

The Ranch Forecaddie

Volume 7, Issue 3

March 2024

Golf in March

March is here, and it is the busiest month of the year. The days are warm and long with plenty of time to golf! Generally we are out of frost season around the middle of March as well. We will have our first *Golf and Grub* event of the year on Wednesday March 13! Look for details in your email inbox. We will also have our annual pro shop St. Patrick's Sale Week running Thursday, March 14 through Wednesday, March 20. New inventory is in stock with great discounts! Stay in tune with the *Forecaddie* to keep up-to-date with everything Pro Shop and golf course related. In the sections following, you will find all the information relating to this month in golf, as well as contact information for our golf associations and our *Greens Committee*.

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Mike Jahaske, PGA

Director of Golf

SaddleBrooke Ranch Golf Club



Pro Shop Schedule

Pro Shop Hours - Open 30 minutes before the first tee time and 1 hour before shotguns. The pro shop closes at 5:30pm. Pro shop staff will carry the pro shop cell phone (520-561-1196) until 6:00.

Staff is available until one hour before sunset.

First tee time: 3-1 to 3-14: 7:15am

3-15 to 3-31: 7:00am

Last tee time: 3-1 to 3-31: 5:30pm

Shotguns: 8:00/1:00

Rate Periods:

3-1 to 3-31: Prime 7:15/7:00 - 11:52

Midday 12:00 - 1:52

Twilight 2:00 - 3:52

Super Twilight 4:00 - Sunset



Golf Maintenance Schedule

A maintenance plan is put into place at the beginning of the year. Variance in weather and agronomic conditions may require changes to the schedule.

March Maintenance Schedule

The Bermuda base is beginning to emerge from dormancy and gradually green up. We will discontinue painting the turf as this occurs. As the turf greens, it will also begin to actively grow, necessitating the need for mowers to be out on the course more often. It takes a few days each week to keep all the areas cut and groomed to playing height, and this will put the machines into golfer traffic at times. Staff are instructed to pull aside and idle their motors, but not shut them off as golfers play through.

We will continue closing one hole per nine to cart traffic to help maintain the quality of the turf. We will also continue our program of resting the natural turf tee on the *driving range* one week per month, except in **December and January**, when it will be rested for two weeks in those months due to the slowing of the growth rate of the rye overseed and the heavy use of the driving range.



Free Monthly Golf Clinic

Every month Mike and Ken will conduct a free golf clinic. All residents and their guests are welcome to attend, and there is no cost. Please sign up in the Pro Shop. The staff have a book behind the counter with all the scheduled clinics that you can sign up for. You are welcome to attend as often and as many as you like! The clinics will cover basic technique and mechanics of each topic. Our golf clinics are great for learning a new skill or brushing up a skill that needs some work.

The next clinic will be in March and will cover bunkers. It will be held on Monday, March 11th at 2:00pm at the practice pitching green. Please see your Chelsea home page event calendar for the full clinic schedule.

Golfing News

Golf Course Access

Dear Residents, many of you have taken to walking as a way of exercise and to get out of the house. Please remember that for your safety, we do not allow joy riding, walking, biking, jogging, etc. on the golf course **AT ANY TIME**. Only golfers, golf staff, or emergency or other authorized service vehicles are allowed on the golf course and paths.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!

Eliminate Potential for Cup Damage

When using a "ball grabber" attached to the end of a putter to extract a ball from the cup, please remove the flagstick first to eliminate the potential for damage to the edge of the turf surrounding the cup. With the green dormant during this time of year it is important to carefully extract the ball from the cup even when using your hand. Stretch out your hand and extend two fingers into the cup to retrieve your golf ball. Thank you. Your efforts will help to keep the edges of the hole crisp and more playable!

Golfing News Cont.

Cart Rules

The following rules shall apply to all types of golf carts, both rental and privately-owned:

- DRIVE ON CART PATH until even with ball, then enter turf at 90°.
- SCATTER ACROSS TURF until ball is on the green complex.
- EXIT TURF at 90° to cart path.
- REMAIN ON CART PATH on all Par-3 holes.
- STAY 25 FEET from tees and greens.
- DO NOT DRIVE around sides or back of greens.
- DO NOT DRIVE in the desert.
- DO NOT ENTER private resident property to retrieve golf balls.

Ball Marks

Our greens have been in service for 3 years now. Aaron and his crew are doing a great job keeping them smooth and fast. To do our part as golfers, we should make every effort to keep ball marks repaired! Ball marks that are repaired immediately heal faster and create less surface disruption resulting in a smoother green. Let's do our part to keep the greens looking good! Please remember to stay in the habit of finding and repairing ball marks on the greens to help keep them rolling smoothly.

Pace of Play

Please follow these simple tips to improve pace of play without having to rush around the course:

1. Be prepared to play your shot while waiting for others to hit, so you can play immediately without delay. This includes shots played while on the putting green.
2. Clean and replace your club in the bag; and record your score, at the next tee, not at the green.
3. Hit a provisional ball when appropriate, and limit searches for lost balls to 3 minutes. Players in the group that can hit safely should do so; while those that can't, should help search.
4. Limit socializing to periods when you are prepared to hit and there is a wait to safely hit.

Have fun on the course, and keep your play efficient, so all can experience an enjoyable pace of play!

Golf News Cont.

Cart Damage to the Course

Without question, cart traffic is the number one cause of damage to the turf on the course. Please do your best to limit the time your cart is on the turf. **One easy way to do that is by staying on the cart path until even with your drive.** This simple tip can reduce wear and tear exponentially because entering the turf area early is the most common mistake made by golfers in terms of course damage. Please make an effort to follow this approach as the wear and tear just after the Plum indicates that a good amount of golfers are NOT doing this!

Golf Rules

Lift, Clean, and Replace

Recently the pro shop began declaring the course to be played as "**lift, clean, and place**" whenever the course was also declared "**cart path only**" by maintenance. This rule covered the *General* area of the course which means the entire course except the green and tee of the hole being played, bunkers, and penalty areas. This would include the desert areas that are in bounds and outside penalty areas. Unfortunately, this version of lift, clean, and place allowed for improving the location of the lie of the ball and created an unfair situation. Therefore, going forward when the course is cart path only, the pro shop will declare lift, clean, and **replace** to be in effect. This means the player may mark, lift the ball and clean the mud off it, and then **MUST replace the ball on the same spot** as the original lie. To illustrate, replace the ball in the same way as a ball marked on the putting green.

New Tree Wells on #6 and #8

Three mesquite trees have been planted on the left side of hole #6 and one mesquite has been planted behind the green on hole #8. The wells surrounding these newly planted trees are GUR, and a player may take free relief of stance and swing path (not line of play) at the nearest point that is no closer to the flag. The relief area is one club length.

Golf Maintenance News

The Spring Green Up is Upon Us

With the anticipation of the warmer temperatures and longer days, it's time for us to get out and begin actively managing the Bermudagrass. We do this in multiple ways, lowering mower heights, grooming and brushing, aerification, fertility, and increased irrigation.

Greens

The growth of the greens respond most readily to the warmer days and nights which almost immediately effects the green speed.

Height Of Cut (HOC) - During December and January we raise the greens HOC considerably to try and "slow" the greens down as much as possible. As soon as days begin to grow longer and the threat of hard frost starts to wane, we begin to lower the HOC down gradually. This is a balancing act and must be done slowly for two reasons. First, if we lower the HOC too quickly, we could harm the grass on the greens. Secondly, if we get a hard frost with an extended cold period, the greens speeds could easily jump back up and become almost unplayable. That's why we have to use caution this time of year.

Golf Maintenance News

Grooming / Brushing - These are attachments built into the greens mowers that lift up the grass blades and reduce the "grain" of the greens. We also have an aggressive brush we pull behind a utility cart that helps stand the leaf blades back up and remove the dead material that has accumulated over the winter.

Topdressing - We start back up with our greens topdressing program to help smooth the surface from ball marks and old cup locations.

Roughs, Fairways, Tees and Collars

Aerification - Now that we have some good green up around the course we're going to start aerating with slicing blades and solid tines. For the tees and collars we'll use a solid tine that's .5' in diameter that does not remove a plug/core. For the fairways and roughs we use a "slicing blade" that will go down 3"-5" into the soil, not removing a core, and will have little to no surface disruption.

Lower mowing heights - The main objective in lowering the mowing heights is to remove all the brown dormant leaves from the Bermudagrass. This will expose the newly emerging leaves and stems to the sunlight and help the overall green up and density of the course.

During the winter season we raise the heights of the fairways and tees to .75" to help with playability as the turf goes dormant. An additional benefit is that it creates more leaf surface area for the grass plant and improves the overall health of the turf during our short winter days. With the increasing daylight and temperatures it's time to go back down to .5". The same is true for the roughs, where we raise the heights to 2" in the fall to improve playability and improve wear tolerance. Over the next few months we'll lower the heights down for the summer and end up at 1.25"

Fertility - We will begin performing more granular application of fertilizer now to promote the Bermudagrass recovery and density. We use organic based fertilizers to promote soil health and get the soils active again as well as the typical synthetic fertilizers. Some of these applications are required to be watered in so there could be some wetter areas around the course if you go out first thing in the morning.

Irrigation - I have mentioned irrigation several times over the past few months. Although we have had great winter rains, we will soon need to begin spot watering around the course to help fill in the thinner areas. Although we do try to do this prior to play we will have our smaller portable sprinklers out to target small areas that need extra attention.

Thanks,

Aaron Thomas

Golf Course Superintendent



Tip from the Pro

Cart Traffic on "CPO" Days

The past few months we have received a lot of rain. Winter usually has some rainfall, but we got an extra share this time around! It has been an inconvenience, but the water has been much needed. Heavier rainfall topped off with cooler cloudy days equals a wet course that doesn't dry out and leads to the need to be CPO, or Cart Path Only.

Cart Path Only (CPO) means that all cart traffic, including those with handicap access, **MUST** keep their cart **OFF** the turf. Carts can be quite destructive to turf, and they cause the most damage when the turf is wet and soggy. Staying off the turf during times when it is saturated with water is extremely important in the winter when the turf is dormant and cannot regrow to repair itself. Once our turf goes dormant after the first hard frost (usually in early December), it isn't actively growing again until sometime in April (depending on night-time soil temperatures).

On a day that carts are restricted to the path, it is important to be aware of the turf edges right next to the path as water drains off the path onto the rough creating very soft areas 1 to 4 feet next to the path.

For this reason, **it is imperative that any passing of other carts stopped on the path be done ON THE DESERT SIDE of the path to avoid damage to the edges of the rough turf adjacent to the path.**

Please let's all get in the habit of **passing on the desert side of the cart path**, and making sure to not park with two wheels on the turf in an effort to "pull over to make room" for passing as well.

Thanks!

Mike Jahaske PGA

Director of Golf SaddleBrooke Ranch Golf Club



Contact Information

Pro shop: 520-818-6403 **After Hours Cell:** 520-561-1196

Golf Maintenance: **Email:** aaron.thomas@robson.com

Phone: 520-600-8797

Chelsea: <https://sbranch.chelseareservations.com>

Your Chelsea home page has access to tee times and events as well as the golf event and maintenance calendars, special event news, rate sheets and annual/play card applications, seasonal daily frost delay info and golf starting times, and Greens Committee minutes.

SBRMGA: www.sbrmga.com

SBRWGA: www.sbrwga.com

SBR Lady Niners: www.sbrladyniners.home.blog

SBR Ranchette Putters: heasleypick@gmail.com

Greens Committee: SBRGreens@gmail.com

Contact Us!