



EGC Newsletter February 2026



Capt. Mark Pearson

Welcome to the February 2026 EGC Newsletter

It's been a VERY wet January – and not a lot of golf played! Hopefully you are all keeping well.

You may notice this is a slightly bigger newsletter font this month – not because my eyesight is getting worse, but because it is more readable on the club notice board!

On that note - the noticeboards have had a good tidy up...go check them out :)

Please read Ian Holder's message in the Externals section and get involved if you can.

Hamper Basket Amnesty: There are still **3 baskets missing** from the TT winners – please drop into the pro shop asap (no names are being taken)

Mark

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Valentine's at EGC

Roses are red,
Golf balls are gone,
You swore it was middle...
It's three fairways on.

That putt looked a tap-in,
A certainty, surely?
Till it lips out the hole
And breaks hearts cruelly.

The course may be muddy,
And closed now and then,
But the clubhouse still fills
With optimistic golfers again.

So, here's to EGC
When fairways dry and greens behave,
May your Valentine still love you...
After the golf ... and the score you gave! 😊

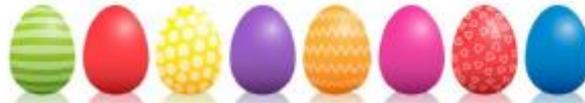


— Your Captain, EGC Poet Laureate (this month only!)



Capt. Mark Pearson

Easter Bunny



EASTER BUNNY



**Saturday 28th March
2026**



Play



Eat



Prizes



Raffle

Entries are now open on Master Scoreboard

Sign up for a fantastic day!

Rules of Golf

Presented by Ketan Bharania

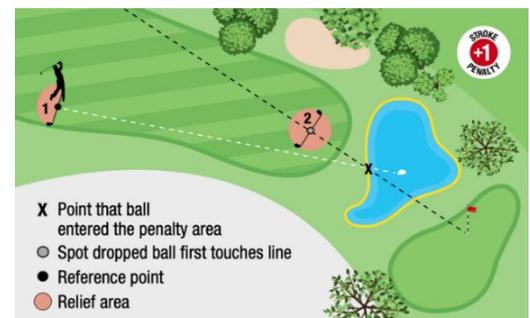
Rules of Golf: Penalty areas (Rule 17)

Relief from a penalty area is one of the most misunderstood rules in golf. Many players do not know the difference between red and yellow stakes and make the wrong call with respect to relief because they did not know all the options available to them. Well, today let's clarify the different relief options to minimise the number of extra strokes we must add to our final score.

A ball is classed as being in the penalty area (previously known as water hazards) when any part of the ball lies inside the penalty area. If you're feeling brave or the lie is nice you can go into the penalty area and play the shot as it lies. If you choose to do this, you can move loose impediments and have practice swings in the penalty area but be careful – you will incur a one stroke penalty if you cause the ball to move. If this is not possible there are numerous places you can take a drop. Each of these options will incur a one stroke penalty.

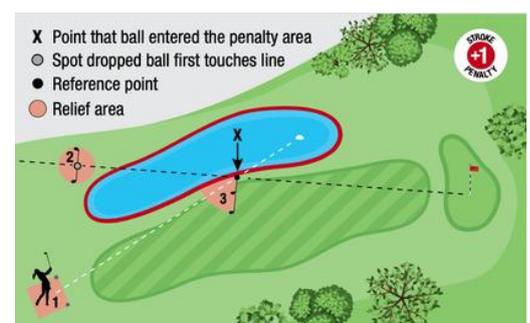
Yellow penalty area

From a yellow penalty, you have two relief options. You can take stroke and distance relief, return to where the original stroke was taken, drop within one club length (no nearer to the hole) and replay. Alternatively, you can take relief by dropping back in line with the pin and the point the ball entered the penalty area. Drop within two club lengths at your desired distance (no nearer to the hole). A local course rule may be in place whereby an additional option of playing a ball from a drop zone is also permitted under penalty of one stroke.



Red penalty area

If your ball is in a red penalty area, you can take stroke and distance or back on-the-line relief as above, but there is another option. You can take lateral relief, which is two club lengths from where the ball crossed into the penalty area (not where you find the ball). When taking this relief option, you must be careful not to drop the ball closer to the hole.





Capt. Mark Pearson

New Members

Update from Stephen Eddy

We have 1 new member this month – Andrew Shirlaw

Please welcome Andrew to the club

Competitions Report

Update from Dean Pullen

Competitions Report – February 2026

The weather has played havoc with January's competitions with only 2 being played due to the course being closed.

January's Competition Winners:

15/1/26 Midweek Stableford – Ian Holder 31 points

17/1/26 Ray Winter League 4 – Joe Saunders 38 points

Away Weekend: 36 currently signed up for The Cotswolds.

Away Days: 26 signed up for Wycombe Heights GC on the 23rd February 2026. Woldingham GC booked for 23rd October 2026. Hurtmore GC is booked for the Captains Away Day on the 25th June 2026.

Knockouts

Update from Kevin Lee

Winter knockout

1 semi-final remains un-played, scheduled to be played Friday 13th (weather permitting!)

2026 knockouts

Sign up now open on master scoreboard until 24th march

Draw to take place early April



Treasurer

Update from Steve Cross

Treasury Notes

Membership Renewals

A reminder that membership fees (£90) must be paid by the 31st March as on 1st April access to all club events will be restricted to members only, no exceptions. A reminder that it can take up to three working days to reach our bank account so to avoid this happening, I recommend that you ensure payment is made by no later than 25th March.

Competition Purse

Please keep an eye on your purse balance. Especially important as Easter Bunny and entry fees for KO's now on the horizon.

Points to note:

- ✚ Your balance is easily available from MasterScoreboard along with a listing of all your recent purse transactions.
- ✚ Please remember that it can take up to 3 working days to reach the club's account.
- ✚ I endeavour to update your purse twice a week but sometimes life gets in the way. Rest assured however that I always check to identify any unposted credits should you have a negative balance before your score is removed from a competition.
- ✚ The 'TOP UP PURSE' button on MasterScoreboard is not operational as it will cost in excess of £1k per annum to use, just pay in to the club's bank account using 'Purse' in the description.
- ✚ Further information on how the purse works can be found on our website. See 'Competition Rules, then 'Entry Fees' to learn more.

Steve Cross, Hon Treasurer, 4th February



Externals

To All Members ref External Competitions

There are a number of External Competitions open for entry on Master Scoreboard. These are open to all handicaps, some have limits on min/max handicap index, but there is something for everyone.

There will be a random draw from the NAPGC where opponents are chosen (usually in March), and then the competitions run from March through to September.

Adding your name to the start sheet gives us extra players to pick a team from as the exact playing dates will need to be confirmed with our opponents nearer the time.

Thanks

Ian Holder, Externals Organiser

Seniors

No activity to report for Seniors Section in January.

The next M4 Winter league match against West Berks G.C. is scheduled for Tuesday 24th Feb, weather and course conditions permitting.

Alisdhair Beckingham. 05/02/26

Webmaster

Chris Corbett's tip of the month

Tip of the Month

Tip 52: Open Competitions: Entries are now being accepted for our Open competitions for 2026, with the Seniors Open on 2nd June and the Easthampstead Open on the 4th July. Visitors can also book online now by completing an entry form and paying our treasurer the correct fee. A link is now available on the public front page of the website to these entry forms.





COMPLEX Q&A

Summary of my monthly meeting held with Downshire Complex

Date 10 February 2026

Q&A between Mark (EGC Capt) and Simon (Downshire GM)

General

The relentless rain has meant the course has had to close for quite some time during January and into early February.

Behind the scenes the green keepers are digging out ditches/pipes where they can, to help draining of the wettest areas. We would like to get the course open asap, just need a day or so dry weather to give it a chance to drain.

Good news is the two areas where drainage was added (13 and 16) have greatly improved compared to last year. The gravel banding work, which will also help, has had to be postponed due to the weather, but is currently scheduled for the provisional date of the 12th March (if they can get the machinery onto the course).

There have been several very promising applications for the apprentice green keeper position, and we hope to get one of them onboard in March, with a second apprentice hopefully later in the year.

What works are in progress or being planned for 2026?

The greenkeepers are refreshing/repainting the wooden stakes and tee box markers, so they look good for the spring. Work is underway to possibly make all penalty areas red stakes giving an extra drop option. Internal out of bounds is being reviewed with the plan to remove it from 6th/9th and 11th/16th. Internal OOB would remain on RHS of 12 for safety reasons (of players on 11th) once the leylandii have undergone the 10m reduction in height that is required.

Subject to budget being approved, there is some work planned for some tee box refurbishment:

The 17th would have an all-weather competition (white) tee installed (like the one on the back of the 4th) as this is in notoriously bad condition and never level!

The two artificial tee boxes on the 2nd hole would also be replaced



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Captains Charity

Mental Health Support... Through Sport



Sport in Mind is a multi-award-winning charity that delivers fun, weekly sport and physical activity sessions to improve the lives of children, young people and adults experiencing mental health challenges.

"Sport in Mind's sessions have played a key role in helping me overcome anxiety and depression."

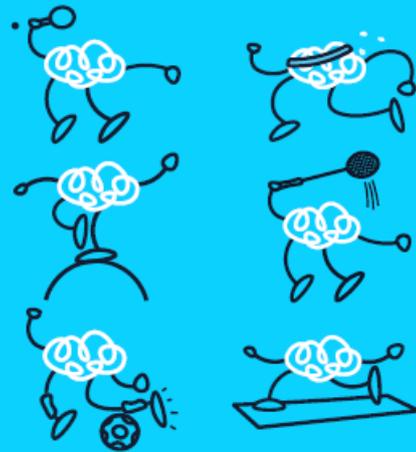
Kelly, 25



 **Sport In Mind**
Registered charity no. 1161323

Sport in Mind offers a range of weekly sport and physical activity sessions for children, young people and adults to promote mental well-being. All abilities and fitness levels welcome.

Activities include: Badminton, Yoga, Football, Table Tennis, Tennis, Walking and many more.



Benefits of regular exercise include:

- Reduced symptoms of depression
- Improved feelings of mental well-being
- Reduced levels of stress and anxiety
- Improved self-esteem and confidence
- Improved sleeping patterns and concentration
- Enhanced physical health

If you would like to attend our sessions, volunteer or are keen to know more about us please get in touch:

Text or Call: 0118 9479762
Email: info@sportinmind.org
Vist: www.sportinmind.org
f t i @sportinmind
Fundraising: justgiving.com/sportinmind



www.sportinmind.org

Thank you for showing your support for this excellent charity