Details of members' phone numbers are available on a 'phone sheet' in the Ladies Locker Room. The Membership Secretary also circulates them by email at the start of the