

**San Diego County Women's Golf Association**  
**TEAM PLAY RULES & CONDITIONS OF PLAY**  
**2026 Issue - Revised 1/16/26**

**USGA MATCH PLAY RULES WILL GOVERN ALL PLAY, PLUS  
THE FOLLOWING LOCAL RULES**

Section I: Club Participation

1. Every Member Club may field at least one team. No club shall be permitted to field more than 4 teams. Two or more different clubs may join to make a "combined team" providing they declare only one of the courses as their home course. If a Club fields more than one team the teams must be constituted in ascending order of handicap indices.
2. Each participating team shall be assessed a fee as determined by the SDCWGA Board of Directors. This fee should be made payable to SDCWGA by the deadline set by the Team Director. This payment, along with the team entry form, must be sent to the SDCWGA Team Director or the mailing address of SDCWGA.
3. The team captain and/or her alternate is expected to attend the pre-season meeting conducted by the Team Director.
4. Should a club withdraw during the Team Play Season, all points won or lost by that club will be withdrawn. All played matches will be adjusted accordingly. The club will be prohibited from participating in Team Play for two years.

Section II: The Roster

A. General

1. Any regularly organized Women's Club who has their handicap indices provided by SCGA is eligible to field a team or teams, subject to the discretion of the SDCWGA Executive Board.
2. A team roster shall consist of no fewer than eight (8) and no more than sixteen (16) players. A club (or combined clubs) that submits more than one team must place its team members in teams according to ascending handicap indices.
3. If a club (or clubs) sponsors more than one team in SDCWGA Team Play, each team shall be considered a separate entity with its own captain and assistant captain. Players may **not** be interchanged between rosters during the season, which includes the playoffs.

B. Player Eligibility

1. Each team player must be listed on the handicap report of the team she is representing or, in the case of a "combined team," on her home club's handicap report; and must be a member in good standing of her team's Women's Club.

2. Each team player must be in good standing of SDCWGA.
3. A team member belonging to more than one club must declare the team for which she wishes to play and will be prohibited from playing for any other SDCWGA team during that year.
4. Prior to participating in her first match of the SDCWGA Team Play season, each team player must:
  - (A) Demonstrate knowledge of the Rules of Golf.
  - (B) Currently has her handicap index provided through SCGA.
  - (C) If a club plays three (3) or more games per month, each team player from that club must have played **Six (6)** qualifying rounds within the last six (6) months prior to her first Team Play match, at least **Four (4)** of which must have been played in competition **organized** by the Women's Club she represents for SDCWGA Team Play, and up to **Two (2)** SDCWGA events played in the last six months prior to her first Team Play Match.
  - (D) If a club only plays one (1) or two (2) games per month, each team player from that club must have played **Four (4)** qualifying rounds within the last six (6) months prior to her first Team Play match, at least Two (2) of which must have been played in competition **organized** by the Women's Club she represents for the SDCWGA Team Play, and up to **One 1** SDCWGA event played in the last six months prior to her first Team Play Match.

**Note: Multi-round tournaments are considered one event.**

**The team captain is responsible for the members of her team meeting all eligibility requirements.** If a team captain has reasonable cause to believe that a player should not play, the captain should deal with the matter on a club level, together with the Women's Club President. The decision should then be communicated to the SDCWGA Team Director.

Questions regarding eligibility should be directed by the Team Captain to the SDCWGA Team Director.

**PENALTY FOR VIOLATION OF ELIGIBILITY RULES:** Disqualification of the offending player. All holes won by the offending player during her match will be declared null and void. Only those holes won by the offending player's partner would constitute their score for the match.

#### C: Replacement and Added Players

Definition: A replacement player is a player who is replacing a player who is injured or has left the area and is no longer able to participate in Team Play. **Replacements are permanent. A player being replaced may not return for the current season.** An added player is a player added to a roster after team play has begun when the team has less than the maximum of 16 players.

A team's placement within a **group/division** is determined by the team average handicap index (lowest 12 players). Once your team rosters have been submitted to the Team Play Director and she has determined your placement in a group/division, the handicap index of a replacement or added player may not RAISE or LOWER the overall team average by more than two index points. In some cases, a

replacement or added player will be required to reduce her index to keep the team average within the division limits.

1. Any addition or replacement player must be communicated to the team director a minimum of 2 days prior to the event. Failure to meet requirements will void that player's eligibility.
2. Any addition or replacement player being added to play in the playoffs must be communicated to the team director a minimum of 14 days prior to the event. Failure to meet requirements will void that player's eligibility. Exceptions can be made by the Committee in consultation with the Team Play Director only in extenuating circumstances.

### Section III: Procedures

#### A: Groups and Divisions

Groups will be determined by ascending order of the average index of the top twelve (12) players from the team roster's handicap index. Groups will be assigned teams by Team Play Director / SDCWGA Board of Directors. Within each Group two or more Divisions will be determined by the Team Play Director / SDCWGA Board of Directors.

#### B: The Course

Play will be home and home or on a neutral course as determined by the SDCWGA Board of Directors. Play will not be allowed at an Executive Course.

Scheduling between Team Captains shall be agreed upon and booked by a date determined by the Team Play Director. The Hostess Captain shall have priority in picking the date on a weekday. Consideration shall be given for possible rain-out dates. If the two (2) Team Captains involved cannot agree on an acceptable date within the overall SDCWGA Team Schedule, then both teams will forfeit all points for that match. All games are to be played on weekdays, Monday through Friday, unless mutually agreed upon by all teams. The team not able to play Monday through Friday will forfeit all points.

**Team play matches shall not be scheduled to conflict with previously scheduled SDCWGA events.**

All Team Play shall be played from the FORWARD tees from which the holes have been handicapped for women. If the course is less than 4400 yards and has holes that have been handicapped for women from a 2<sup>nd</sup> set of tees, the Hostess Captains may choose to play from the 2<sup>nd</sup> set of tees. If the Host Club normally plays from other than the forward tees (a second set of tees or combo tees) the Host Club may designate those tees for Team Play only after prior approval from the Team Play Director. UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CAPTAINS MUST AGREE ON TEE SELECTION.

## C: Players

Each match should be played by four sides from each opposing team.

Any eight players may be chosen from the team roster for a scheduled match. The first four (4) lowest handicap players shall be assigned to the first two groupings of the match/bracket in any order. The next four (4) players shall be assigned to the last two groupings of the match/bracket in any order the Captain chooses. If the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> players by handicap index have the same handicap index, the Captain may choose which player to put in the first 2 brackets. Teams **should** have at least one player in every bracket. If unable to fill all brackets, the first bracket to be left open **must** be the 4<sup>th</sup> bracket position and the opposing captain must be notified prior to play. *(i.e. if a team only has 6 players and they wish to concede the points for one of the brackets, it must be the 4<sup>th</sup> bracket. Any bracket can be filled with only 1 player at any time.)*

Players shall play with the index on the date determined by the Team Director. Although team play is open to all SDCWGA members regardless of handicap index, a maximum course handicap of 36 is allowed during play.

## D: General

The Guest Team will have honors on the first tee. The side that wins gross shall have the honor on the next teeing ground.

Brackets must play in the order assigned unless the two team captains agree to change the order because some trouble has befallen a group.

Players may walk the course if the course allows, BUT pace of play must be maintained. If players who walk are constantly behind, they may face penalties and will be required to ride in subsequent matches. **Note:** Some courses and/or Captains may require carts for all players. Failure of a player to abide by this rule if imposed by courses or captains will result in disqualification of that player.

## E: Adverse Weather Conditions

In case of adverse weather conditions prior to play, the Hostess Team Captain and host professional shall decide if the match will be played. **All team captains** should call the host pro-shop for confirmation of play. IF POWER CARTS ARE NOT ALLOWED, TEAM PLAY SHALL BE

POSTPONED. In case of cancellation, the Hostess Captain notify other captains when she can reschedule the match. If the Team Captains involved cannot agree on a new date that is within the overall SDCWGA Team Schedule, all points for that match will be forfeited.

If rain commences after all the teams have teed off, the matches will continue unless canceled by the Hostess Captain and the host professional under "course unplayable." In the event of Imminent Danger, play will be suspended until the Committee resumes play.(Rule 5.7b).

#### F: Scoring

1. Handicap allowance for each player in a team match will be 90% of a players handicap index on a date to be specified by the Team director.
2. Strokes shall be taken as they fall on the scorecard, starting with the #1 handicap hole on the course played.
3. One gross ball and one net ball for each side will be scored: the same ball may be used for both gross and net. The gross ball will be scored at scratch.
4. Each match will be played as 4-ball match play (*better ball of partners*). The low gross ball of a side is matched against the low gross ball of the opponent's side for a gross win of that hole. The low net ball of a side is matched against the low net ball of the opponent's side for a net win for that hole. If there is no gross or net winner the hole is halved, and has no consequence in regards to the match.
5. The side with the most gross wins on the first 9 holes scores 1 point gross for that 9. The side with the most net wins will score 1 point net for that 9. The same format will continue with the second 9 holes resulting in a win of 1 point for the most gross wins on the back side, and 1 point for the most net wins on the back side.
6. The side with the most gross wins will score an additional 1 point for overall gross wins. The side with the most net wins will score an additional 1 point for overall net wins. Each side can earn 3 points gross and/or 3 points net, for a team total of 12 points gross and/or 12 points net.
7. The Gross winner of each Division will be the Team scoring the most Gross Points during the season. The Net Winner of each Division will be the Team scoring the most Net Points during the season.
8. For handicap purposes, if a player starts but does not complete a hole, she shall record a score she most likely would have made preceded by an X (ex: X6). Such a score shall not exceed the maximum hole score for that hole as described in Section 3.1b of the USGA Rules of Handicapping.
9. All Gross scores (actual number of strokes plus any penalty strokes) will be entered into Golf Genius. The Host team will be responsible for assigning the most experienced person with Golf Genius, regardless if they are Home or Visiting team, to enter any and all scores in the GGID.

#### Section IV: Rules

1. A side may be represented by one partner for all or any part of a match; all partners need not be present. An absent partner may join a match between holes, but not during play of a hole. (Rule 23.4) A nonappearance by any team at a scheduled match shall be cause for forfeiture of all points accrued to date. That team will be barred from further team play in the current season. All points won or lost by that team will be withdrawn from all previous opponents. **PLEASE NOTE:** If a team should default by nonappearance at the final match of the regular season or any playoff match, all members will be ineligible for team play the following year. This rule holds true even when the last match is a make-up/rain date.

Each team side must be on the tee at the **scheduled time**. **PENALTY:**

- Loss of 1st hole if both players on a side are within 5 minutes late of the start time.
  - 1st hole will be halved if both sides are late.
  - Loss of match if both players on a side are more than 5 minutes late. It will not be necessary to play the match, but it may be played if both sides wish to do so.
3. If a putt is conceded, **it must be accepted** and one more stroke added to the score. Conceded putts are to be picked up & may not be replaced & putted. Although there is no penalty for holing out in such circumstances, if the putt would be of assistance to a partner, the partner is, in equity, disqualified for the hole. (Rule 23.6)

In match play, if a doubt or dispute arises between the players and no duly authorized representative of the Committee is available within a reasonable time, the player shall continue the match without delay. Any claim, if it is to be considered by the Committee, must be made before any player in the match plays from the next teeing ground or, in the case of the last hole of the match, before all players in the match leave the putting green. (Rule 20.1b) No later claim shall be considered unless it is based on facts previously unknown to the player making the claim and the player making the claim had been given wrong information by an opponent. (Rule 3.2d) In any case, no later claim shall be considered after the result of the match has been officially announced, unless the Committee is satisfied that the opponent knew she was giving wrong information.

5. All golf balls used during team play must be on the current USGA list of conforming golf balls. XOUTS are prohibited. (Rule 4.2a) **PENALTY:** Loss of hole for the player using non-conforming ball.
6. If the “cart path only rule” is in effect, all team members must conform. If use of a Blue Flag is approved by SDCWGA and the course management agrees that that person and her partner may drive on the course, the “Host” Team Captain shall ask for the same privilege for their two opponents. A copy of the DMV Handicap Certificate must be on file with SDCWGA. **During Playoffs all team members must ride in carts and must abide by course regulation regarding their use\***. \*Failure of a player to abide by the cart rule will result in disqualification of that player.
7. Neither galleries nor spectators are permitted on the course while matches are being played. (This includes Team Captains who are not playing and players that have completed their matches.)

8. No caddies are allowed during team play matches or during team play play-offs. **PENALTY:** Loss of hole at each hole where a caddie was used, applies to that side.
9. Distance measuring devices (Rule 4.3a) are allowed; however, the use of devices that gauge or measure other conditions (e.g., wind, elevation change, line of play or club selection based on player's ball location) is not permitted. In the spirit of the game, the measurement on the distance measuring device should be shared with the opponent, if solicited.
10. **Pace of Play: (Rule 5.6a & 5.6b)** In match play, players may agree to play out of turn shot by shot to save time. All players should prepare in advance for their next stroke and that stroke must take place no more than 40 seconds after you reach your ball and it is safe to play. Penalty for first breach: One stroke penalty to the offending player on the offending side. Penalty for second Breach: Loss of hole for the offending side. Penalty for 3<sup>rd</sup> breach is disqualification for the offending side. **If a course marshal tells the players to pick up their balls and move on, the players MUST do so. Failure to do so may result in disqualification. The hostess Captain is responsible for making sure the Pace of Play Policy is enforced.**
11. In order to maintain pace of play, players are not to play any practice stroke on or near the last green played. **PENALTY:** Loss of next hole.
12. A player should pick up her ball when her score is not in contention.
13. **Any group delayed by trouble after play has commenced should allow the following group to play through.**
14. The Hostess Captain is responsible for providing a rules committee. The committee may be two Team Captains **or** one experienced player from each team. They shall decide rules questions, procedures, doubts as to procedures, or any disputes that may arise during the play of the match. If the 2 people cannot agree the final decision will be determined by the Rules Director of SDCWGA. The Hostess Captain or designee should have a copy of the SDCWGA Team Rules and a USGA Rules of Golf Book available. – A USGA Official Guide to the Rules of Golf effective January 2019 would be helpful.  
**NOTE: IF PREFERRED LIES ARE USED, THE LOCAL RULE WILL BE AS STATED ON THE SDCWGA WEBSITE.**
15. **Ball Lost or Out of Bounds** (Rule 18) SDCWGA events will not allow the use of any local Rule a club that has put the optional OB or Lost Ball rule into effect. Any OB or lost ball in a SDCWGA Event will be loss of stroke and distance.

#### Section V: Team Captain Duties

## **PRE-SEASON**

1. Before the due date determined by Team Play Director, each team captain shall provide her roster to the Team Play Director and the maintenance schedule for their home course. The roster shall list her team members, their GHIN numbers and indices (in ascending order). Any subsequent addition to the team roster must be communicated directly to the Team Play Director a minimum of 7 days prior to the event. Failure to meet requirements will void that player's eligibility.
2. The Hostess Team Captain shall secure her course for team play within the time frame designated by the SDCWGA Team Play Director. She shall obtain quotations as to green fees and cart fees from the golf course pro or manager and she shall coordinate with the Guest Team Captains regarding the date, tee time and fees.
3. The team captain is responsible for ensuring that all players meet the eligibility criteria described in Section IIB. She should coordinate with the club's handicap chair.
4. **The team captain is responsible for her team's understanding and abiding by the USGA Rules of Golf governing this type of play, and in addition, the etiquette and good sportsmanship characteristic of the great game of golf.**
5. **ALL PLAYERS NEED A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF THE RULES OF GOLF PRIOR TO PARTICIPATING IN TEAM PLAY.**
6. **If a player consistently shows a disregard for the Rules or lack of knowledge she will become ineligible for Team Play for the remainder of the season.**

## **PRE-MATCH**

1. Opposing team captains **must** communicate their player line-ups and current handicap indices to each other at least 48 hours prior to the match. Failure to do so could result in team disqualification, or Team Captain Suspension.
2. **Each Hostess** Team Captain shall prepare scorecards for both teams for each match if not provided. Each scorecard must include the names of players from both teams (*4 players-2 sides*) and indicate strokes where they fall.
3. There should be enough space remaining on the card to neatly record gross and net wins.
4. **The Hostess Team Captain is responsible for preparing a Local Rules Sheet** for the course being played. **NOTE:** Local Rules that give an option other than stroke and distance for Lost Ball or Out of Bounds is not allowed in SDCWGA Events.

## **MATCH-DAY**

1. The Guest Team Captain will check in with the Hostess Team Captain at least ½ hour prior to play.
2. The Hostess Team Captain will explain the procedure for the day. The Hostess Team Captain or designee should be available ½ hour before the first tee time to assist with check-in and answer any questions. **The Hostess Team Captain will supply the pro shop and/or starter with a list of all players.**
3. Each Team Captain shall present the official SDCWGA Results Sheet listing players (*4 sides*) for the match, together with their indices and handicaps to the other Team Captain to establish the correct listing of all players.
4. The Hostess Team Captain **shall** review the Local Rules sheet with the Team Captains and present 4 copies of the Local Rules Sheet to each Team Captain for distribution to their teams.
5. Payment of green and cart fees shall be made to the pro shop prior to the start of the match.
6. At the conclusion of play, result sheets shall be completed by team captains, signed, and returned to the Hostess Team Captain. The results sheet shall be sent via text or e-mail to the SDCWGA Team Director within 24 hours of the match and results entered into the Team Play Module via SDCWGA website. The Team Captain must retain a hard copy of the results until the end of the season. If there is a question or protest, the team captains should not sign the result sheet. A letter or e-mail explaining the protest shall be sent to the Team Director as soon as possible following the match in question.
7. All players **must** post their games on the day they played team in order to keep their handicap current. Failure to do so could result in the player's disqualification due to incorrect handicap index.
8. **The team captains shall retain all scorecards until the end of the season, including playoffs.**
9. It is recommended that each team captain carry a current, USGA Rules of Golf Book (Effective January 2019) in her golf bag.

## **HOSTESS DUTIES**

1. The Hostess Team Captain shall notify the pro-shop at least one week before play of the number of power carts needed.
2. **The Hostess Team Captain should give a policy of the Pace of Play to the Course Marshall or other individual who can enforce the Pace of Play.** She should provide a Marshal if at all possible, or if not, inform the proshop marshals about expectations for pace of play.

3. She should request that any "ground under repair" area be marked, and tee markers be set at the proper monument on all teeing grounds.
4. She shall prepare a local rules sheet for distribution to all players. Make sure local rules apply to Match Play, e.g. cannot "play another ball in case of dispute". The SDCWGA Rules Director is available to assist in the preparation of these rules and may be consulted to be sure the rules conform to SDCWGA policies.
5. The Hostess Team Captain or designee shall be available ½ hour before the first tee time to assist with check-in and answer any questions. At the conclusion of each match, she should collect the properly completed results sheets which have been signed by opposing captains. **No alteration of results sheets is permitted once they are signed by the respective captains.**
6. The results of the match **shall** be sent via text or email to the Team Director immediately following the match.

**IF A HOSTESS TEAM CAPTAIN FAILS TO PERFORM ANY OF THE DUTIES – THE TEAM MAY BE DISQUALIFIED FROM FURTHER TEAM PLAY.**

## Section VI: PLAYOFF GUIDELINES:

In the event of a tie for a gross winner or a net winner within a Division, a playoff of one game on a neutral course will be scheduled. The Team Play Director will select the course to be played. A coin will be tossed to determine which Team Captain will act as the "Home" Team Captain and book the course on which the match will be played.

In the event that a team should be both gross and net winner in its Division, that team will become the gross winner and the team that is 2<sup>nd</sup> net will become the net winner.

The Net Group Champions will be determined by semi final playoffs of the winners from each Division. The Team Director will arrange playoff matches on neutral courses. Playoff matches will be determined at the end of the season.

The overall SDCWGA Gross Champions will be determined by final playoffs of the winners from each Division in Group 1 only. Gross winners from Group 2 will not be in a playoff but will be recognized for winning Gross within their respective Division. Playoff matches will be determined at the end of the season.

If there is a tie at the completion of the playoff matches for Group winners, winners will be determined by a card-off based on the total number of holes won by the whole team. If there is still a tie at that point, the winner will be determined by a card-off, i.e., the total number of holes won by the whole team on the back nine holes, etc.

Overall the Net Champion will be determined by final playoffs of the winners from each Group. The Team Director will arrange playoff matches on neutral courses. Playoff matches will be determined at the end of the season.

If there is a tie at the completion of the playoff matches, winners will be determined by a card-off based on the total number of holes won by the whole team. If there is still a tie at that point, the winner will be determined by a card-off, i.e., the total number of holes won by the whole team on the back nine holes, etc.

There may be a neutral arbitrator at the inter-divisional play-offs. The arbitrator shall be the SDCWGA Rules Director or if not available a person appointed by the Team Play Director with the approval of the SDCWGA Executive Board.

All players must ride in carts. There will be no galleries or caddies permitted on the playoff course. Spotters serving that day are not to be construed as gallery. It is the duty of the arbitrators to enforce this rule.

**PACE OF PLAY** – will be enforced during all matches. **ALL PLAYERS MUST RIDE.** All players should prepare in advance for their next stroke and that stroke must take place no more than 40 seconds after you reach your ball and it is safe to play. Penalty for first breach: One stroke penalty to the offending player. Penalty for second Breach: Loss of hole for the offending side. Penalty for 3<sup>rd</sup> breach is disqualification for the offending side. **If a course marshal tells the players to pick up their balls and move on, the players MUST do so. Failure to do so may results in disqualification.**

## **AWARDS**

Divisional and Regional Champions, both gross and net, will receive a certificate of recognition.

The Overall Gross and Net Champion Clubs will have the club's name engraved on a perpetual trophy, which the winning clubs may keep and display for one year.

Individual team members for all winning clubs are also recognized with a small keepsake.

All awards and recognition will be awarded at our Team Play Awards Luncheon which will be determined and announced by the Team Play Director. Please encourage your team and club members to attend this event and recognize your accomplishments.

## Section VII: TEAM PLAY DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The goal of the Team Play Director is to provide the best possible environment for SDCWGA Team Play competition. Toward that end, the Team Play Director will:

- Conduct pre-season team captain meetings.

- Provide team captains:

  - Team rosters for respective regions

  - Playing schedules

  - Name/phone number and email of all captains and assistants

  - Any information regarding team play that becomes available throughout the season

- Inform team captains of team play results and standings following each match throughout the season.

- Provide the results to the SDCWGA Media Director for publication in *County Capers*.

- Along with the SDCWGA Rules Director, mediate any protests filed by team captain or hostess captains.

- Monitor the eligibility of players as the season progresses.

- Conduct the inter-Regional play-off tournaments.

- Help select appropriate awards for all the winning gross and net teams with the Trophy Director.

- Evaluate the team play season in an attempt to continually improve SDCWGA Team Play.