

GOLF

GENERAL RULES

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics golf competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon the *Rules of Golf* as written by the Royal and Ancient Club of St. Andrews (R&A). In efforts with the USGA, these rules shall govern all competition except when in conflict with the Official Special Olympics sports rules. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics sports rules shall apply. For more information, visit www.randa.org.

OFFICIAL EVENTS OFFERED

1. Level 2 – Unified Sports Alternate Shot Team Play*
2. Level 4 - Individual Stroke Play 9-Hole Competition*

ATHLETE MAXIMUM STANDARDS FOR COMPETITION

An athlete must be able to score under the maximum standard set for the level of golf in which they will be participating. An athlete may not be registered for an event unless he or she is able to meet the maximum standard listed below:

Level 4 – average of 81 or lower

* Competitors may not play on the tournament golf course the day of competition prior to the start of the event.

SECTION A – GENERAL RULES AND MODIFICATIONS

1. All Levels of Competition
 - a. Undue Delay; Slow Play - The player shall play without undue delay. Upon lining up for a shot (or being informed to do so by the official) a player shall take no more than 45 seconds to strike the ball.
 - b. Between completion of the hole and playing from the next teeing ground, the player shall not unduly delay play.
 - c. Use of Caddie – A caddie may assist a player with club selection, and lining up a shot only. Caddies shall not coach during competition or cause undue delay in play. **Caddies are not allowed for alternate shot competition.**
 - d. Teeing Ground – Female golfers shall tee-off at the forward (red) tees while male golfers shall tee-off at the middle (white) tees. This rule applies to all levels of golf.
 - e. Penalties for breaching the before-mentioned rules:
 - 1) First Offense – One Stroke
 - 2) Second Offense – Two Strokes
 - 3) Third Offense – Disqualification
2. **Level 2 – Unified Sports Alternate Shot Team Play**
 - a. Definition of a team: A team shall consist of one golfer with an intellectual disability and one golfer without an intellectual disability. **NOTE: The partner (golfer without an intellectual disability) must be registered as a Class A volunteer with the Program Office by the State Outdoor Sports Tournament medical deadline date in order to participate.**

- b. Form of Play
 - 1) The form of play will be foursome Rule 29 under the rules of golf (alternate shot) – The players play alternately from the teeing grounds and then alternate strokes until the ball is holed.
Example: If player "A" plays from the tee on the odd number holes, then player "B" would play from the tee on the even number holes. Only one ball is in play on a hole.
 - 2) Only one ball per hole is used unless it is lost during play.
- c. Scoring
 - 1) Once the ball is in play on each hole, the players shall alternate turns hitting the ball until the ball is holed, or ten strokes have been played. **NOTE:** A swing and a miss, counts as a stroke.
 - 2) If a 10th stroke is played without holing the shot, the team shall record a score of 10x and proceed to the next hole.
- d. Ties
 - 1) First-place ties shall be determined in the following manner:
 - a) Of the teams tied for first place, the teams with the fewest number of 10x scores shall be declared the winner.
 - b) If teams have an equal number of 10x scores they shall compare stroke total on the 4th hole of play and any subsequent holes until the tie is broken.
 - 2) All other ties shall be broken by counting the number of 10x scores with the fewest getting the higher place. Ties after the 10x scores have been counted will remain as ties.
- e. Stipulated Round
 - 1) A stipulated round shall be nine holes.
 - 2) At the discretion of the tournament committee, a championship may be contested over one, two, three or four rounds.
- f. Tournament Venue Selection
 - 1) The selection of the golf course shall be at the discretion of the tournament committee.
 - 2) The committee should consider the degree of difficulty and its impact on the conduct of the tournament.
- g. Golf Course Set-Up
 - 1) The course shall be set up at the discretion of the tournament committee.
- h. Registration and Divisioning
 - 1) Each team shall register by submitting the most recent six scores over nine holes since last year's State Outdoor Sports Tournament. Two of the six scores must be completed on courses of 2400 yards or longer.
 - 2) The score must be accompanied by the par and yardage for the course(s) for each score.
 - 3) All scores must be verified by signature of the Agency golf coach or course golf professional.
 - 4) Divisioning for State competition will be based on the six scores submitted.

i. Equipment

- 1) Each player is responsible for providing their own equipment including:
 - a) A set of clubs that should include at least one wood, one iron and one putter. The maximum number of clubs per player is 14. Partners (team) may share clubs provided that the total number of clubs carried by the partners (team) sharing does not exceed 14.
 - b) A Golf Bag
 - c) Golf Balls
 - d) Pitch Mark Repairer

3. **Level 4 – Individual Stroke Play Nine-Hole Competition**

- a. The purpose of Level 4 golf is to allow athletes to train and compete in regulation golf competitions.
- b. Level 4 Special Olympics athletes compete in nine-hole stroke play competition.
- c. A minimum physical requirement is that the athlete must be able to walk the entire nine-hole round in a reasonable time period. Those persons who wish to request the use of a cart for medical reasons must fill out a special needs form and must provide a written verification from a physician stating the reason. Information must be submitted with tournament registration. Cart fees are to be paid by the participant.
- d. Scoring - After an athlete reaches a score of 10 on one hole, he/she should pick up their ball and move on to the next hole listing a 10x on their score card.
 - 1) First-place ties shall be determined in the following manner:
 - a) Of the teams tied for first place, the teams with the fewest number of 10x scores shall be declared the winner.
 - b) If teams have an equal number of 10x scores they shall compare stroke total on the 4th hole of play and any subsequent holes until the tie is broken.
 - 2) All other ties shall be broken by counting the number of 10x scores with the fewest getting the higher place. Ties after the 10x scores have been counted will remain as ties.
- e. The teeing ground will be determined by the games committee. Females and those eight to 11 years old will play the forward-most set of tees. Every player must have a set of clubs and a golf bag. (A set of clubs includes a minimum of one putter, one iron and one wood.) Maximum total number of clubs is 14.
- f. Registration and Divisioning
 - 1) Each team shall register by submitting the most recent six scores over nine holes since last year's State Outdoor Sports Tournament. Two of the six scores must be completed on courses of 2400 yards or longer.
 - 2) The score must be accompanied by the par and yardage for the course(s) for each score.
 - 3) All scores must be verified by signature of the Agency golf coach or course golf professional.
 - 4) Divisioning for State competition will be based on the six scores submitted.

- g. Golf Course Set-Up
 - 1) The course shall be set up at the discretion of the tournament committee.

***The Level 1 Rules have been moved to the Skills Assessment Section of the Appendix**