

# Yes, We Are Slow: Changes And Possible Solutions To Slow Play In College Golf

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# Overview of College Golf

- There are two distinct segments in College Golf:
  - Regular Season
  - Postseason

## Reputation

- Pace of Play in college golf competitions for both Men and Women is very slow.



Texas' Brandon Stone catches a ball in his pocket after bouncing it on the head of his club while waiting to tee off on the 16th hole during the NCAA men's golf championship tournament Thursday, May 30, 2013, in Milton, Ga. (AP Photo/John Bazemore) (The Associated Press)

- “When you announce to a field there’s a pace of play system and there are people out to enforce it, you’ve already done a little good.” – Duke Head Coach Dan Brooks

- From GolfWeek, “*On the Road With Julie Williams*”  
*October 5th*

# College Golf: Regular Season

- **Regular Season**

- Events are not regulated by governing bodies (NCAA, NAIA or NJCAA)

- **Reality**

- Pace of play in some collegiate events for both Men and Women is slow.

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## Golf Central Blog



### Slow-play penalty costs Texas A&M shot at title

By Ryan Lavner May 30, 2013, 10:04 pm

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MILTON, Ga. – The NCAA picked a heck of a time to finally take a stand on slow play.

Texas A&M sophomore Ty Dunlap was slapped with a one-stroke penalty Thursday in the third and final round of stroke-play qualifying at the NCAA men's Championship.

That added stroke – assessed after more than a half-hour deliberation in the clubhouse at Capital City Club – dropped the Aggies from sixth place into a four-way tie for eighth at 2-over 842. The top eight teams after Thursday advanced to the match-play portion of the championship, which begins Friday.

Less than an hour later, Texas A&M was the lone team eliminated in a 4-for-3 team playoff with New Mexico, UNLV and Arizona State.

Lavner is a staff writer for GolfChannel.com and in charge of the Golf Central blog.



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# Causes of Slow Play in College Golf

- Size of Field (Number of Players)
- Tournament Format
  - 36 Hole Days
  - Shotgun Starts
- Venue selection
  - Walkability
  - Green to tee distances
- Course setup (In relation to quality of field)
- Insufficient number of qualified Rules officials
- Lack of a consistent Pace of Play Policy
- Reluctance by events to enforce a Pace of Play Policy and assess penalties
- Coaching
- Bathroom availability

# College Golf: Postseason

- **Postseason**

- Events are regulated by governing bodies (NCAA, NAIA , NJCAA , Conferences)

- **Reality**

- Pace of Play in postseason stroke play events for both Men and Women is not as slow.



Source: [golfwrx.com](http://golfwrx.com)



# College Golf: Postseason

## – Primary Reasons Pace of Play is not a problem in postseason competition

- Manageable size of field
- Optimal Format (single tee/double tee)
- Venue selection criteria
- Dedicated Tournament Administration
- A sufficient number of qualified Rules officials
- Consistent application of Pace of Play Policy

- “Our livelihood depends on their executing; it doesn’t depend on them playing fast.” – Mic Potter Head Women’s Golf Coach Alabama.
- From GolfWeek, “On the Road With Julie Williams” October 5th

# College Golf: Pace of Play Review

- NCAA DI Men's Championship Pace of Play Review
  - Format:
    - 156 players in groups of three
    - Unbalanced #1 & #10 tee start in two waves
      - (15 groups on one side and 11 groups on the other)
    - 10 minute starting time intervals
  - 2014 (Prairie Dunes Country Club, Hutchinson, KS)
    - Course Set-up : 6,941 Yards; Par 70
    - Maximum Allowable Time: 4:46 (for all players)
    - Pace of Play Range: 4:37-4:58
  - 2013 (Capital City Club–Crabapple Course, Atlanta, GA)
    - Course Set-up: 7,319 Yards; Par 70
    - Maximum Allowable Time: 4:44 (start on 1); 4:48 (start on 10)
    - Pace of Play Range: 4:42 to 5:11
  - 2012 (Riviera Country Club, Los Angeles, CA)
    - Course Set-up: 7,292; Par 71
    - Maximum Allowable Time: 4:45 (start on 1); 4:47 (start on 10)
    - Pace of Play Range: 4:38 to 5:02
  - Brad Gregory, PGA; Director of Rules NCAA D-I Men's Championship

# College Golf: Pace of Play Review

- NCAA DI Women's Championship Pace of Play Review
  - Format:
    - 126 players in groups of three
    - 11 minute starting time intervals
  - 2014 (Tulsa Country Club, Tulsa, OK)
    - Course Set-up: 6,194 yards; Par 70
    - Maximum Allowable Time: 4:22
    - Pace Averages: 4:32 (R1), 4:19 (R2), 4:17 (R3), 4:16 (R4)
  - 2013 (The University of Georgia Golf Course, Athens, GA)
    - Course Set-up: 6,372 yards; Par 72
    - Maximum Allowable Time: 4:34
    - Pace Averages: 4:34 (R1), 4:35 (R2), 4:37 (R3), 4:44 (R4)
  - 2012 (The Legends of Vanderbilt, North Course, Nashville, TN)
    - Course Set-up: 6,377 yards; Par 72
    - Maximum Allowable Time: 4:34
    - Pace Averages: 4:29 (R1), 4:28 (R2), 4:41 (R3), 4:30 (R4)
  - Jerry Lemieux, Director of Rules NCAA D-I Women's Championship

- “They are going to play as slowly as you let them, and as fast as you make them.” – Puggy Blackmon Director of Golf at South Carolina.

- From GolfWeek, “On the Road With Julie Williams”  
October 5th

# Road Map for Improvement

- Guidelines

- Establish guidelines through college golf's governing bodies (NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA) that all regular season events must meet if tournament results are to be considered for postseason selection. The guidelines should include:

- A maximum number of players in the field (seasonally adjusted)
- Standardization of course setup by division (length of course, green speeds, maximum length of rough, etc.)
- A regular season Pace of Play policy that is consistent with the postseason policy
- Require a minimum number of qualified Rules officials based on field size
- Limitation on the number of two-day 36/18 hole events teams may play in
- Reduction of the number of shotgun starts

# Road Map for Improvement

- Program education
  - Teaching best practices of player readiness; timing of players during practice and qualifying rounds
  - Additional emphasis on knowledge of the Rules of Golf and effective use of Rule 3-3
- Available porta potties or shuttles to bathrooms when possible