

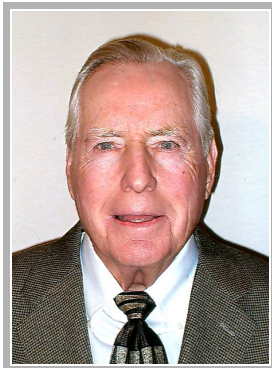


# MISGAGRAM

Volume 122 – March 2015

[www.misga.org](http://www.misga.org)

## President's Message



What a WINTER, let's hope spring is here...

The spring meeting of the MISGA Board of Directors was held on Thursday Mar 12, at Sparrows Point Country Club. No golf because of the weather and wet conditions. We continue to have membership losses and we must make a concerted effort to stem the tide and gain new members. Division 6 has prepared a MISGA INFO BOARD and a handout to emphasize the benefits of MISGA to visiting golfers in an effort to increase membership. Whatever it takes to grow MISGA is a worthwhile effort.

We will be holding the Annual Rep's Meeting on April 13 at Prospect Bay Golf and Country Club. Please let me or your Club Rep know of any ideas

that you may have to improve MISGA so we can bring it up at the meeting.

Earl Gentry, MISGA President

## Upcoming Frolics & Flings for 2015

### Spring Fling – 2015

May 12,13,14 - Williamsburg, VA (See page 3)

**ONLY 20 SLOTS REMAIN FOR FULL FIELD.**

**ENTRY DEADLINE APRIL 10, 2015.**

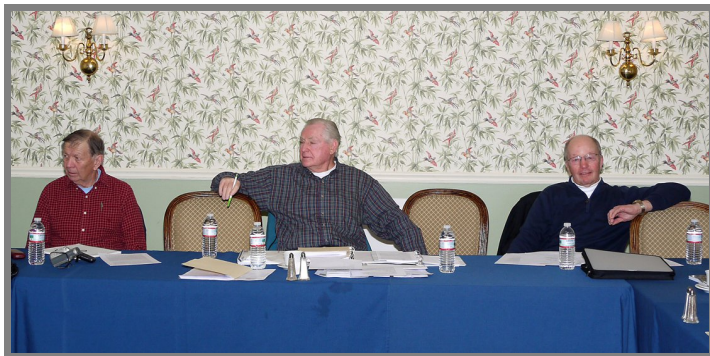
Click "[here](#)" for flyers and registration forms.

## MISGA Board Meeting – March 12, 2015

Sparrows Point Country Club



Peter Sorge Explains



John Babyak, Earl Gentry, & Joe Baily Listen

Maryland  
Interclub  
Seniors Golf  
Association

**President**  
Earl Gentry

**Vice President**  
Joe Baily

**Secretary**  
John Babyak

**Treasurer**  
Dick Schwinger

The MISGAGRAM is the official newsletter of the organization published on the web site four times each year. The mission of the MISGAGRAM is to provide information of common interest to association members.

The MISGAGRAM can be read or downloaded at:  
[www.misga.org](http://www.misga.org).

The publication months for the MISGAGRAM are:

**March**  
**June**  
**September**  
**December**

Noteworthy events and announcements for away activities, and articles of general interest may be submitted to the editor at any time for publishing. The closing dates for publication are:

**10 March** (March)  
**10 June** (June)  
**20 Sept.** (September)  
**20 Dec.** (December)

All materials should be sent via e-mail to:

[b.keadle@comcast.net](mailto:b.keadle@comcast.net)

Byron W. Keadle  
MISGAGRAM Editor

## Summer Frolic2015

The Summer Frolic is being held at the newly renovated Carroll Valley Liberty Mountain Resort in the beautiful town of Fairfield, Pennsylvania. Set the dates of **September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>** aside on your calendar for two days of golf, fun and good eating!! For complete information, see the Flyer and Entry Form under [www.misga.org/events.htm](http://www.misga.org/events.htm), then Summer Frolic. Questions should be directed to Tom Taylor, 410-848-1866 or email to [trytogolf@comcast.net](mailto:trytogolf@comcast.net). All entries must be in by July 31<sup>st</sup>.

## MISGAGRAM Editor Vacancy

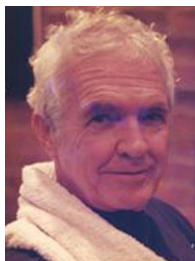
The MISGAGRAM editor is planning to retire before September, 2015. If anyone is interested in the job, please contact either Byron Keadle at [b.keadle@comcast.net](mailto:b.keadle@comcast.net) or Earl Gentry at [earlgentry3@comcast.net](mailto:earlgentry3@comcast.net).

## OBITUARIES

Recent Deaths not previously reported in the MISGAGRAM

### Daniel Hunt, Capt. USN Ret.

November 17, 1920 - January 11, 2015



It is with a heavy heart that we pass along some sad information today. One of our members Captain Daniel Hunt, 94, passed away on January 11th. **Chester River Yacht & Country Club** would like to express its condolences to the Hunt family. He loved the game of golf and his passion was obvious. He will be dearly missed.

-- Larry Ortmann, Chester River Rep

### Ralph Bussard

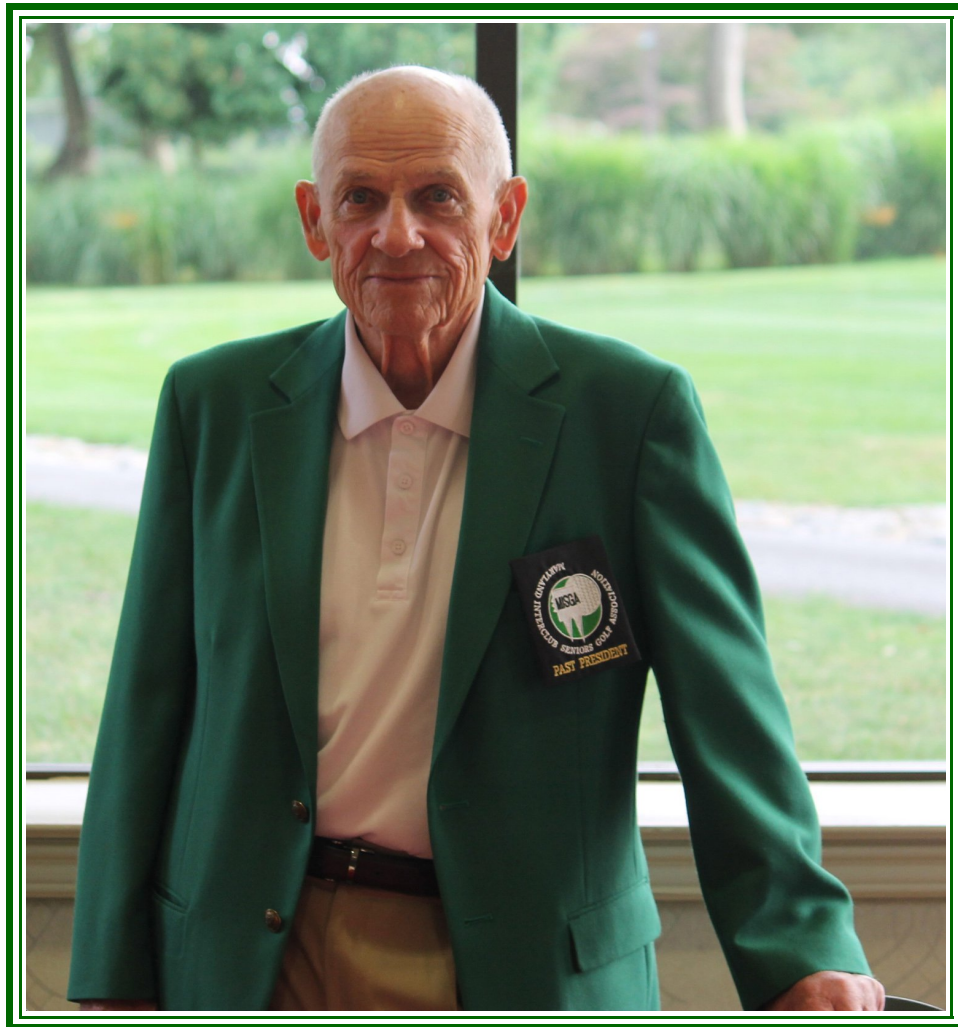
October 15, 1936 – March 13, 2015



Our hearts are heavy from learning of the passing of Ralph Bussard. He was a Starter/Greeter at Musket Ridge and was one of our original Musket Ridge MISGA Associate. He will be greatly missed by all of us. The Musket Ridge MISGA Group would like to express its condolences to the Bussard family. He loved the game of golf and his passion was obvious.

-- Tom Rowlett, Division II Assistant Director

Thank you, Byron!



An era is coming to a close. BYRON KEADLE, a model of grace and dignity, did not expect to stay in his position putting up a quality publication for quite so long. But then Byron is no ordinary person. His qualifications were honed throughout his storied career. We in MISGA are fortunate that we have been the recipients of his many talents.

His hair loss is directly attributed to searching through the overabundance of submitted material for Gram publication. MISGA has been lucky to have him and his lovely spouse Aretta to provide outstanding service to our organization. His photography has "Almost" no equal in MISGA.

Please feel free to stay on! We know you and your wife are ready to relax and play golf, with no thought of deadlines and who is going to submit something of note for publication.

We (Tom Tarpley, especially) Thank You for your Dedication and more often than not thankless Effort!

Tom Tarpley, PP and Chair PPADHoc

## **2015 MISGA SPRING FLING**

WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

Tuesday May 12 (Arrival)—Thursday May 14 (Departure)

The 2015 Spring Fling will again be in Williamsburg, Virginia, which is a 2.5 to 3 hour drive south of Washington DC. Each year the weather has been ideal with temperatures in the 70's in the daytime and 60's at night. The great weather and excellent golf courses make Williamsburg the perfect location in mid-May. We will be playing Golden Horseshoe Green Course, Golden Horseshoe Gold Course, and Kiskiack.

You are responsible for obtaining your own lodging. There are many hotels and condos available in the Williamsburg area, all convenient to the three golf courses and the historical downtown area. If you need assistance finding quarters for your stay contact Joe Baily; contact information below.

Shotgun starts are scheduled for Green Course 1:00 PM on Tuesday 5/12, Gold Course 9 AM on Wednesday 5/13, and Kiskiack 9 AM on Thursday 5/14. Typical Misga team competitions will be played each day.

There is a luncheon scheduled for the non-golfing wives/guest on Tuesday 5/12 at Golden Horseshoe Green Course. Dinner will be on Wednesday evening 5/13 and there will be a deli luncheon at Kiskiack following golf on Thursday.

The basic package price includes three rounds of golf, prizes awarded daily, a luncheon Tuesday for the non-golfing partners, dinner Wednesday evening, and a deli lunch Thursday following golf.

Misga members must submit an APPLICATION FORM and check for payment in full to the address on the form. Go to [www.misga.org](http://www.misga.org) to download the form that is located under "Frolics and Flings" heading on the home page. If you are not computer savvy or unable to download the form contact Joe Baily 302-465-0793 or [jjbaily3@verizon.net](mailto:jjbaily3@verizon.net) to obtain an application form.

The field is now set at 72 golfers and at press time we are approaching that number. Don't be disappointed - GET YOUR ENTRY IN NOW!!!

## **The Back Nine - A poem by Ray Kangas**

The fairways seem much narrower and somewhat longer too,  
My pace is somewhat slower and my birdies are quite few.  
I don't mind that the march of time has ravished all my skill,  
To live to play another day, for me is still a thrill.

Golf is more than a game to me, it's a pattern for our lives,  
It takes time and effort to learn the putts, the chips, the drives.  
The rules, the tools, the etiquette, are all part of the game.  
As is the case in the game of life, we strive to make our name.

For some the game is simple, they drive and chip with ease,  
Others of us, not so much, and it brings us to our knees.  
Such my friend is the game of life, we are all dealt different hands,  
We play them out as best we can, while we watch the hourglass sands.

For those of us who made the turn a long, long, time ago,  
We don't want the game to end but one day it must be so.  
We have learned to love the game and we have tried to play it well,  
We see in golf the game of life, if you know us, you can tell.

So please don't ask yourself why I struggle on the greens,  
You see, I am not struggling, that's just the way it seems.  
I love the game, I love my friends, we bicker back and forth,  
We respect each other's journey and respect each other's worth.

We know we haven't many holes to go, we savor each and every one,  
We hurry not to post our scores when our golfing days are done.  
We will all look back and know that we played the best we could,  
The game of life, the game of golf, as we always hoped we would.

## **2015 Winter Fling – Plantation on Crystal River Resort**

Crystal River, Florida February 22-28

MISGA's 2015 Winter Fling to the Plantation Resort in Crystal River, Florida was described by many as "Best Winter Fling ever!" The staff was attentive and accommodating, and the food was the best in the five years that I have been attending. The new management has made a difference. And, of course there was the chance to play golf, good or otherwise.

When I left Ocean Pines there was 6 inches of snow on the ground, and the temperature was 5° with a wind chill of 20 below. At Crystal River we did get some cool days, but folks were able to wear shorts for all four rounds of golf with temperatures pushing 70°. It was good golf weather with just a few light sprinkles for a couple of holes on Monday.

The course at the Plantation was in its usual great shape—the greens were true and very fast. Along with many others in the MISGA group, it took a while to get used to the speed and the amount of break that comes with playing Florida's Bermuda greens. A newcomer, Ron DeGrouchy, was this year's star player for the Men as he was pushing scratch most days. His wife Sharon also played a pretty good game in the Ladies' matches. I guess you'd expect this from a couple that has built a putting green into their basement! NOTICE: We need some competition for Ron next year.

Our heartfelt thanks to Bill and Laura Thomson for setting up the golf pairings. Laura worries herself sick over this each year, but Laura – you did great. Prize money was spread around and almost all participated. (Hmmm – except yours truly – have to look into that).

The breakfast buffet was very good with a nice variety of eggs, bacon, sausage, grits, cereals, French toast, and fruit. They had home-made muffins that were superb (get there early or the locust get the good ones – you know who you are), and those who choose the three dollar upgrade to the eggs Benedict were more than satisfied. Our dinner offerings were very good with a nice variety of choices and some exceptional deserts. Tuesday's London broil was at the top of my list along with the salmon and prime rib served for our final meal.

The Plantation provided us with our own hospitality suite where we had an opportunity to adjust our attitudes before dinner and recall our better shots and lost opportunities after dinner was over. I am not sure why moonshine and Girl Scout cookies work, but...what's not to like about that!

Unfortunately the weather was a little too cool and overcast to make full use of the pool, though a long soak in the hot tub was close to heaven after three consecutive days of golf. Those strolling the lush grounds at The Plantation reported several sightings of manatees, a few alligators, and a variety of birds and other Florida wildlife.

To all that came I hope you had as good a time as I did. If you missed this year's fling, I hope you will think about making plans to attend in 2016

Nelson Fenwick  
MISGA Winter Fling Coordinator - 2015

## MISGA 2015 WINTER FLING ATTENDEES BY CLUB

### **BAY HILLS**

Hobart Smartwood

### **CAROLINE**

Fred Meers

Carol Meers

### **CROSS CREEK**

Ron DeGrouchy

Sharon DeGrouchy

### **HARBOURTOWNE**

Carter Hughlett

Dixie Hughlett

Dennis Medlock

Page Medlock

### **HOBBITS GLEN**

Bob Fitzgerald

Kathy Fitzgerald

John Gale

Dorothy Gale

Richard Violette

### **HOOPERS LANDING**

Richard Dale

Patty Dale

### **OCEAN CITY**

Pat McAllorum

Lynne McAllorum

### **OCEAN PINES**

Jim Beisler

Pat Beisler

Nelson Fenwick

Natalie Fenwick

Bob Kessler

Norma Kessler

Walt Lischak

Barbara Lischak

Bob Long

Margaret Long

Steve Neal

Carolyn Neal

Ron Olszewski

Rose Olszewski

Bill Stafford

Sally Stafford

Bill Thomson

Laura Thomson

### **TANTALLON NATIONAL**

John Sullivan

Aileen Sullivan

Ralph Harms

Zelma Harms

### **USNA**

Tom Brown

Peggy Brown

## MISGA 2015 WINTER FLING RESULTS

### MONDAY SCRAMBLE (MIXED MEN AND WOMEN)

1 <sup>st</sup> Ron DeGrouchy	2 <sup>nd</sup> Fred Meers	3 <sup>rd</sup> Bob Fitzgerald
Dick Dale	Tom Brown	Zelma Harms
Natalie Fenwick	Jim Beisler	Walt Lischak
	Rose Olszewski	Pat Beisler

TUESDAY – Both Men and Women played the same format: 1 best ball on Par 5's,  
2 best balls on Par 4's, and 3 best balls on Par 3's

#### Women:

1 <sup>st</sup> Page Medlock	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dixie Hughlett
Sally Stafford	Kathy Fitzgerald
Pat Beisler	Dorothy Gale
Kathy Fitzgerald (Blind Draw)	Rose Olszewski

#### Men:

1 <sup>st</sup> Ron DeGrouchy	2 <sup>nd</sup> Bill Stafford
Ralph Harms	Carter Hughlett
Tom Brown	Bob Kessler
Hobie Swartwood	Ralph Harms (Blind Draw)

THURSDAY'S Rounds were played on Wednesday, because of impending wet weather for Wednesday.  
Formats were different: Men played a 4-person Stableford; Women played Low Putts.

#### Women:

1 <sup>st</sup> Carolyn Neal	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dixie Hughlett
Sally Stafford	Carol Meers
Zelma Harms	Pat Beisler
Natalie Fenwick	Page Medlock (Blind Draw)

#### Men:

1 <sup>st</sup> Ron DeGrouchy	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jack Sullivan
Steve Neal	Ron Olszewski
Bob Kessler	Jim Beisler
John Gale	Ralph Harms (Blind Draw)

FRIDAY – Both Men and Women played the same format – 3 best balls on Holes 1-6, 2 best balls on  
Holes 7-12, and 1 best ball on Holes 13-18

#### Ladies:

Flight A	Sally Stafford	Flight B	Norma Kessler
Winners	Kathy Fitzgerald	Winners	Barbara Lischak
	Carol Meers		Dorothy Gale
	Zelma Harms		Rose Olszewski
	Overall Low Gross	Page Medlock	
	Overall Low Net	Pat Beisler	
	Closest to Pin	Sharon DeGrouchy	

#### Men:

Flight A	Ron Olszewski	Flight B	Dick Dale
	Walt Lischak		Bob Kessler
	Steve Neal		Patrick McAllorum
	Jack Sullivan		Jim Beisler
	Overall Low Gross	Ron DeGrouchy	
	Overall Low Net	Ralph Harms	
	Closest to Pin	Jack Sullivan	



Over the past few years, many suggestions have been made on the pages of the MISGAGRAM aimed at improving the MISGA experience: playing by the rules, improving speed of play, honoring the rules of golf etiquette, and increasing enjoyment for all associates. Some are reprinted here as a BONUS in the final edition for this editor.

### **Commentary with Current Data (MG-2008-12)**

As MISGA enters its 40th year, we face serious challenges for the continued growth and development of MISGA. Membership has declined every year since its peak of 4830 associates in 2000 to 3838 in 2008, to 3106 associates in 2014. In addition, participation is down to the point where four or five clubs must be invited to have a reasonable number of players for a mixer. Nevertheless, MISGA remains the best way for senior golfers to enjoy the physical and social activity afforded by the "mixer" format and by the sponsored "frolics." In spite of increasing costs, MISGA events are attractive options for golfing vacations.

What are some of the reasons that senior club members are not joining MISGA or not participating much, or are dropping out entirely? In conversations with both associates and non-associates, we have learned some of the reasons:

1. Slow play – mixers frequently take 5 to 5 1/2 hours for everyone to finish.
2. Cheating – associates not playing by the rules of golf and/or maintaining inflated handicaps.
3. Course length – courses are too long for many to enjoy. Handicaps adjust for the course length, but that doesn't make it any more fun.
4. Too expensive – they want to play golf, not eat a large meal in mid-afternoon. However, it is realized that clubs need that income to offset the "no green fees" policy of MISGA.
5. Too many mixers – this may be related to "too expensive." Playing in only four mixers a month can cost over \$160. It's not uncommon for a club to have 20+ mixers in a season. At some point, cost does become a serious consideration.

We need increased emphasis on playing by the rules, first of all on "play down, putt out." That would be a big accomplishment. The next milestone would be to educate on relief situations and procedures – a "how-to" guide.

Let's Have Fun - With the ages of associates spanning 50 to 90+ and with handicaps ranging from single digits to over 40, we certainly have a diverse population participating in our Mixer Program. The "one size fits all" approach to tee selection just doesn't provide a fun golfing experience for everyone. In many cases, the standard tee placement creates a course that is too long for enjoyment by many players. Some will say that handicaps adjust for course length and difficulty. While that may be true in a technical sense, it doesn't equate to "fun." Fun is being able to hit a club other than a 3-wood for the second shot on most par 4 holes. We need to encourage clubs to offer Multi-Tee Mixers, where the tees played from are determined not by age or handicap, but by individual choice. Call this the "fun factor." Of course, the USGA method for "mixed tees" must be used to assign course and tee handicaps. (Golfnet takes care of this.) Then, according to the USGA, this would provide an equitable competition, which should cause no one to agonize over unfairness issues. Furthermore, as a bonus, we can have fun without dispensing with the rules of golf.

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### **This Isn't the PGA (MG-2008-12)**

A fellow associate suggested to me recently that MISGA seniors should improve their lies everywhere within the tree lines, except bunkers. I mentioned that that was not in keeping with the spirit of the game, even cheating. He said, "We're not the PGA; we're out here to have fun. Besides, everyone (in MISGA) cheats."

Isn't that a sad state of affairs? How can cheating ever be fun?

However, cheating is deeply embedded in the MISGA culture. It is not only tolerated, but actually abetted. How often are putts conceded by teammates, or given to a teammate, or just taken, period? Have you noticed that a player, after missing one putt, casually backhands the next for another miss? But never mind, it was already taken as "good." In fact, his teammates will be quick to announce, "That was good!" so as not to embarrass the player by counting the already missed putt as a stroke. It is considered an insult to expect him to putt out from a "short" distance. And how about the next one, which was merely picked up instead of being putt into the cup?

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### **There are no "gimmes" in golf! (MG-2008-12)**

I really don't believe that everyone cheats. A large majority of MISGA associates will not violate the USGA rules if they are given explicit instructions during the pre-mixer announcements. Everyone can understand, "Play 'em down! Putt 'em out!" After all, golf is not a game of perfect lies. The challenge is to get the most out of a given situation, whether in a divot or behind a tree.

Any game is more fun when played within the rules. So, let's play golf, MISGA! Play 'em down and putt 'em out! You'll have more fun.

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## Conquering Slow Play (MG2010-07)

Slow play is a continual problem for the senior MISGA golfers. Many feel that placing two groups on par 3 holes causes slower play. They suggest that par 3s should have only one group, while par 4s should have two groups. However, that guarantees that the par 3 group will arrive at the following par 4 tee before the second par 4 group has teed off, or shortly thereafter. Further, the par 3 tee is empty because the par 4 group behind has yet to reach the green. So we have a one group delay at the following par 4 and a one group gap at the par 3.

Now, consider putting two groups on the par 3s, but only one group on the following par 4. Since the par 3 plays faster, that group will finish putting while the group ahead is hitting second shots. Thus, the par 4 tee is open when the par3 group arrives. Meanwhile, the second group on the par three is hitting their tee shots, while the par 4 group behind is hitting second shots to the green. Then, the trailing par 4 group is putting at the same time that the second par 3 group is putting and the first par 3 group is hitting second shots on the following par 4. The result is no waiting and no gaps, at least to get started.

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### Summary of Responses to MISGAGRAM Editorial of Dec-08.

We've had a number of responses to the December MISGAGRAM editorial. There was general agreement that the problems identified were indeed problems that need to be addressed within MISGA. Some suggestions from the responses follow.

Slow Play: It has been the practice to expect the "A" player in each group to insure rules compliance and pace of play. That has proven to be unsuccessful; no one wants to be the ogre. Suggestion: Set a strict time limit of 4 ½ to 4 ¾ hours, announcing before start of play that no scorecards would be accepted for prize consideration if not turned in prior to the time limit. The time limit has been effective at both Manor and Lakewood. Perhaps other clubs are using the time limit to help speed play.

Cheating: "Cheating" is tied with "Slow Play" as the number one reason that people are not participating. In the past, the "A" player has been charged with enforcing the rules; however, this has not been effective either because he doesn't know the rules, or is reluctant to challenge his teammates, or considers "winning" a more urgent requirement. The person not playing by the rules should be the pariah, not the enforcer. Suggestion-1: We recommend that each club rep purchase additional copies of the USGA pamphlet "Golf Rules in Brief" so that each of his members can have a copy. This is a small 8-page summary of the principal rules of golf, easily carried in the golf bag. It is available from USGA at \$0.75 a copy. Suggestion-2: Meanwhile, try the following experiment: (1) Banish the Gimme; (2) Play the Ball as it Lies; (3) Take Relief only according to the Rules; and (4) Post your Score. Remember: "Winning without Honor is no Victory."

Course Length: Many players consider the typical mixer course to be too long, even for many "A" players. Two solutions were offered for this: (1) Mixed Tees and (2) More Scrambles. Either of these suggestions would also tend to speed up the game.

Mixed Tees: Several liked the idea of playing shorter courses, such as offered by the mixed tees format. The only requirement for playing a different set of tees is pre-notification for choice of tees. Golfnet does the rest. Here is the MISGA policy on Mixed Tees:

"The use of alternate tees in MISGA Mixers, State Tournaments and other events, such as Frolics and Flings, is optional and is to be determined by the Club, the Club Rep or the Event/Tournament Chairman. All golfers may choose to play any of the optional tees if optional tees are offered. When optional tees are offered, participants must be informed in advance and the USGA Handicap Manual must be used to rate the use of all tees offered." - BM-20060302

More Scrambles: The Scramble is widely considered to be a "fun" format for groups with disparate capabilities. The USGA provides recommended handicap allowances for Scrambles, which seem to work well for most groups, regardless of minimum number of drives required or other special conditions. – Section 9-4, USGA Handicap System

Segregate Field by Handicap: One suggestion for improving participation is to segregate the field on the basis of handicap because some younger players don't want to play with older, high handicappers. While segregating the field on the basis of skill is somewhat counter to the social aspects of the mixer concept, the format for a given mixer is at the discretion of the host club rep; consequently, he could try that to see how it works.

Cost: Cost is not so much a consideration for an individual Mixer, which even at current cost still appears to be a fair price for value received. Cost does become a factor when, because of expected low participation, multiple clubs are invited for a home mixer to produce a decent size field, resulting in reciprocal away mixers with every club invited. Now, we are talking 20 to 30 mixers a year. Thus, partly on the basis of cost, many will not participate in all scheduled mixers, resulting in continuation of the low participation problem. Suggestion: Increase participation by applying some or all of the suggestions noted herein.

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## **In Favor of Fair Play (MG-2009-04)**

By George Donadoni

No man with any self-respect likes to be branded as unsportsmanlike. But, unfortunately, MISGA has a reputation in some circles as an organization whose members flout the rules of the game.

Some think that cracking down on rules violators is contrary to the MISGA ideal of camaraderie. Why spoil a friendly match by insisting that the integrity of the game be maintained?

Well, to be blunt, if a player is not playing by the rules, he is not playing golf; he's playing some other game involving knocking a ball around. Ignoring the rules means shifting standards: the 83 he shot today may or may not be better than the 87 he shot last week. If he is not applying the same standards, to wit: the rules, he has no idea if today's score was better or worse than last week's. And, if he is in a competition and ignoring the rules - face it - that is unsportsmanlike conduct.

Obviously, claiming a score lower than one actually achieved is cheating by anyone's criteria. But there are other ways to flout the rules that may not be so obvious.

- Deliberately making a bad shot or missing a putt to pad one's handicap.
- Failing to apply equitable stroke control.
- Failing to post *every score* played for 13 holes or more in an active season under the rules of golf, whether those scores come at a MISGA event or otherwise.
- Faithfully posting all one's high scores but conveniently forgetting to post the low scores.
- Conceding a putt or taking a gimme of any length when that putt will count in the score for a competition.
- Moving the ball in the rough (except under authorized conditions). coincident
- Purporting to play a provisional shot when the original ball is in a hazard, then finding and attempting to play the original ball.
- Taking an unauthorized free drop.
- Taking an authorized drop, and re-dropping if one doesn't like the resulting lie.
- Being too liberal in determining the point at which his ball entered a hazard.
- Abandoning a ball, playing another shot, then finding and attempting to play the original ball.
- Grounding a club in a hazard, or moving objects in the hazard.

It really doesn't matter if there is serious money at stake; the purity of the game demands that the rules be taken seriously. It also doesn't matter if one's playing partners agree to an infraction. It further doesn't matter if one thinks that a rule is silly (such as the prohibition on repairing spike marks). Finally it doesn't matter if one is unsure of a rule - it is likely that at least one of his playing partners will know the correct procedure.

**Bottom line: learn the rules and abide by them ALWAYS! Play the game as it is intended to be played.**

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## **TWO GROUPS ON PAR 3's (MG-2011-03)**

In setting up shotgun starts for MISGA during the Winter Fling, the Golf Pro at Plantation Inn put two groups on par 3's to improve speed of play. Coincidentally, this technique was suggested in the July issue of the MISGAGRAM (MG-2010-07 - "Conquering Slow Play") as a means of speeding play.

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## **Fixing MISGA (MG-2012-03)**

During the past several years, there have been numerous suggestions aimed at improving the MISGA experience.

### **SLOW PLAY**

1. For shotgun starts, put two groups on the par 3s and only one group on the following hole.
2. Continuous Putting - All putting lanes have already been stepped on by previous groups.
3. Mixed Tees - Some want shorter courses and some want longer courses. The obvious solution is to use "mixed tees." If course handicaps follow the USGA guidance, then it will be an equitable competition.
4. Ready Golf! - Hit when ready, but watch everybody's balls.
5. DQ - This is rather severe and can have the opposite of the intended effect. It may drive people away from mixers rather than speeding play. Of course, smaller fields will then play faster.

### **ENJOYMENT**

1. Mixed Tees - With multiple tee options, one can choose the set of tees most suitable for his or her enjoyment.
2. Shorter Courses - Makes the game faster as well as more enjoyable.
3. Follow Golf Rules - You'll really feel better about yourself! Try it.

## CHEATING

It is doubtful whether cheating can ever be eliminated. Cheating is as ingrained in the game as gambling.

1. Eliminate prize money – If there is no prize or money involved, then cheating won't matter and everyone can play by his own "interpretation" of the rules.

## TOO EXPENSIVE

1. No Open Bars at Events – Non-drinkers shouldn't be charged for others' drinks.
2. Cut back on lunch to Soup & Sandwich Bar – We don't need big meals in mid-afternoon.
3. Hold Fewer Mixers
4. Schedule Closer clubs – reduce traveling time and expense.

Let's have more suggestions for making MISGA Mixers/Events a more enjoyable experience for all skill/age/sex levels.

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### **On Putting (Things to Ponder) (MG-2011-06)**

1. What is the reluctance to fairly putt the ball into the cup?
  - a. Is it because it's impossible to miss a "short" putt and requiring a player to putt out could be considered poor sportsmanship?
  - b. Is it to speed play because a tap-in takes so long, whereas plumb-bobbing a long putt from both sides doesn't?
2. Does a casual backhand miss count the same as a careful forehand miss? Or, is it retroactively counted as good because he could have made it easily, if he really tried?
3. Does a successful rake-in count the same as a fairly struck putt-in, since a prior concession was already implied?
4. Why do teammates concede putts to their partners in a team stroke competition? Is it because no one wants to antagonize or embarrass a partner?

Just wondering!

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### **SPEED OF PLAY (MG-2011-12)**

Speed of play is recognized as one of the major problems within MISGA. The MISGAGRAM is full of suggestions on attacking this problem. A second major problem is not playing by the rules of golf. We don't want to violate the rules in the hope that it will speed play; e.g., "gimmies."

The following suggestions will definitely contribute to faster play:

- Play "Ready Golf"
- Keep up with the group in front, not merely ahead of the group behind!
- Multi-tees – golfer's choice. USGA Handicap System must be followed in determining course handicap. We already do this for women, don't we?
- Drop player at first ball; then continue to next ball. After hitting, return to meet first player.
- Hold clubs until next cart stop; then put them away.
- Hit before searching for lost ball.
- Watch all balls to expedite the search.
- If a ball may be lost outside a hazard or out-of-bounds, hit a provisional. Of course, if the original ball is found, you must abandon the provisional. (It may be better not to find the original.) If the original is going to be unplayable, don't even search for it.
- Continuous Putting – the green has already been trampled. Don't waste time by marking and plumb-bobbing, again.
- Park the cart at the exit of the green before putting.
- Go to the next tee before marking score or replacing clubs.
- Learn Taking Relief procedures & penalties.

Equitable Stroke Control (ESC) has nothing to do with speed of play. ESC controls the maximum score for a hole that may be posted (after the round is over). It is never to be used as a countable score for a hole. Some people are perhaps confusing ESC with Most Likely Score (MLS), the score that you are most likely to make if you play it out. However, if you pick up, then you are no longer in the individual competition for those nine holes or for the eighteen. If playing as a member of a four-man team, then picking up becomes more palatable, and will speed play. But neither an MLS nor an ESC number can be counted in determining a prize-winning score, whether individual or team competition.

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## **Pace of Play (MG-2011-06)**

Key to slow Play!! **Must want to do it!!!!** If you don't care or don't pay any attention to pace of play....it will not get better. Attention to pace of play is a sign of consideration to your fellow players.

Remember, you don't own the course.

Other people may have other things they want or need to do.

Golf is great, but it does take a long time to play at best. It can be really bad if dragged out unnecessarily

Improved pace of play is a personal responsibility - You must want to improve and work at it each time you play.

What is the proper time to play a round of golf?

Average golfers try to establish 4 hours.

High handicap players struggle to finish a round in 4 ½ hours.

**EVERYONE gets mad when a round goes beyond 4 ½ hours**

What can we do to improve the pace of play?

Overall:

Be prepared

Use your time well

Make a conscious effort to improve your pace

Change time-wasting habits....

Habits:

At the Tee

Encourage everyone in foursome to hit as soon as possible

Hit and leave the tee, talk about the shot later

Watch all tee shots; finding balls is a great time waster

If tee shot may be lost, hit a provisional ball

Put the cover on the club while riding to the next shot.

Fairway (rough for some of us) to the green

Plan your shot while others hitting their balls

Be ready to play when it is your turn

Play ready golf

Move briskly between shots

Go directly to your ball. Don't sit in cart waiting while other is hitting

Take several clubs to your ball so you do not have to return to the cart

If out of the hole, pick it up and enter a score according to handicap guidelines

Change clubs when you get to the next shot

Put the cover on the club while riding to the next shot

On the Green

Place extra clubs near the exit side of the green

Plan your putt while others playing

Be ready to putt when it's your turn

First to finish putting, pick up the flag

Exit green quickly when hole is finished

Put the cover on the putter while riding to the next tee

Go to next hole before entering scores on the score card

**What can you as a MISGA rep do?**

Emphasize pace of play in starting instructions

Tell everyone that lunch will be served exactly 4 ½ hours after the start of play

DQ any group over 2 holes behind

This article was prepared by David Roth of Norbeck Country Club for a MISGA reps training session

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## **Slow Play (MG-2009-07)**

Since we have stopped taking "gimmes" (we have, haven't we?), there is a tendency to mark and wait, the assumption being that if you miss, it had to be because you didn't take your time. I miss my share of short putts, not because I rush, but because short putts are difficult. That's the real reason that golfers take gimmes. Not only is it embarrassing to miss a short putt, but it adds a stroke to one's score.

We recently received an email suggesting that each of us should continue putting until we hole out. Stepping on another's line is no more than a "red herring". That line has been stepped on many times before we got to the green. This person reported that a group of men, using the continuous putting routine, shaved 30 to 40 minutes off their round by not marking every putt. It seems to me that continuous putting is certainly worth a try, in the interest of speeding up the game. Ready Golf on the Tee; Continuous Putting on the Green! What could be simpler?

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## **TEE IT FORWARD (MG2011-09)**

(Have More Fun and Play Faster)

### Guidelines for Selecting Tees

Driver Distance	Recommended 18 Hole Yardages		
275	6,700	-	6,900
250	6,200	-	6,400
225	5,800	-	6,000
200	5,200	-	5,400
175	4,400	-	4,600
150	3,500	-	3,700
125	2,800	-	3,000
100	2,100	-	2,300

To help golfers have more fun on the course and enhance their overall experience by playing from a set of tees best suited to their abilities, The PGA of America and the United States Golf Association have partnered to support “*TEE IT FORWARD*,” a new national initiative to be proposed for golf facilities nationwide.

*TEE IT FORWARD* encourages all golfers to play the course at a length that is aligned with their average driving distance (see above chart for guidelines). Golfers can speed up play by using tees that provide the greatest playability and enjoyment. “Simply put, *TEE IT FORWARD* can make golf much more fun for millions of people,” said PGA of America President Allen Wronowski. “We believe that by moving up to another set of tees, golfers will experience an exciting, new approach to the game that will produce more enjoyment and elevate their desire to come back and play even more golf.”

Barney Adams, the founder of Adams Golf, provided the concept that led to *TEE IT FORWARD*. By playing from forward tees, amateur golfers have the chance to play the course at the same relative distance as a touring professional would over 18 holes. The playing field is leveled by giving golfers the opportunity to play from distances that are properly aligned with their abilities.

Jack Nicklaus said, “All of us deeply involved in the game constantly encourage golfers of all skill levels to play the proper tees, but too often golfers want to bite off as much of the golf course as they can. What ends up suffering is their scorecard and their overall enjoyment. This program should help stimulate people to play the proper tees and maximize the golf experience.”

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## **PLAY BY THE RULES OF GOLF (MG-2010-04)**

### Strange But True

There are no gimmes in basketball!

Golf is one of the few “sports” where you can drink beer and smoke cigars while participating.

### Short Putts

“Long ago I learned that no putt is short enough to take for granted.”

-- Bobby Jones

### Nearest Point of Relief

Your ball came to rest in the middle of a cart path. To the left of the cart path in the direction of the green is a huge tree two yards away. If you drop on the left, you will be stymied by the tree; on the right you would have a clear shot to the green. You are right-handed. Where do you take relief – on the left or on the right?

To determine your nearest point of relief, take your stance and ground your club so that you have complete relief from the obstruction (cart path), first on the right side of the path (place a tee where your ball would be) and then take a stance on the left side and ground the club where you have complete relief for stance and swing.

Now, measure from the ball (middle of cart path) to each tee. Since the tee on the left is the “nearest point of relief” for a right-hander, you must drop within one club length of the tee, no closer to the hole. Of course, you could play from the cart path, which would avoid the tree (not recommended). If you were left-handed, you would drop on the right side of the cart path. (Life is so unfair!)

### Preferred Lies

“Playing golf with the ball up is like playing tennis with the net down.”

--Anonymous

### Wiggles & Waggles

“My own preference is for a manner of addressing the ball that wastes little time. Having decided upon the club to use and

the shot to play before stepping up to the ball, I can see no reason for taking any more time in the address than is necessary to measure one's distance from the ball and to line up the shot."

--Robert T. Jones, Jr., *Bobby Jones on Golf*

"Did you ever notice how fascinating a man's waggle is? A man with a good waggle is like a man with a good cigar. He may stink, but at least he looks impressive."

--Dorothy Langley

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## POPULAR MYTHS (MG-2010-02)

### Looking Up

"Contrary to widespread belief, head lifting invariably is an EFFECT of bad swinging, not the CAUSE."  
---Ernest Jones, *Swing the Clubhead*, 1952.

"Looking up is the biggest alibi ever invented to explain a terrible shot. By the time you look up, you've already made the mistake that caused the bad shot."

---Harvey Penick, *Little Red Book*, 1992

So, if someone says, "I looked up!" as if to absolve himself of any personal responsibility for a poor shot, interpret that as, "I made a really bad swing."

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## DOs and DON'Ts for GOLF ETIQUETTE (MG-2010-02)

It is the duty of every golfer to keep up with the game in front and not just ahead of the game behind.

### DOs:

- Play "Ready Golf" to speed play, even at the tee.
- Be ready to perform your shot when appropriate to do so, in a timely manner.
- Place your bag or cart at the exit point from the green before putting.
- Continue Putting if you can putt without standing on someone's line.
- Place ball mark immediately behind ball, not in front of it.

### DON'Ts:

- Don't stand on a line behind the person who is driving.
- Don't stand on the line of a putt while another is putting, either behind or beyond.
- Don't talk, move, or make noise while someone is hitting.
- Don't go back to the cart to change clubs; hit with what you have with you.
- Don't return your club(s) to the bag until arrival at the next shot location, if riding a cart.
- Don't record scores until arrival at the next tee area.
- Don't hit your shot until the area ahead is clear, including carts still at the green.
- Don't wait for someone else to drive if you can drive safely and the tee is open. (Ready Golf!)
- Don't be oblivious and step on line of putt of fellow competitor.

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## CARE of GOLF COURSE (MG-2010-02)

### **Cart Manners:** [ZOOM to enlarge picture]

- Keep all four wheels on cart path when parking on or near a cart path.
- Keep all four wheels on cart path around tees and greens.
- Keep pull-carts on cart path around tees and greens.
- Don't take pull-cart between bunkers and greens.

### **Damage Control:**

- Replace divots.
- Repair ball marks on greens.
- Place flag softly on green when putting.
- Fill gouges on tees with seed mixture or sand.
- Stay off ladies' tees with pull-carts!



## PLAY BY THE RULES OF GOLF (MG-2010-02)

Any game is more enjoyable when played within the rules.

### Some common breaches of the rules:

1. The proper measuring point for lateral hazard relief is the point where the ball last crossed the hazard line, not at a point opposite where it splashed down.
2. The nearest point of relief from a cart path is sometimes on the bad side of the cart path, and may be different for right- and left-handers.
3. When taking relief from water or lateral hazard or for unplayable lie, one may choose the option to go back as far as desired along a line to the hole through the point where the ball last crossed the hazard boundary, not along the line of flight back to the tee.
4. When taking relief within one or two club lengths from a given point, one should be sure to drop the ball within the stipulated distance, not beyond it.
5. For an unplayable lie, a golfer may drop within two club lengths from where ball came to rest, not two club lengths from boundary of troublesome feature.
6. There is no relief from a sprinkler head on one's line of putt; relief is for stance and area of swing only. That one chooses to putt from off the green has no relevance.
7. Taking relief under the rules does not necessarily provide line of flight relief.
8. If a ball is found after a provisional has been played, the provisional must be abandoned. Then, if unplayable lie is declared, one option is to go back and hit again from previous spot. Sometimes it is better not to find a ball if an unplayable lie is likely and the provisional is good.
9. A golfer has no authority to concede putts to a teammate or fellow competitor, and no authority to accept concessions of putts from a teammate or fellow competitor, except in match play.
10. A putt must be fairly struck, not raked or pushed, into hole. Gimmes are not permitted!
11. If a ball rolls back into a water hazard (yellow stakes), or is hit into a water hazard from the green side, the next shot can be from across the water hazard towards the tee at a spot which keeps the point where it last crossed the hazard line between that spot and the flag; or, from the spot where the previous shot was played; or, from the drop area if one is provided. Penalty is one stroke.

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## On Marking Your Ball (MG-2008-09)

By **Bill Brown**; *Piney Branch*

Placing unique and personal markings on your golf balls is a very useful and practical practice for all golfers. By this simple action, you can speed-up play, avoid the embarrassment of hitting the wrong ball and the penalties that accompany this action. More importantly, a good personal mark on your ball precludes the need to touch it or lift it in order to identify it. Usually your ball can be identified as yours from several paces allowing you to get ready to hit the proper ball, pronto. I have even had lost balls of mine returned after a round of golf because my "mark" was identifiable to others with whom I golf.

Marking your ball is a simple process. Use a permanent magic marker in the color of your choice. Put distinct markings on two sides of the ball usually on opposite sides of the logo. Be creative with your marks. The wife of one of the tour players is a graphic artist and draws elaborate pictures on her husband's golf balls. His lost golf balls are collectors' items. Keep the marker in your golf bag. That way you can refresh marks on balls you've been using and newly found balls can be marked before putting them into play. If the marker is handy, you will find it convenient to apply your mark.

(This article was written by **Bill Brown** of *Piney Branch*, as part of the MISGA 2001 Rules and Handicap Project, a well-crafted set of 28 one-page articles on rules, etiquette, and handicapping, produced by former MISGA President **Sam Hall's** Ad Hoc Committee on Rules and Handicaps. Those articles were handed out to the club reps in 2001, with the intent that they be posted or distributed at the clubs. Only a few were inserted into the MISGAgrams. To give these fine articles a new life and to provide "reminders" of rules, etiquette, etc., an effort will be made to use them somewhat regularly for future MISGAgrams.)

*Dick Crone - Chairman, MISGA Rules and Handicap Committee*

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## Consideration of Other Players - Etiquette (MG-2008-09)

1. No one should move, talk or stand close to or directly behind the ball or the hole when a player is addressing the ball or making a stroke. Exception: During a Scramble competition, it is permissible to stand behind your partners when they putt.
2. On the putting green, players should take care not to walk or stand in the "line of putt" of other players. It matters not that one is wearing "soft spikes."
3. When tending the flagstick for another player, the proper position is at arm's length from the stick with your shadow falling away from the line of putt.
4. The first player to hole out on a green is expected to stand ready to replace the flagstick.
5. After holing out on a green, it is good practice to immediately move to the next tee and mark the scorecard when you get there.
6. "Ready-Golf" helps speed play, but prior to playing a stroke or making a practice swing, the player should ensure that no one is standing close by or in a position to be hit by the club or ball.
7. If a player hits a bad shot, the player should forget that shot and move on to the next. Opponents and fellow competitors are not interested in hearing why the shot was executed badly.
8. If a player hits a bad shot, fellow competitors should resist the temptation to offer advice unless asked to do so.
9. Do not leave cigarette butts, cigar butts, sunflower shells, wrappers, cups or other kinds of trash on the course. Use trash receptacles.
10. When marking a ball on the green, the marker should be placed behind the ball without touching it. Do not place the ball marker to one side or in front of the ball.

(This is another of the papers prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee on Rules and Handicaps formed in 2001 by MISGA President **Sam Hall**. Editor)

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