

# United States Golf Tour – Player Guide

A Player Handbook designed by our Players for our Players with the foundations of fair competition.

## WHO WE ARE

- The United States Golf Tour is the perfect blend of camaraderie, competition, and charity that attracts the tri-state areas top amateur players from across the country.
- Our tour prides itself in offering the best player experience in the business through our dedication to remain focused on our players experience, tournament value, connecting with our community, and delivering a professional well-run and organized event to our players and course partners.
- VALUE ADD- Our staff will always run the event from start to finish; we do not play in our own events!

## FREE MEMBERSHIP

- VALUE ADD- There is no cost to join the United States Golf Tour and it is open to any amateur golfer.
- Season Passes may be available so please review our membership options under Tour Info. and enjoy options for those who want to play more and save more!

## TOUR & TOURNAMENT FORMAT

- The United States Golf Tour will provide tournaments on a local, regional, and national level including a National Championship. Tournaments are flighted, individual stroke-play. All events are governed by the Rules of Golf as set by the United States Golf Association (USGA®).
- On-site Tournament Officials conduct player registration/check-in, provide player assistance, monitor, and enforce pace of play, and apply rulings, as necessary. Other formats that may be offered include team competitions, match play, specialty events, etc.

## TOUR COMPETITION

- Within each flight there will be an open am division (under age 50), senior division by flight (55 and over), Super Senior division for ages 55+, Women's Net division, and Hero's division for our Veterans and First Responders.
- Based upon the number of golfers entered in a flight, all divisions could be combined as one Open Flight if six or more players aren't registered.
- In that case, Senior Players and Women will compete from a forward tee in relation to the Open Flight Tee Boxes to help maintain a competitive balance.



## FLIGHTS

- Nicklaus (3.9 or less)
- Woods (4.0 – 7.9)
- Hogan (8.0 – 11.9)
- Player (12.0 – 15.9)
- Jones (16.0-19.9)
- Watson (20 and up)-plays a triple bogey max.

## FLIGHT PLACEMENT

- If player is new to the tour, a USGA handicap and or verified handicap system from another organization will be used to determine a player's flight. Once a player competes in 4 or more events, a tournament index will be considered.
- The Tour reserves the right to promote a player at any time and/or re-flight a player at any time based on their performance or previous history.
- Any player with a Tour Index will be flighted within that handicap range but can request to play up to a higher flight than his/her lowest and verifiable USGA® handicap index and this responsibility rests with the player.
- Tour Director reserves the right to place players in any flight to maintain a fair competition and the integrity of each flight.

## FLIGHT POLICY - PLAYER PROMOTION PASS

- If a player's Tour Index improves to correspond with a better flight, he/she will be awarded with a "Player Promotion Pass" to the next flight and will be notified, promoted, and awarded this distinction of improvement. Promotions normally occur on the first day of each month, but the Tour Director may make these promotions at any time. Any promotion awardee will automatically qualify for the National Championship in their new flight.
- Promoted players will keep their points in their previous flight and can still win Player of the Year should the rest of the flight be unable to catch up after the Tour Championship. The player can also have the opportunity to earn Player of the Year honors in their new flight by making up ground beginning at their first event in flight and through the remainder of the points season.
- Promoted players will also maintain their previous flight point total within the new flight. However, upon promotion, the promoted player cannot move into a position higher than 3rd place for player of the year. Points will be deducted, if necessary, to reflect into a tie for 3rd place as player recognizes that the points accrued were in a less competitive flight. In the spirit of fair competition, promotion does not entitle them to jump ahead of a player currently ranked in the Top 3 of their new flight.
- Any Player who wins a tournament in a higher flight at any point of the current points season is not eligible to move back a flight until after the season. At that point, we are happy to review and re-flight if your tournament index warrants it.

## FLIGHT POLICY - MOVEMENT TO AN EASIER FLIGHT

- A player who feels he/she is not competitive in their flight may request to be moved back and provide the data (Tour Index) to support the claim.
- The Tour Director will review information and automatically move once a player's index is a full point above their handicap range for their current flight. Requests must be made before pairings are set for that next event. Points will be carried as described above with a ranking no higher than 3rd place to start their new flight play.
- A player who wishes to move to a higher handicap flight, once eligible but not yet at a full point above, must request the move within a week of the next event.

\*Note: All flight movement will be suspended as of July 31st each season. Reviews for flight movement will resume in the fall points season after Nationals.

## TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION

- Tour Players can register online or by emailing their local Tour Director. Each tournament will have a limitation on number of entries, and therefore each event will become full on a 1st come, 1st served basis. Players are strongly encouraged to register early for each event as they may sell-out well in advance of the entry deadline.
- It is the responsibility of the Player to submit the required entry fee prior to the entry deadline. Acceptable payment methods to be listed on each tournament information page. We accept Credit Card payments before all events through the registration portal. The local tour director may permit alternative payment methods.
- Entry fee typically covers all green fees, cart fees for players only, range balls and use of the practice facility, LIVE scoring, player prize fund, trophies, and misc. tournament expenses.

## CANCELLATIONS / NO SHOWS

- Withdrawal from any event prior to registration being closed in accordance with the posted tournament cancellation policy will not be penalized.
- Any tournament cancellations after the deadline or same day no-shows will forfeit their entry fee as the tour staff has committed a final number to the course.

## TOURNAMENT PRIZING

- The winner of each flight will receive a trophy and the winner and top finishers as determined by the director will earn a portion of the designated prize pool for each flight.
- A portion of the entry fee by player is also used to generate the prize fund which is based upon participation and can vary based on late entries, withdrawals etc. All payouts will conform to USGA® Rules of Amateur Status.



## SPECTATORS & CADDIES

- Caddies and spectators are welcome at each tournament. Each course may have different policies that we abide by as guests of the host facility.
- Caddies and spectators are the responsibility of the associated player who is solely responsible for their proper golf etiquette and general decorum. If any issue(s) arise with their behavior or lack of proper golf etiquette, they will be asked to leave the premises.
- Golf carts are limited at each event to tournament players. Caddies and spectators wishing to ride should anticipate paying a cart fee if asked by the club. They may choose to walk the course and remain on the cart path and at a safe distance.

## PLAYER CONDUCT

- Players and/or their guests shall always respect the courses local dress code and personal conduct policy. In addition, the United States Golf Tour reserves the right to disqualify any player for any suspicion of the following conduct and behavior. unsportsmanlike conduct towards another player, damage to property or players, poor course etiquette, or disrespectful actions towards fellow players, drug and alcohol abuse, any reason deemed as inappropriate by the course staff, player complaint, and or tour. Throwing a club and or intentionally acting out and damaging the course is an automatic DQ. Not respecting Pace of Play times given before your round can also result penalties up to and including a DQ during your round and or after. Cheating with intent will result in a permanent ban. All the above will forfeit the right to refunds requested by the player.

## PACE OF PLAY

- Efficient pace of play is a driving factor of a successful and positive tournament experience for all participants. The Tournament Committee at each competition will determine the maximum allowable time each group is permitted to play the round, noting a player is expected to maintain a pace faster than the maximum allowable time.
- Typically, the maximum allowable time will be 2 hours 10 minutes for nine holes and 4 hours 30 minutes for 18-holes.
- Repeat offenders of the pace of play policy will be asked to tee off at the end of the tee sheet or disqualified after they reach the allotted time.
- Lead Group(s)
  - The first group(s) should finish their first nine holes at a pace faster than the maximum allotted time. If the lead group finishes over the maximum allotted time after nine holes, each player in the group will be assessed a 2-stroke penalty applied on their 9th hole.
  - Exception: If the lead group is held up by public play that was sent out before them or that began on the opposite tee, they will be absolved from the penalty provided they finish within 14 minutes of the group in front of them.
- All Following Groups
  - Groups are always expected to be waiting on the group directly in front of them. A 2-stroke penalty will be assessed to each player in a group that is over maximum time and fails to finish within 14 minutes of the group in front of them. Penalties will occur at checkpoints on holes #9 and #18.
- Advisories
  - Tournament Officials are not required to notify a group they are out of position – knowing this is the responsibility with the player and their group.



- Each group is responsible for monitoring their pace of play. Being in position means to be immediately behind the group in front of you.
- Any player penalized three (3) times during a calendar year will be suspended from the Tour for six (6) months.
- A player concerned about slow play in a group should first remind the player of the pace of play policy and encourage them to play more efficiently. The concerned player may request an official monitor the group and offending player(s). If a player is identified as holding up the pace of play, penalties may be applied to that player and rescinded from others.
- In the event you are playing or paired in a foursome and experiencing slow play, it is suggested you break into two twosomes until you catch the group in front of you.

## WEATHER POLICY

- Weather-related conditions may delay or suspend play such as:
  - Lightning
  - Course being deemed unplayable as determined by host facility
- If such inclement weather is present, every effort will be made by the tournament committee to complete the full number of holes. Under a delay, all players should remain on property and await official announcements from the tournament committee. A delay will never go longer than 2 hours. If the course remains unplayable and/or lightning is present, and, as the last option, the following may result in an official tournament:
  - 18-hole events may become shortened to nine holes. If this is not possible, it may be rescheduled.
  - 36-hole, 54-hole, or 72-hole tournaments may become official and shortened to an 18-hole tournament.
  - While the Tour will do everything possible to complete the full of prescribed holes, there will be no refunds should inclement weather shorten the event. All prizes and points will be awarded as if the tournament was completed.

## CHECK-IN & STARTING

- Tour Players should always check-in with the tournament committee on-site prior to the start of the first round and at least 30-minutes prior to starting time. It is the responsibility of the player to be at their starting hole approximately ten (10) minutes prior to their starting time.
- A player arriving to their starting hole at their starting time or up to five minutes late will incur a 2-stroke penalty. Any player arriving five (5) or more minutes after their starting time will be disqualified.
- When possible, tee times are accelerated. It is the responsibility of the player to check in at the 1st hole to see if their group could go off early.



## TEEING GROUNDS

- Course yardages to be determined by the tournament committee and aligned with the flight abilities. Typically, senior and ladies yardages will be less. Actual yardages may vary based on conditions, courses etc.
- Targeted tee boxes by flight
  - Nicklaus (3.9 or less)- Open 6500-6800 yards; Senior 6200-6500 yards
  - Woods (4.0 – 7.9)- Open 6500-6800 yards; senior 6200-6500 yards
  - Hogan (8.0 – 11.9)- Open 6300-6500 yards; senior 6000-6300 yards
  - Player (12.0 – 15.9)- Open 6200-6500 yards; Senior 6000-6300 yards
  - Jones (16.0 – 19.9) and Watson (20 and up)- Open and Senior 5800-6200 yards
  - Women all Flights- Ladies Tee Box; recommend by the local pro.
  - Super Senior players 70+ in Jones and Watson flights will have the option to play from the forward tee.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- Distance measuring devices that provide factual information are allowed at each event. Devices that measure slope, wind, or other factors besides yardage are not permitted.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices should always be on silent out of respect for fellow competitors.
- The playing of music during a tournament must be agreed upon by all golfers in the pairing and even then, the volume must be kept low so that no other groups can hear the music. It is not recommended by our staff.

## DRESS CODE

- Players shall maintain a positive dress appearance at tournaments as representatives of the United States Golf Tour. Golf shirts are required, should be tucked in, and no denim, jeans, jogging outfits, or sweatpants are permitted. Hats, when worn, should be with the bill facing forward.

## OTHER

- Any discrepancy regarding these rules, their interpretation, omissions, etc. are at the discretion of the Tour Director.

## POINTS/PRIZES/TOURNAMENT SIDE GAMES AND PREVIEW

- Will be shared before the event and awarded and paid the same day. You do not have to be present to win or collect. In that case, you will receive your awards and winnings before the end of your Next scheduled event.