



# 2026 ISPA Tournament Guide

## General Information

<b>Tournament Dates:</b>	Wednesday, April 8 through Sunday, April 12, 2026
<b>Tournament Location:</b>	EMC Convention Center 730 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street Des Moines, IA 50309
<b>2026 Officers:</b>	Louie Bartles, President On Jake Austin, Vice President Brandy Meredith, Secretary Barb Avery, Treasurer
<b>2026 Tournament Coordinator:</b>	Rob Bish
<b>2026 Tournament Director:</b>	Ira Miller
<b>Tournament Equipment:</b>	180 Valley Cougar 7-foot coin-operated tables. Red Circle cue balls. All tables will be “open” (no charge) for play during the entire tournament, including scheduled events, mini tournaments, and practice.
<b>Tournament Sponsors:</b>	The Greater Des Moines Sport Commission The Iowa Events Center Jacoby Cues Anytime Billiards 1 of a Kind Billiard Supply JamUp Apparel

# CHANGES FOR 2026 TOURNAMENT

1. Effective for the 2026 ISPA Tournament, any woman player that signs up to play in the Mixed Team Division will only drop ONE level.
  - a. Example: Women Master will drop to an Advanced to play on a Mixed Team.
2. Effective for the 2026 tournament, we are changing to the way you can qualify to play.
  - a. **Singles and Team Play:**
    - i. Players may play within multiple separate sessions under the same operator to acquire six weeks of play. All teams must consist of two original (core) players that played a minimum of six weeks together on the **same team**. Players are not eligible to “stack weeks” in the same night and must be played as scheduled in order to qualify as a week of play.
3. Addition of the forfeiture policy.
  - a. Match play is suggestive and may start before or after the suggested start time. Due to this, please remain vigilant on monitoring your match via Compusport.

# Tournament Registration and Eligibility

- Players must register through their league operators and meet all eligibility requirements.
- Registrations for Mixed Scotch Doubles, Junior events, 2nd Chance tournaments, 10-ball events, and mini tournaments will be taken “on site”. Pre-registration is required for all other events.
- Entry forms can be found online at [www.ispa-billiards.org](http://www.ispa-billiards.org) or obtained from your league operator.
- **Absolutely NO refunds!!!**

Important Dates	Comments
<b>LEAGUE OPERATORS DEADLINE</b> <b>March 15, 2026</b>	League Operators must have all entries entered into the ISPA website, and mailed (with payment) to the ISPA Treasurer at:  Barb Avery 214 SW Pleasant Street Ankeny, IA 50021  Entries postmarked after this date will be subject to a \$25 late fee per entry.
<b>March 22, 2026</b>	Late entry deadline. <b>Absolutely no new entries accepted after this date.</b>

## Weeks of Play Required

Each player entering the tournament (singles or team) must have played a MINIMUM of 6 (six) full weeks of regularly sanctioned league play under the same League Operator since June 1 of the previous year. This means, as an example, that if you play in a multi-divisional league and you play 3 full matches in a Tuesday night division and 3 full matches in Thursday night division, you ARE QUALIFIED. If you play 3 full matches in the Fall session in a division and then play 3 full matches in the same division during the Spring session, you ARE QUALIFIED. All teams must consist of two original (core) players that played a minimum of six weeks together on the **same team**.

## Entry Limits

All eligible players may enter ONE Singles Division in 8-Ball, ONE Singles Division in 9-Ball, and may play on ONE team only during the tournament. You may be listed on more than one team roster, but once you have played on a specific team, you are committed to that team and may not compete on any other team during the tournament. Only women may compete in Ladies Divisions. Both men and women may compete in the Mixed divisions.

## Right of Refusal

The ISPA Board of Directors maintains the right to refuse any player’s permission to enter and participate in its tournament. Additionally, players can be removed from the tournament at any time, should the situation warrant that action. Entry fees will NOT be refunded.

## Unsportsmanlike Conduct

This is any intentional behavior that brings disrepute to the sport, or which disrupts or changes the game to the extent that it cannot be played fairly. This includes but not limited to distracting the opponent, foul language, harassment of opponent, continuing to play after a foul has been called or play has been suspended, practicing during a match, marking the table, delay of game and using equipment inappropriately. Violation of any of these rules could result in loss of game, forfeit of the match, or being removed from the Tournament depending on the infraction.

# ISPA Conduct and Ethics

Any personnel appointed to represent the ISPA organization, as a vendor, tournament director, referee or player shall conduct themselves in a respectful manner.

Dispute between ISPA players, ISPA officials or representee of the ISPA.

1. The dispute will be held in a closed-door manner.
2. Both parties will bring their league operators or league representative to the discussion.
3. Both parties may be interviewed separately and/or together depending on the circumstances.
4. The ISPA board members will be the final decider of conflict.
5. The conflict will be addressed with the ISPA board members present and any other parties warranted to resolve dispute.

Penalty Phase- Penalties can range from a warning to immediate expulsion from the tournament area depending on the severity of the offense. These punishments can be handed down to any member of the complaint.

1. Warning to end such behavior.
2. Removal from tournament for one day
3. Removal from all tournament events and removal from tournament arena
4. If the conflict cannot be resolved by the ISPA board members, then the conflict will be forwarded & addressed by ISPA League Operators if any other punishments are recommended.

The ISPA board can render any decision that will eliminate the conflict.

**Any ISPA board member should excuse themselves if there is conflict of interest noted.**

## Event Information

### 1. Singles:

- A minimum of 8 players must pre-register for these events. Otherwise, brackets will be combined with another division with a bigger handicap, placed in their appropriate division (senior vs open/intermediate/etc), or if requested, their entry fee can be refunded.
- Races and start times are subject to change based on number of entries and the Board and Tournament Director's discretion.
- Singles entry fees include a \$15 admin fee, a \$10 greens fee, and \$1 admission fee.

### 2. Teams:

- Mixed Teams will have a minimum of 5 players and no more than 7 with a limit of two women on the team.
- Women's Teams will have a minimum of 4 players and no more than 6.
- Team entry fees include a \$50 admin fee + a \$75 greens fee.

Singles (Women and Men divisions)	Entry Fee	Day	Approximate Start Time	Race to (Subject to Change)
9 Ball – Open Singles	\$60	Wednesday	11AM	4
9 Ball – Intermediate Singles	\$70	Wednesday	11AM	5
9 Ball – Advanced Singles	\$80	Wednesday	11AM	Men only: 6
9 Ball – Masters Singles	\$90	Wednesday	12PM	Men: Masters 7, Elite 9; Women: Masters 6, Elite 7
9 Ball – Senior singles (Women: 50+; Men: 55+)	\$60	Wednesday	12PM	Women: Open 4; Intermediate 5; Masters 6 Men: Open 4; Intermediate 5; Advanced 6; Masters 7
9 Ball – Super Senior Singles (Men: 65+)	\$60	Wednesday	12PM	Men only: Open 4; Intermediate 5; Advanced 6; Masters 7
8 Ball – Open singles	\$60	Thursday	9AM	4
8 Ball – Intermediate Singles	\$70	Thursday	9AM	4
8 Ball – Advanced Singles	\$80	Thursday	11AM	Men only: 5
8 Ball – Masters singles	\$90	Thursday	12PM	Men: Masters 6, Elite 8; Women: Masters 5, Elite 6
8 Ball – Senior singles (Women: 50+; Men: 55+)	\$60	Thursday	9AM	Women: Open 3; Intermediate 4; Masters 5 Men: Open 3; Intermediate 4; Advanced 5; Masters 6
8 Ball – Super Senior Singles (Men: 65+)	\$60	Thursday	9AM	Men only: Open 3; Intermediate 4; Advanced 5; Masters 6
<b>On-Site Registration Events (MUST BE OUT OF ALL EVENTS TO SIGN UP SUBJECT TO CHANGES DUE TO ENTRIES)</b>				
Jack & Jill 8 Ball – Advanced/Masters Division (limit 1 Master)	\$50	Friday	6PM	4

Jack & Jill 8 Ball – Open/Intermediate division (no Master)	\$40	Friday	3PM; 5PM	3
Scotch Doubles 10 Ball (limit 1 Master; one division)	\$40	Friday	10AM	Race to handicap – single elimination
10 Ball - Super Mini (one division)	\$20	Wednesday	8:00 PM	Race to handicap – single elimination
3 Person Team Event (must be 55 or older) - Teams can be formed from ANY league.	\$75	Friday	TBD	9 Game Format - Race to 5 Start time to be determined by entries
<b>Team Events – Mixed Teams: 5 Person (limit 2 women); Women Teams: 4 Person (no men)</b>				
8 Ball – Master Team	Mixed: \$275	Saturday	9AM	13
	Women: \$245			
8 Ball – Advanced Team (limit 1 Master)	Mixed: \$250	Saturday	9AM	Mixed only: 11
8 Ball – Intermediate Team (limit 1 Advanced)	Mixed: \$225	Saturday	9AM	9
	Women: \$195			
8 Ball – Open Team (limit 1 Intermediate)	Mixed: \$200	Saturday	9AM	9
	Women: \$170			
8 Ball – Intermediate Team – 2nd chance*	Mixed and Women: \$50	Saturday	6PM	Mixed: First 64 teams; Women: First 16 teams
8 Ball – Open Team – 2nd chance*	Mixed and Women: \$50	Saturday	6PM	Mixed: First 64 teams; Women: First 16 teams
*Must have not finished in the money to qualify				
<b>Junior Divisions - onsite registration only</b>				
9 Ball – Boys and Girls Singles (age 8 – 13)	\$35	Sunday	12PM	5
9 Ball – Boys and Girls Singles (age 14 – 18)	\$35	Sunday	12PM	5

# Information for New Players

## Where should I stay?

- Please see the list of preferred hotels on the ISPA website: [www.ispa-billiards.org](http://www.ispa-billiards.org)

## When should I arrive?

- Plan to arrive so you have time to check in to your hotel, get comfortable, look around and familiarize yourself with the site, find your starting times, and be at your table when your match is scheduled to play. This usually means arriving the night before your division is scheduled to start.

## Do I need to Check-In?

- Singles players are not required to check in.
- Teams are not required to check in with the office staff. You should check your players on CompuSport and make sure all information is correct. If you are caught playing with someone not registered properly, you could be disqualified from the team event. There will be a \$5.00 charge for team changes at the event.

## Where and when do I play?

- It is your responsibility to know when and where you play. Some matches may be called earlier than the scheduled start time. Second calls will be announced, and forfeiture process will be in effect.
- The Tournament Brackets can be accessed via your smart phone, iPad or computer at <http://compusport.us>
- Input your name in one of the available computer monitors at the Tournament Director's station. You will be able to navigate to the events you are registered for and will be able to see the bracket you are assigned to. Find the start time and table number of your match.
- If a match is still in progress on that table, please wait at the table until that match is completed. If the match is not close to ending, report to the tournament director and ask for table reassignment.

## After the match is done?

- We use CompuSport's online scorekeeping for both singles and team. Please sign off your match as soon as it is completed, **BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE TABLE.**
- Check one of the computers for the start time/table number of your next match.

# General Rules

## Tournament Rules

- The rules governing play are detailed in the current edition of Billiards – World Standardize Rules.
  - Exception: 9Ball break does not count in the two corner pockets closest to the rack. In all other pockets, a 9Ball break is a win.
- Referees are the authority in all matters relating to the rules. You can, however, dispute a ruling by a floor Referee and the matter will be taken up with the Head Referee who will be the Final Authority.

## Protests

- If for any reason, a player feels that another player (or team) is ineligible, that player may file a written protest with the Tournament Office. A required \$100 protest fee must accompany such protests. The protest will then be reviewed and a determination made. If the protesting Team prevails, the protest fee will be returned and action taken as deemed appropriate by the Qualifications Committee, whose decision is final. If the protested player is found to be eligible, the protesting player or team will forfeit the \$100 protest fee.
  - This same rule also applies to all singles division players.
- There are other situations that can be protested – check with a Referee if a situation occurs that you feel may warrant a protest.

## Match Start Times

- We make every effort to get all matches under way at the appointed times. Your timeliness in reporting for all matches will help make this job easier. Please be considerate of your fellow players.
- When playing in a singles event, you will be allowed a five (5) minute grace period for arrival at your match. If your opponent has not arrived at the table at five (5) minutes after the appointed time for the match to begin, take your scorecard to the Tournament Director's station. The Tournament Director will announce the start of the grace period and announce your opponent's name. At the expiration of this announced time, you will win the match by forfeit. The Tournament Director's clock ONLY will be used and is official for this purpose and the decision of the Tournament Director will be final.
- When playing in a team event, only one team member needs be present to start the match. The same grace period rules will apply as in the singles events, if no member of the opposing team is present.

## Shot Clock

- We observe a "reasonable" shot time frame. If you feel that a player is intentionally taking too much time on or between shots, you should notify a Referee. The Referee will then generally issue a warning to BOTH parties (singles players or teams) that a second complaint will result in the ENTIRE match being placed on a shot clock. This will hold each shot to a 45 second time limit.
- If the match is put on the shot clock, a Referee or designee will be placed at the match. Each shot will be timed. "Time" will be announced after 35 seconds, and "Foul" will be announced after 45 seconds. Ball in hand or other appropriate penalty will then be applied towards the offending player. Any abuse of a Referee under this provision by either a player or team will be handled as "Unsportsmanlike Conduct", and the Referee or other Tournament Official will take the appropriate action under the rules pertaining to Administrative Discretion.



# Player Classification

## Definitions

- **Open** – this division is reserved for entry level players. These players will typically not be able to run a rack. They most likely will need 2 or 3 times at the table to win. They don't have the knowledge of all aspects of the game at this level and probably only win about 30 to 45 percent of their games playing a higher ranked player.
- **Intermediate** – These players are a step above open players. They most likely play more and have a little more knowledge of the game. They have the ability to run a rack and may be able to execute some good safe play. They will be able to play better shape and have more control of the game. When playing against a lower ranked player, they should be able to win consistently 60 percent or more of their games.
- **Advanced** (Men's Singles and Mixed Team Only) – These players have the ability to run rack more consistently and can execute well played safeties. They have a good foundation of knowledge and will most likely win 75 percent or more of their games when playing a lower ranked player.
- **Masters** – this division is for the top end players.
- **Elites** – These players are permitted to play in the Masters division with a handicap to their opponent. The ISPA Qualifications committee determines who is considered an Elite player.

## List of Player Rankings

- A list of players rankings is maintained by the ISPA, and you must register for singles accordingly. These lists are available from your League Operator, and can also be found on the ISPA website at <https://compusport.us/CS/PlayerOfAssociation/PlayerLookup?AssociationId=28&sanctioned=true>  
**PLEASE NOTE: THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS MOVING UP EACH YEAR IS NOT A FIXED PERCENTAGE. ONLY BOARD MEMBERS ARE AWARE OF THE PERCENTAGES AND NO, YOU MAY NOT KNOW THE PERCENTAGES MOVED.**

## Voluntary Entry in Higher Division

- Any team or player may voluntarily choose to play in a higher skill division. Voluntary entry into a higher division does not necessarily require the team or player to play in the higher division at future tournaments. However, if the player cashes in the higher division, their eligibility to play in a lower division will be subject to review by the Qualifications Committee.

## Player Reclassification

- Players wishing to change to a lower skill division of play must submit a reclassification request form through their league operator. The form must be submitted on the ISPA website by October 1st. The Qualifications Committee will review the request, and either grant or deny the petition. Decisions will be shared with your League Operator once reviewed. Petitions received after the deadline will NOT be reviewed.
- To be eligible to request a reclassification, the player must have "participated" in the appropriate singles division for at least 2 years and not have cashed in that division during that time. Skipping the tournament does not count as a year played for this purpose.
- Remember – most divisions pay out to the top 25% of their participants. Just because you don't finish in the top 25% does NOT mean you don't belong in the other 75% of your division, based on your skill.
- **Not cashing for 2 years is by NO MEANS a guarantee that your reclassification request will be granted.**

## Known Ability Rule

- At the discretion of the Qualification Committee, any player or team may be placed in a higher division based on known ability. This may be done on site, and the required additional fees will be due and paid in full prior to that team or player being eligible to compete.

# Team Rules

## Structure of Teams

- Mixed teams can have up to two women playing on their team. Each woman's current singles status will drop 1 ONE level for team. Example: Women's Master will drop to an Advanced to play on a mixed team.
- Mixed teams have minimum of 5 (five) players with a maximum of 7 (seven) players on the roster.
- Women's teams have minimum of 4 (four) players with a maximum of 6 (six) players on the roster.
- All teams must consist of at least 2 original players from an original league team, all of whom have met the 6 (six) week requirement. (see "Weeks of Play Required in the Tournament Eligibility section – Page 3). The balance of the team may consist of any players from within their League Operators system who have also met the week of play requirement.
- At least 2 (two) core players must play all rounds. If there are only two core players on the team, the core players must play every round. If there are more than two core players, core players may rotate out so long as two core players are playing in the round.

## Open Teams

- An open team may include ONE player listed on the Intermediate Singles List. No Elite, Master or Advanced players (male or female) are permitted to play on an open team.

## Intermediate Teams

- An intermediate team may include ONE player listed on the Advanced Singles List. A Women's Intermediate Team can have ONE player listed on the Master Singles list. No Elite players (male or female) are permitted to play on an intermediate team.

## Advanced Teams (Mixed Division only)

- A Mixed Advanced team may include ONE player listed on the Master Singles List. No Elite players (male or female) are permitted to play on an advanced team.

## Masters Teams

- A Masters Division Team may be made up of any number of players up to 7 (seven) from within their League Operators system. This can include players from different divisions, different nights, and different sessions so long as EACH player meets the weeks of play requirement outlined above. These are traditionally "all-star" teams and none of these players need be on the Masters Singles list, but one or more may be. These teams are not required to meet the "2 original player requirement" used for non-Master Teams.

## Substitution Rules

- The Team Captain may substitute another player for a NO-SHOW player but not until after the completion of the round in which the player was listed to play. The no-show player may also be substituted back in a subsequent round should they arrive at the match late.
- The Team Captain may substitute another player for a REGULAR player but not until after the completion of the round in which the player was listed to play.
- The opposing Team Captain must be informed of all substitutions prior to the start of the round. If such substitution causes the substitute player to match up against a player they have already played, the substituted player will lose that game by forfeit.

## Start of Team Play

- When playing in a team event, only one team member needs be present to start the match.

- Score sheets will be filled out in a timely manner and play will commence as soon as both teams have a member present. If a game is completed and the listed opposing player is not present to begin the next game on the score sheet, that game will be forfeited to the player who is present and the match will proceed to the next game. This will continue until such time as a game can be played and the offending team or teams will take the forfeits accordingly. A player listed on the roster and on the scoresheets may begin play at any time he/she arrives but may not make up forfeited games.

### Dress Code

We wish to make your tournament experience as positive and comfortable as possible and present the best possible image for our sport. We ask that you help by maintaining proper and appropriate dress during the event. If you have a written medical excuse, you may present it to the ISPA office to obtain an exception. Otherwise, please observe the following requirements:

### Effective Times

The dress code is in effect during ALL event matches even if matches extend beyond midnight. The dress code applies to all areas inside all tournament rooms. – NO EXCEPTIONS!!!

### Singles Events Dress Code

ITEM	CODE
<b>SHIRTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collared shirts such as Polo or button-down style shirt with sleeves and fold-over or pro-cut collar.</li> <li>NOT PERMITTED: T-Shirts, sleeveless shirts or tops regardless of gender or classification</li> </ul>
<b>PANTS &amp; SHORTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Casual or dress pants</li> <li>Neat and clean jeans</li> <li>Business casual, walking, denim shorts - Must be of conservative length and have a hem.</li> <li>Capri-style pants</li> <li>Yoga pants or leggings are permitted but must be dark color, solid and non-transparent.</li> <li>NOT PERMITTED: <b>No tears, holes, or threadbare spots</b> including designer clothing incorporating such features as a part of the design, squorts, cutoffs, bib-type overalls, surgical scrubs, and sweatpants or suits.</li> </ul>
<b>DRESSES &amp; SKIRTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sleeved dresses of conservative length</li> <li>Skirts of conservative length</li> <li>Culottes</li> </ul>
<b>FOOTWEAR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean, neat shoes must be always worn</li> <li>Shoes with laces must have the laces properly tied.</li> <li>NOT PERMITTED: No bare feet or stocking feet. Open-toe shoes are not permitted unless an exception has been obtained by the tournament committee.</li> </ul>
<b>HEADWEAR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Billed or brimmed hats must be clean, neat and worn with the <b>bill straight forward</b>.</li> <li>Skull caps, bandanas or head bands may be worn but must be conservative, neat and clean.</li> <li>Tams are permitted.</li> <li>NOT PERMITTED: Stocking caps, ski caps, or hoods of any kind.</li> </ul>

## Team Event Matching Shirt Requirements

Team matching shirt requirements are in effect for all team events. Team shirts must match in color, style and trim. The chart below describes what features are critical in determining whether a shirt is considered to be matching.

ITEM	REQUIRED
<b>COLOR, STYLE, QUANTITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All team members must wear shirts or blouses of identical style and color, with matching logos, front and back, exclusive of embroidered names, league award patches, etc. All members of a team must have their own team shirt or blouse.</li><li>• In emergency situations, if a player does not have a team shirt, they <b>MUST</b> wear an event shirt purchased from the shirt vendor on site.</li><li>• NOTE: No borrowing of shirts will be permitted. Team members may be required to remove coats, sweatshirts or jackets to ensure dress codes are not in violation.</li><li>• NOTE: No team may have members arrive late to undermine dress code violations.</li></ul>
<b>NAMES, GRAPHICS &amp; OTHER MARKINGS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name on shirt does not need to match the player's name</li><li>• Names are not required on shirts. Some may have names while others do not.</li><li>• Large areas of embroidery or graphics cannot be offensive or suggestive in nature (ISPA has sole discretion). No exceptions.</li></ul>

### Dress Code Enforcement

- Any player found in violation of the dress code will be given 15 minutes to correct the violation (during match play) and return to the match site. If the player is not back in 15 minutes, the player will lose one game of the match, and will lose one additional game, for each additional five minutes, until he or she returns. A team captain may not substitute another player for a player found in violation of the dress code until after the player returns in proper attire. During mini tournaments any player found in violation of the dress code will be asked to leave the tournament floor and will forfeit their position in the event.

### Dress Code Protest by Players

- If a player or team wishes to protest or report a suspected violation of the dress code, it must be done prior to the commencement of a match. Only players involved in a singles match or the team captain, if a team event match, may make such protest to a referee. Once a match has begun, no dress code protests will be recognized but may be enforced by a Referee.

### Referees Authority

- Referees will be the final authority in all matters of dress code, always. Referees shall have the authority to always enforce the dress code and at their discretion as to compliance times, whether immediate or at a future time, a player or team captain lodges whether or not any protest.

# Miscellaneous Information

## Payout Procedures

- All payouts must be collected from the payouts window or Office in the main lobby by the Tournament Director's station. Payouts will be distributed during posted times only!
- To receive your payout sheet, you must have the following:
  - Photo ID
  - Pay-out voucher (received from the ISPA Office station)
- Fill out the required paperwork as directed by ISPA office staff. Team payouts will ONLY be given to the Team Captain.
- Any player who receives over \$600 in winnings (ALL EVENTS COMBINED) will be issued a 1099 by the ISPA and be required to provide their Social Security Number.

## Mini Tournaments

- Time and space permitting, mini tournaments will be scheduled on site. These events are typically held in the evening, with 8 player brackets for various divisions of play. Entry fees vary by division.
- ELITE/Master players will not be permitted to enter Mini tournaments unless a specific Elite/Master Mini Tournament is scheduled.

## Electronic devices / Cell Phones

- **No cell phone usage during a match. Phones must be silenced or turned off. You will be given 1 warning.**
- **No headphones, ear buds, or electronic devices usage during match. Hearing aids will be allowed.**

## Food and Drinks

- Food and drinks from outside sources may not be brought into the tournament site. It's the Law! Violators may be disqualified from the event.

## Other Miscellaneous Rules

- Gambling is NOT permitted at any time during the event! ISPA is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen items.

**Thank You for Your Participation and Enjoy Your 2026 ISPA State Tournament...**