

The following 2 emails clarify the position of the Axedale Golf Club since the last day of competition on Saturday 28 March 2020.

This email from Secretary Owen Davies was posted on Sunday 29 March 2020:

Hello All

Just to avoid any confusion, Axedale Golf Course is currently CLOSED to all golf.

No comp, no social golf, no anything! We have removed pins from the greens and tomorrow the holes will be filled in.

The course was closed by Government directive and will remain closed until at least 13 April, another two weeks. Presumably the Government will at that time review the COVID-19 situation and determine whether or not golf courses will be allowed to reopen.

This is of course a pain in the proverbial, but with coronavirus cases in Victoria continuing to escalate, it is vital that we all obey Government directives to stay at home and refrain from socialising.

Here are a few ideas to get your fix at home:

- YouTube. There are some great golf lessons and highlights available. While there are many, many teachers with YouTube material, a couple of the more enjoyable/entertaining channels are meandmygolf and Rick Shiells.
- Buy some plastic or foam balls and whack them around the back yard. You don't need an awful lot of room; my biggest drives fly about 15 metres ... (yes, about the same distance they go on course I hear you laugh).
- Our sponsor Drummond Golf has a number of 'home' swing aids available, including nets and mats if you want to get serious. (Assuming Drummond remains open!)
- Putt up and down your hallway - endless fun for about two minutes until it gets as boring as ... well, as boring as being cooped up with no golf for weeks!

Just think, at least your handicap won't blow out for a while! Happy non-golfing.

Owen Davies

Hon. Secretary

Axedale Golf Club

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The following email was posted previously to the above on Friday 27 March 2020. Note that some details mentioned have changed since it was written, mainly that even Social Play and Green Fee players are now prohibited:

From The President

Tomorrow's competition, Saturday 28/03/2020, will be the last for the immediate future.

Even though official Government notice approves the continuation of golf, with restrictions, Committee believes now is the right time to act unilaterally to protect the health of staff and Members. Consider:

- Leading infectious disease specialists are now calling for an immediate national shutdown, warning 'every day counts'.
- For evidence, they point to the disaster unfolding in Spain, where 800 people died just yesterday and ice rinks are being converted into morgues.
- Even though we would like to deny reality, our membership is heavily skewed to the riskier end of the population spectrum.
- Even with good sanitation practices and protocols - and we have been pleased by your adherence to them - we cannot guarantee the virus, if present, will not be spread. Bendigo's first case was confirmed today.
- We have staff and volunteers working across the course and do not want them exposed to infection.

There are, of course, implications in closing competitive golf. Most pressingly, we must maintain our primary asset, the golf course. Hard decisions have already been made. Two of our staff are using their paid leave; we have halted purchase of materials while we rework budgets. Dylan continues working and will concentrate on maintaining our 'fine turf'. We've had a typically Axedale response to the call for volunteers and they will be allocated duties on which they can work singly with their own tools. This should maintain the course in good order.

Volunteers, please do not visit the machinery shed. We will email your duties to you. If you happen to be on the course with other volunteers, maintain strict social distancing.

While competition is suspended, social play by Members may continue but we recommend you play alone or with members of your own household only - no 'mixed' groups. Bring your own bucket and bottled water. The clubhouse is closed.

As we occupy an unmanned public reserve, it is not possible to simply close access to the public. Green fee players will be advised of the same restrictions applying to Members.

While we might hope this situation is fleeting, the reality is it could go on for months until restrictions can be relaxed. Be assured your Committee continues to work on your behalf to see the resumption of golf 'the Axedale way' as soon as can be safely done.

ALLAN ANDREWS