



## TEXAS LEAGUE PLAY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### 1. RESPONSIBILITY OF PARTICIPANTS

- a. The World Handicap System (WHS) will govern all handicap indexes.
- b. Under the Rules of Handicapping (Rule 1.3(i)), a player is expected to:
  - i. Act with integrity by following the Rules of Handicapping and to refrain from using, or circumventing, the Rules of Handicapping for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage,
  - ii. Attempt to make the best score possible at each hole,
  - iii. Submit acceptable scores for handicap purposes as soon as possible after a round is completed and before midnight local time,
  - iv. Submit acceptable scores to provide reasonable evidence of their demonstrated ability,
  - v. Play by the Rules of Golf, and
  - vi. Certify the scores of fellow players.
- c. Golf Club/Handicap Committee (Rule 1.3(ii)), a club is expected to:
  - i. A golf club is affiliated to its Authorized Association and is responsible for ensuring the Handicap Index of those members who have designated it to be their home club is administered in accordance with the requirements of the Rules of Handicapping.
  - ii. A Handicap Committee is established by a golf club and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the golf club's specified obligations and responsibilities under the Rules of Handicapping.
- d. Manipulation of handicap indexes will not be tolerated. WHS issues should be communicated to the Texas Golf Association (TGA). All issues will be reviewed by the TGA Championship Committee and subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.

### 2. ENTRY FEE/FORM: \$600 per team.

- a. A team participating in Texas League Play **must** submit an official Entry Form via the Golf Genius registration link to secure a position in the league.
- b. A club **must** submit payment via credit card on the Golf Genius registration page. Alternative payment methods (checks/invoices) will not be accepted.
- c. All entry fees **must** be paid by the registration close date.

3. **CLUB ELIGIBILITY:** Open to any current TGA member club in good standing meeting the following criteria:
  - a. TYPE 1 Club: Owns / operates at least one 18-hole golf course measuring at least 6,500 yards. 9- Hole facilities are not eligible for Texas League Play.
  - b. COURSE RATING: Has a current and valid USGA course rating / slope issued by the TGA within last 10 years.
  - c. HANDICAP SYSTEM: Utilizes the WHS for issuing / maintaining handicaps for members.
  - d. HANDICAP COMPLIANCE: Has a designated handicap committee in place as required by the TGA membership agreement and the USGA Rules of Handicapping.
4. **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:** Open to male amateur golfers and male Club Staff Professionals who meet the following criteria:
  - a. CLUB MEMBERSHIP: Amateur players **must** be full dues paying active golf members in good standing with the club and appear on the handicap roster by the start of the regular season.
  - b. GHIN #: All amateur players **must** have an **active** GHIN number with an established WHS Handicap Index at the club they are representing.
  - c. SCORE HISTORY: A player's GHIN score history **must** contain at least 10 scores posted within in the previous calendar year.
  - d. CLUB STAFF PROFESSIONALS: A member of the club's professional golf staff who is a full-time employee of the club is encouraged to participate. Only one Club Staff Professional is eligible to play per match. Should the Club Staff Professional decide to play, he will be required to play in the scratch four-ball match. Touring Professionals belonging to a club are ineligible to participate. A Club Staff Professional is required to receive a "paycheck" from the club. Independent Teaching Professionals, not employed by the club, are not eligible.
  - e. AGE: Players and club staff professionals **must** be at least 21 years of age as of the date of the match in which they wish to participate.
  - f. COLLEGE PLAYERS: A player that is listed on a College Golf roster, regardless of division, may not represent a club during the season and playoffs.
  - g. MAXIMUM STROKES ALLOCATED: The maximum strokes allocated for a match will be 18.4. If a player has a handicap index higher than 18.4, he will not receive additional strokes beyond the maximum 18.4.
  - h. MULTIPLE CLUBS: Should a player be a member of two clubs that are participating in Texas League Play, he is deemed to have played for a club once he puts a ball into play with the club he is playing with. He is not allowed to play for any other club during that season.
  - i. PEER REVIEW

- a. The player and the Handicap Committee have joint responsibility for adhering to the Rules of Handicapping including, but not limited to the following basic guidelines: each player will try to make the best score on every hole in every round, regardless of where the round is played, and that the player will submit every acceptable score for peer review.
- b. As a part of peer review, the Club's Handicap Committee **must** make the scoring record of members accessible to all other members for the certification of scores. This may be accomplished through handicap software provided by the club (i.e., mobile app or online application).

**A Side in Breach of Section 4: Player Eligibility will forfeit the match, and all three points will be awarded to the opposing team.**

## **5. TEAMS**

- a. NUMBER OF PLAYERS: A team will be comprised of 8 players for each match.
- b. ROSTER: There is no limit to the size of a team's roster, provided they meet the player eligibility requirements set forth in Section 4: Player Eligibility.
- c. NUMBER OF TEAMS PER CLUB: Each Club is permitted to register one team per course on the facility. However, players are not permitted to play on multiple teams.

## **6. CONFERENCES**

- a. NUMBER OF TEAMS: Conferences will be comprised of 4 teams all representing different clubs.
- b. SELECTION OF TEAMS: Teams will establish their own conference by coordinating with other clubs on their own.

## **7. LEAGUE SCHEDULE**

- a. Clubs will be allowed to set their own schedule once the conference is established. Dates may be moved from these dates so long as all teams agree. Teams within the conference should establish a "standard" day of the week for the matches to be played and adhere to scheduling matches on that day as much as possible. Any deviation from the established schedule requires both club's consent and the TGA **must** be notified.
- b. All regular season matches can be started once a schedule has been accepted and approved by the TGA. All regular season matches **must** be completed by the end of the established regular season. Any matches not played will be recorded as a 6-6 tie. Clubs must make a reasonable effort to complete their matches within the deadline. Matches will **not** take place after the deadline.
- c. To fit all matches within the deadline, more than one match may be played during a given week so long as both teams agree.

## 8. TEAM CAPTAIN DUTIES

The Team Captains are instrumental in the success of the league. Captains are responsible for fielding a team each match, submitting lineups and posting results. In addition, the team captain should use discretion when choosing players and select those who represent the club in a positive manner.

- a. MATCH SCHEDULING: The team captains are responsible for setting the regular season schedule by coordinating with the other team captains within the conference. Once schedules are determined they **must** be submitted to the TGA by the published schedule entry deadline.
- b. MATCH ARRANGEMENTS: Team captains **must** communicate with the other team captains within the conference prior to the start of the season to establish the following:
  - If any guest fees will be charged and payment collection method at your club,
  - Tee times for matches played at each club (a standard time for all matches is preferred),
  - Acceptable pace of play for each club,
  - Caddies (if caddies are required, what the fees are and gratuity policy),
  - Tipping policy for outside service staff,
  - Acceptable forms of payment (cash, credit card, reciprocal charge) for carts, food and beverage, golf balls, etc., and
  - Cell phone policy at your club.

## 9. GOLF GENIUS TEAM MATCHES

- a. The team captains will be invited to the Team Captain Portal by the TGA. A how-to guide will be provided for each captain with instructions to navigate the portal.
- b. The winning team's captain is responsible for posting the match results in the Team Captain Portal. All match results **must** be submitted to the portal within 48 hours of the completed match.
- c. Additional details regarding scoring are outlined in Section 18: SCORING

## 10. HOST CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. TEE TIMES: The Host Club is responsible for making sure the matches begin at the established time and determining the order of play. The club should communicate the playing order to their opponent ahead of the match.
- b. PAPERWORK: The Host Club should make the following paperwork available to every player on the day of competition: Scorecards with Handicap Strokes, Pairings Sheet, Pace of Play Guidelines and Local Rules Sheet.

- c. SCOREBOARD: The Host Club **must** utilize some form of scoreboard or scoring area where match results will be reported.
- d. FOOD AND BEVERAGE: If your conference has agreed upon providing any F&B post-match, these arrangements should be made ahead of time and communicated to all players, so guests know where to go after the round and feel welcome.

#### 11. RAIN OUTS

- a. If a match is suspended due to the weather and cannot be resumed on the same date, it should be made up as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of the host team captain to find dates that work with the opposing team captain. Once a date is agreed to by both captains, that date is final. Teams must be willing to sacrifice certain days/times to complete the matches by the deadline.
- b. Generally, the captains should decide to re-start the match all together or continue from where the suspended match left off. If all four matches have played at least nine holes, then the matches **must** be resumed from the previous positions.
- c. In the instance that a suspended match cannot be rescheduled, and **all** matches have completed at least nine holes in their respective matches, the match is considered official, and the team who has earned the most points from current matches will be the winner. Points will be awarded based on current point standing regardless of if the back 9 or overall matches have been completed. Decisions to resume or cancel play should be made on site by a committee of three – the two team captains and the host club professional who is on site at the time.
- d. If all matches haven't completed at least nine holes and a reasonable effort was made by both clubs to find a reschedule date, then the match will be scored as a 6-6 tie. A match can only be cancelled if both captains agree, or the club is closed. Cart Path only is not an acceptable reason to cancel a match.

12. **GUEST / COURSE FEE:** Each club should agree to the same conference-wide standard guest fee amount. Billing / collecting this guest fee amount from the visiting team is the responsibility of the Host Club.

13. **GENERAL RULES OF PLAY:** The Rules of Golf, Texas League Play Policies & Procedures, and the Host Club's Local Rules will govern play. Host Club Local Rules **must** be made available to all visiting clubs.

#### 14. SUBSTITUTIONS

- a. Within 24 hours of the match, substitutions **must** be communicated directly with the opposing club's captain or golf professional **and** submitted in the Team Captain Portal. A substitute **must** be placed into the correct position within the lineup.
- b. In accordance with the Rules of Golf, Rule 23.4, a side may be represented by one partner for all or any part of a match. A partner may join a match between holes but not during play of a hole.

15. **\*HANDICAP INDEX**

- a. *\*Each player will establish a Low Handicap Index (Low H.I.) based on the players' Low Handicap Index from the previous calendar year (January 1 - December 31). This index will be used for the duration of Texas League Play's regular season and ensuing playoffs.*
- b. *\*The players' Low H.I. will be adjusted 90% based on course rating/slope and tees being played.*
- c. *\*Match handicaps will be established based on the low man in the group. For example, if Player A is a 2 Low H.I., Player B a 4 Low H.I., Player C a 6 Low H.I., and Player D an 8 Low H.I., the strokes will be distributed as follows. Player A, being the low man in the group, will get 0 strokes, Player B will get 2 strokes, Player C will get 4 strokes, and Player D will get 6 strokes.*

16. **MATCH FORMAT**

- a. Each player will compete in a Four-Ball Match.
- b. Match 1 will be a scratch match and Matches 2, 3, and 4 will be handicapped.
- c. *\*Any player can play in Match 1 regardless of Low H.I. If a golf staff professional is playing, the golf staff professional must be designated and play in the scratch match (Match 1).*
- d. *\*For Matches 2, 3, and 4, players are listed by Low H.I., from lowest to highest. If two or more players have the same Low H.I., they may be placed in the order that the captain chooses. Note: A player's Low H.I. could be different from the player's course/playing index for the match.*

**A Side in Breach of Section 16: Match Format will forfeit the match, and all three points will be awarded to the opposing team.**

17. **TEES**

- a. Matches 1-2 (Players 1A through 2B) will play from the tees which is closest to the target yardage of **6,800 yards**.
- b. Matches 3-4 (Players 3A through 4B) will play from the tees closest to the target yardage of **6,500 yards**.
- c. *\*All yardages are subject to course availability. Yardages can be adjusted based on various weather conditions. All changes must be communicated to the opposing team's captain.*

18. **SCORING**

- a. One (1) point is awarded for a win on the front 9, one (1) for the back 9, and one (1) for the overall match for a total of three (3) points in each match. A tie is worth ½ point to each side. There are a total of 12 points available for the overall match. The team to earn 6 ½ or more points is the winner.

- b. In the event of rain causing the match to stop reference Section 11: Rain Outs.
- c. The winning team captain is responsible for submitting the match results via the portal.
- d. Scores and match results are considered final once confirmed with the TGA. All disputes **must** be resolved before the match results are posted to the Team Captain Portal.
- e. If different / incorrect results show in the portal, it is the team captain's responsibility to contact the TGA immediately to review the results.
- f. Once match results are considered final, there will be no adjustment to the outcome of the match, unless there is a breach of Section 4: Player Eligibility.

#### **19. CONFERENCE WINNERS / TIES**

- a. A club wins their conference when it has the best overall record in the conference. Points will only matter regarding playoff seeding and tiebreaking.
- b. If two teams tie for the best record, the tie will be broken by the following order:
  - i. Head-to-head record,
  - ii. Points earned against team they are tied with, or
  - iii. Points earned in away matches.
- c. If there are three or more teams tied for the best record, the team with the most overall points wins the conference (if two clubs have identical points, those two clubs will use the above-mentioned tie-breaking method).
- d. In the event of a tie after all the above conditions are met, and the opportunity to accumulate points is not equal due to an 18-hole match being condensed to only 9 holes, then the tie should be decided via a playoff if practicable. The playoff would be run like that of the League Play Playoffs, i.e., sudden death match played at scratch. The host site of the Playoff will be chosen by lot.

#### **20. QUALIFICATION FOR LEAGUE PLAY PLAYOFFS / CHAMPIONSHIP**

- a. Should Texas League Play have 16 conferences, all conference winners will be invited to the playoffs. Teams **must** play in at least three matches in the Regular Season to advance to the Playoffs.
  - i. Should a conference winner elect to not participate in the Playoffs, the runner-up from the same conference will be invited. Following the runner-up would be the third-place team and then the fourth-place team. If none of the teams from the conference elect to play the spot will be given using the criteria in Section 19: Conference Winners/Ties.
- b. Should there be more than 16 conferences participating, the following steps will be used to determine which teams advance to the playoffs.

- i. At the completion of registration, the TGA will divide the state into Four Regions: West Texas, DFW, Houston, and Hill Country (Austin & San Antonio). Each region is guaranteed to have the four top point earners advance to the League Play Playoffs.
  - ii. If one of the Four Regions does not have four conference winners, the next conference winner with the highest point total across all four regions will earn an invitation into the playoffs. If the point totals are tied with another Conference Winner across the state, the Playoff Seeding Tiebreaking (below) will determine who will receive the invitation.
  - iii. There will not be a consolation bracket set up. However, additional playing opportunities at a discounted rate will be made available to teams once eliminated.
- c. Should there be less than 16 conferences participating, or if all four teams in a conference elect to not participate, the following steps will be used to invite additional teams to the Texas League Play Playoffs to fill a 16-team bracket.
  - i. At the completion of the regular season, any team that does not win their respective conference will be ranked by their total number of points accumulated throughout the regular season. In the event in which total points are tied, the following criteria in Section 19: Conference Winners/Ties will be used to break the tie. The process will be repeated until the playoff field is full of 16 teams.
- d. Playoff seeds will be determined by the total number of points accumulated. In an event in which the total points are tied, the following criteria will be used to break the tie:
  - i. Overall Record,
  - ii. Last Three Matches (by date) total points,
  - iii. Last Two Matches (by date) total points, or
  - iv. Last Match Played (by date) total points.
- e. A team may use different players for the different playoff matches, provided they have played in at least one regular season conference match.

## 21. RULES QUESTIONS OR INFRACTIONS

- a. The TGA Championship department will have the final say on any Rules questions that arise.
- b. Questions regarding the Rules or match outcomes **must** be reported to the TGA prior to the finalizing of any match results.
- c. Any issues regarding a player's eligibility shall be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.



## **22. WITHDRAWALS**

- a. If a team withdraws any time after the conference schedule has been set, they will be subject to a one-year suspension from TGA League Play and will forfeit their entry fee for that season.
- b. If a team withdraws from the conference, all remaining matches will be forfeited. The forfeited matches will be scored as outlined in Section 23: Forfeits.
- c. If two or more teams withdraw from a conference the conference will be subject to termination.
- d. Any circumstances causing a team to withdraw from Texas League Play will be subject to review by the TGA Championship Committee for possible suspensions from future participation.

## **23. FORFEITS**

- a. Forfeits are detrimental to the overall success of the league. The inability to field a full team of 8 players, or the lack of interest once a team has been eliminated from advancing to the playoffs are not acceptable reasons to forfeit a match.
- b. A forfeit shall be scored as a loss to the forfeiting team and a win to the opponent.
- c. If a team is granted a forfeited victory, the victorious team will be given a 6.5 to 5.5 victory.
- d. Any circumstances causing a forfeit will be subject to review by the TGA Championship Committee for possible suspension from future participation.