



Talking in the 19th Hole

Driver. Most golf clubs have a group of ladies who actively participate in the game and enjoy its benefits. The ladies group is an essential part of the golf community. Its activities include:

- They play on weekdays and weekends.
- They play on ladies' day.
- They play in other courses through exchanges.
- They participate in local, regional, and national tournaments.
- Participate in and organize charity tournaments.
- They give jobs to caddies.
- They support the families of the Club's employees.
- Serve and direct in golf organizations at club, association and federation levels.
- They take private classes and in the Club's clinics.
- They support their children who play golf.



Unfortunately, in recent years there has been a decrease in the number of ladies starting and integrating golf. The causes of this trend are multifactorial among them:

- The offer of activities that compete for the ladies' health and entertainment has increased, among them: paddle tennis, tennis, swimming, dancing, yoga, Pilates, the gym, etc.
- An unattractive golf clinic program.
- The lack of motivation for the beginning players.
- The few couples and families who play golf.
- Fashions in society in general.
- The loss of family traditions.

The Golf Committee, through the Ladies Committee and the golf staff, has the responsibility to attract and retain more ladies. Let's see some of the actions that can be implemented for this.

Call a captain of ladies with summoning power between the different groups of ladies. The captain must surround herself with a work team that supports her. The captain calls players to whom she assigns some responsibility, such as sponsorships, tournaments, rules, communication, treasurer, secretary, clinics, rookies, seniors, young single adults, birthdays, etc.

Establishing one ladies' day a week is one of the most successful initiatives to have an active and robust group. Food and Beverages could support coffee or tea in the practice area or a complimentary snack for after the round. The Greenkeeper could put a special flower or plant in some teeing areas. The Starter could give preference to the ladies at the tee times. The Marshal could be aware of the needs of the players during the round. The Pros could come out to support the ladies, and once a month, they could play with them.

An attractive tournament schedule keeps the players active. Tournaments motivate you to go out into the course, take classes, and participate in clinics. The list of reasons to do competitions in Mexico is extensive: Friendship Tournament, Mothers Tournament, Golfer Tournament, Halloween Tournament, Turkey Tournament, Caddy - Patron Tournament, The Rope Tournament, Independence Tournament, Revolution Tournament, Advanced - Beginner Tournament, Rookie Tournament, Match Play Tournament, Ryder Cup, Flag Tournament, Annual Tournament, Night Tournament, Skills Tournament, Interclub Tournament, Birthday Tournaments, Farewell Tournaments, etc.

An engaging clinic program is a powerful magnet for attracting and retaining beginning, intermediate and advanced players. Golf instructors should be the primary stakeholders in the program's success as it will represent more work for them and their caddies, but there are clubs where the pros are the least. After seeing and trying different clinic formats, the format that I consider the most successful is the following. A group of ladies of 3 to 5 selects the day and time they wish to host their golf clinic. The group receives one class a week for an hour and a half. The golf pro responsible for the ladies makes the program assigning the teacher and the activity to be carried out. In this way, the players are with their friends at the time and day of their preference.

These four actions are part of the golf culture that should be in a club. Achieving them requires teamwork and having people willing to add.

Woods. One of the most common negative attitudes in golf is getting into the game of other players, neglecting your own. We can see it from the children's tours where some parents are caddies. After the player completes the hole, he and his caddy (father) stay to watch the other players, instead of going to the next hole.

In Stroke Play competitions, some gentlemen and ladies seem to be playing Match Play because of the personal way with which they take the game. Players who spend energy, time, and attention observing and getting into the game of others do so because they believe it puts pressure on them and avoids any advantage they might take.

When two picky players meet in a competition, the overall result will be a lose-lose. This attitude is a reflection of the lack of experience of the players. Experienced players act differently, they:

- Focus on your game.
- They let others play their game.
- They understand the unalterable truth that golf is always a game between two players: the golfer and the course they play on.

And remember, you can't play your best golf if your mind is preoccupied with other players. To play your best golf, focus your mind on hitting specific targets.

Irons. In my childhood, my father taught me to wash the grips, especially before a tournament. Hands accumulate substances when sweating, putting on sunscreen, or eating. These substances stick to the grips, where over time, they solidify, decreasing their adherence.

The washed grips provide better adherence and extend their useful life. To clean your grips, prepare soapy water. Wet a brush, then scrub the grip. Add water, pat dry, and voila. If the grip is very crystallized, use sandpaper to remove the top layer of the rubber.



The habit of washing grips has been forgotten. It is essential to teach children and youth to wash their clubs, including grips. Adults should do this too, or they can ask Club staff to do it.

Putts. Golf Clubs fulfilled their commitment to support caddies, the months that were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Players and Clubs helped in different ways. Well done.

One item on the to-do list of many golf committees is the annual update of caddies service fees. Due to simple inflation, the caddies fees should be updated every year, just like the Club members' monthly fees, and as it happens in the budgets of any organization.

Some players pay more than the established quota. Some players pay the fee, which is correct. If the quotas are not updated, the purchasing power of the caddies has decreased, affecting their standard of living. I invite the Clubs to update the fees the first month of the year systematically. **Fore.**

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