

## **The Spirit of the Game – Oakes High School Golf Team**

There is much more to playing golf than striking the ball and adding up scores. Proper etiquette and good sportsmanship are a big part of what makes golf such a great game. We will emphasize both of these in our golf season. This year the OHS golf program would like to continue to make strong efforts to nurture personal growth in young golfers and heighten their respect for the game of golf and its rules. Training and inspiration will be provided during lessons, tournaments, and by examples set forth by the OHS golf coaching staff. The 4 areas that reflect the spirit of the game are:

1. Knowledge of and Adherence to the USGA Rules of Golf
2. Personal Conduct
3. Taking Care of the Course
4. Helping Others Get Better

### **1. Knowledge of and Adherence to the USGA Rules of Golf**

The rules allow for everyone to play the game at the same level of fairness. The rules guarantee a consistency to every round of golf. The rules include the procedures of play as well as the penalties for breaking them. Throughout the golf season we will cover the definitions and rules in the rulebook. As coaches we will go over golf situations with the players and demonstrate how to address specific rules and penalties, so the players will be best prepared to play the game in accordance with the rules. The more the players practice playing in accordance with the rules, the more likely that they will become honest golfers throughout their entire lives and carry on the tradition of integrity and high quality golf.

### **2. Personal Conduct**

Throughout a round of golf, an individual is constantly challenged by good and bad breaks. Accepting moments of discouragement such as losing or playing poorly is one of the game's greatest challenges and is a constant test of personality and character. You can gain more respect with the way you act when you play poorly than you can from when you play well. Playing poorly but still acting in a civil manner and not making up excuses is a very important step in becoming a complete player. You joined the golf team to develop yourself into as good a player as possible. You want to be respected by the top players. You need to start working on your image now. Be gracious to others when you lose and respect others for their accomplishments. Remember you are representing the OHS Golf Teams. You will be held accountable for your actions by yourself, your teammates, and your coaches. To help you in this area we will have golf etiquette practice rounds and go through situational golf scenarios during our practices.

### **3. Taking Care of the Course**

Fixing the damage that is done to the course during the process of playing golf is extremely important. Keeping the course in good condition by fixing divots and repairing ball marks allow those that play behind them to enjoy the course as it should be played. Doing your part also shows great character and respect for employees at a facility that works hard to keep the course in as good of shape as they can.

### **4. Helping Others Get Better**

A goal of the mentoring program is to break down barriers between the older and younger players. The older players are nearly always looked up to as models by the younger players. We want to facilitate the younger players' development which will lead to more successful teams. Teams work together toward being the best in the state. Share your knowledge, it will only strengthen the team.

Remember that there is more to playing golf than just playing the game. Proper attire, being polite, good manners on the course or in the clubhouse, being prepared to play, and being quiet while others take their turn are just some of the behaviors we hope to instill in our golf team members. They can play the game throughout their entire lives and will come to appreciate the game and its traditions if they respect the game, their fellow golfers, and the golf courses.

## **12 Practice Guidelines**

1. Always warm-up
2. Always use clubs for alignment
3. Practice the clubs you hit the most
4. Practice your pre-shot routine
5. Vary your target
6. Vary your yardages
7. Vary your lies (uphill, downhill, thick grass, short grass, dirt, etc.)
8. Practice regular and extreme shots
9. Practice your visualization skills
10. Periodically practice in the wind
11. Visualize and practice your risk/reward situations
12. Practice focusing primarily on your current shot and situation, instead of worrying about the should-have/would-have/could-have.