



RULES AND FORMAT

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Core values:

We aim to uphold the values of golf, including integrity, honesty, competitiveness, and friendship.

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to create a fair competitive environment for golfers of all skill levels. We inspire and encourage golfers to do their very best and strive to beat their personal best on and off the golf course.

Deposit/ Cancellation policy:

- **Local chapter events:**
 - For 1-day events, a \$20.00 deposit is required, and for 2-day events, a \$40.00 deposit is required.
 - In the event of cancellation, a \$10.00 fee will be charged. HLAT cannot reimburse the merchant charges to process a credit card.
 - If a cancellation is made outside of two weeks before the registration deadline, the player's deposit will be returned minus the cancellation fee.
 - If a cancellation is made within 2 weeks of the registration deadline, the player will forfeit the deposit.
 - If there is a waitlist and another player takes the spot, the cancellation fee will be waived, except for the \$10.00 fee.
 - Once the tournament balance is processed and it is past the deadline, no refund will be issued.
- **National events:**
 - A \$100.00 deposit per day of the tournament is required.
 - In the event of cancellation, a \$25.00 fee will be charged. HLAT cannot reimburse the merchant charges to process a credit card.
 - If a cancellation is made outside of 4 weeks before the registration deadline, the player's deposit will be returned.
 - If a cancellation is made within 4 weeks of the registration deadline, the player will forfeit the deposit.
 - If there is a waitlist and another player takes the spot, the cancellation fee will be waived.
 - Once the tournament balance is processed and it is past the deadline, no refund will be issued.

Tour Schedule

- **National events (Majors)**
 - National Majors are scheduled to start in 2025.
 - The National office will host three different types of Majors.
 - **Regional Majors**



- Each local Chapter will belong to a region.
- Only members of that region are allowed to register.
- Players must have played in at least three local events and have a validated HLAT tournament index.
- The tournament will be at least a two-day, 36-hole contest.
- **National Majors**
 - There will be three to four National tournaments hosted each year.
 - The tournament will be at least a two-day, 36-hole contest.
 - Players must be members, have played in at least three local events, and have a validated HLAT tournament index.
- **National Championship Tournament**
 - The tournament will be at least a three-day, 54-hole contest.
 - Players must be members, have played in at least three local events, and have a validated HLAT tournament index.
- **Chapter Tour Schedule**
 - Each chapter must have a minimum of eight to thirteen tournaments.
 - There is no limit to the number of tournaments each chapter can play. For example, Florida could have a longer season than the Iowa schedule.

Handicap Committee

- The committee's primary purpose is to place new players and unvalidated players in the appropriate division.
- The committee will be made up of the Handicap President, three local chapter owners, and five HLAT player members (one per division).

Tour Index

The players' index will be determined by using the differential handicap of each round in the HLAT system. To calculate this number, we will average the 5 lowest rounds from the last 10 rounds and then multiply it by .96. This will serve as your tournament index:

- 1 tournament = this round will be used
- 2 tournaments = Best score
- 3 tournaments = Best score
- 4 tournaments = 2 best scores
- 5 tournaments = 2 best scores
- 6 tournaments = 2 best scores
- 7 tournaments = 3 best scores
- 8 tournaments = 3 best scores
- 9 tournaments = 4 best scores
- 10 tournaments = 4 best scores



The maximum number of tournaments is 20. When the 21st tournament is played, the oldest score will be dropped, and the index will be recalculated using the top 8 differential scores.

- **Validated Index**

- A player's index will be validated after their 3rd HLAT tournament round.

- **Divisions**

- There will be 5 divisions.
- Division handicap ranges:
 - D1 – (up to 4.9)
 - D2 – (5.0 – 9.9)
 - D3 – (10.0 – 14.9)
 - D4 – (15.0 – 19.9)
 - D5 – (20.0 – higher)

Divisional Placement

- **New members**

- Vetting - The process of vetting will include various factors such as GHIN, other tour handicaps/Indexes, contacting local courses, club championship scores, and other tournament scores. When using GHIN, the player's lowest score within the past 52 weeks will be a significant factor in determining which division they will be placed in.
- New members will be assigned to the division that best matches their playing ability. The final decision on this placement will be made by the tournament directors. Their decision-making process may involve conducting phone interviews with the player, considering GHIN, local course information, club championship scores, and other tournament indexes/scores.
- If the tournament directors are unable to verify a new member's handicap, the new member will be placed in Division 1 to ensure fairness for the other participants. It is the player's responsibility to provide a verifiable handicap, not HLAT.
- After the completion of the 3rd HLAT tournament round, the player will be placed in the Division where they achieved their lowest score.
 - For example, if the player's differential indexes are 14, 9, and 13, they will be placed in Division 2.

Division Movement

- **Existing Members with validated indexes**

- Members will be placed in the division their index indicates the day after the final round of the national championship tournament or their local finals. Whichever is the latest in the season.
- Members will only be moved if they request self-promotion. Otherwise, members will stay in the division they are placed in at the beginning of the tour season.
- Members are allowed to request to move up a division. If that request is granted, they will **NOT** be allowed to move back down until the beginning of the next season.



- **Stroke Back Rule**

HLAT aims to promote improvement among its members and does not intend to punish them for getting better. The organization wants its members to score higher, but it also acknowledges the need to maintain fair competition within each division. Instead of automatically promoting a player when they reach the divisional line, the player has the option to either move up to the higher division or give strokes back to the field they are currently competing against.

- The stroke ratios for giving strokes back to the field below the divisional line are as follows:
 - 0.1 to 1.0 below division line: 1 stroke
 - 1.1 to 2.0 below division line: 2 strokes
 - 2.1 to 3.0 below division line: 4 strokes
 - 3.1 to 4.0 below division line: 6 strokes
 - 4.1 to 5.0 below division line: 8 strokes
- This trend continues with a 1:2 stroke ratio for every stroke below 2.1.
- If a member decides to self-promote to a higher division, they will only be allowed to transfer 70% of their Player of the Year points into the higher division.
- HLAT believes this method to be the fairest in the amateur tournament industry. It ensures that each member does not miss out on the Tour's Player of the Year race, while also maintaining fair competition for all participants.
- This system also protects the field. For example, if a member has an 11.5 handicap in Division 3 and shoots an 84, their adjusted score will be 90 (84 + 6), placing them in the middle of the 15-20 handicap level.
- The member's actual score will be used to determine their tournament index.

Tournament format

- **Stroke play**
 - All tournaments will be stroke-play format unless otherwise noted in the tournament details on the tournament information page on the website or app.
- **Format**
 - Division format will be gross strokes.
 - Each division will play stroke play against the other players within their division.
 - Gross scoring will be used within these divisions.
 - The only exception is when the stroke back rule is being used for a player that has an index below the division line.



Out of Division Scoring

- **Existing validated member**
 - Due to the structure of our divisions. Out of division scoring from an established member will not fall into a DQ status. However, this score will affect their handicap tournament index. See rule: Stroke Back Rule
- **New Member**
 - If a new member or guest player wins in divisions 2-5, they will be disqualified if their score is 2 strokes below the division line and outside of 3 strokes from the next placed player. This rule is in place to prevent new members from deceiving HLAT and division members by playing in the wrong division.
 - If a tournament director suspects that a player intentionally added strokes to their round in order to avoid disqualification or to inflate their handicap, the player will be disqualified and given a warning. They will also be automatically moved to the division that the tour believes is the appropriate fit for them. The player will remain in that division until the end of the season, at which point they can request to be moved down if they wish.
 - Once a player has a validated index, they will not be disqualified for shooting outside of their division.

Battlefield promotions

- Only new members or members that are not validated are eligible for a battlefield promotion.

Disqualification

- **Breaking the Rules**
 - Any player that is caught intentionally cheating will be given a 2-tournament suspension. A \$100 citation will be issued to the player. Citation will have to be paid before player is allowed to return in good standings.
 - All citations will be given to Heart of a Lion Foundation as a charitable donation. Must show proof of payment to regain good standings with HLAT and be allowed to play on the tour.
 - If a player returns and continues to violate the rules HLAT has the right to remove the player from the tour without a refund of membership fees.

Caddie Policy

- Caddies are allowed as long as it's not slowing down pace of play or causing undue issues on the course.



Spectators

- Are welcome as long as it's not slowing down pace of play. If they are riding, they will need to pay the clubhouse for a spectator cart charge.

Tour Event Prizes

- Trophy, tour credit, cash gift cards and various prizes provided by sponsors at discretion of chapter owners and national office.

Prize Pool

- Determined based on size of field.

Trophies

- Division winners - Trophies will be awarded to each division winner.

Pairings

- Will be posted on the app prior to the tournament date.
 - A player can request a pairing; all pairings are at the discretion of the tournament director.
 - Pairing will be done by tee box assignments as best possible to keep up pace of play.

Tour Event Scoring

- All scoring will be stroke-play unless otherwise stated in the tournament details.
- Each pairing will be required to enter in live scoring after each hole is completed.
 - This will assist HLAT with keeping pace of play moving forward and allow the tournament director to identify slow play on the course.

Triple Bogey Max

- Divisions 3-5 will play triple bogey max.
 - This is strictly a pace of play rule.

Tee Box assignments

- These distances are approximate and are not set in stone. The yardages from the tees will vary depending on the specific layout of each golf course and its location. In comparison to Iowa, where the distances tend to be shorter, the distances in Utah will be greater due to its elevation of 5,000 feet above sea level. Similarly, in Florida, where the terrain is flat and dry, the distances will also be longer.
 - Tee box bump is the number of tees ahead of the furthest back tees (TIPS)
 - D1
 - Open - (TIPS) -HLAT BLACK
 - Seniors – (1) tee box bump – HLAT RED
 - Women – (2) tee box bump – HLAT GREEN



- D2-D5
 - Open - (1) tee box bump – HLAT RED
 - Seniors – (2) tee box bump – HLAT GREEN
 - Women – (3) tee box bump – HLAT WHITE
- Tees might be combined on holes based on the hole's length and overall playability. There might not be room for a 5th tee box as an example.

Tie breakers

- If 1st place has a tie within the division there will be a 1-hole playoff. The hole will be determined by the clubhouse. We will have to work around their tee sheet.
 - The playoff will continue until a winner is declared.
- If a 1-hole playoff is not feasible due to the course or split shifts. Then 1st place will be determined by the USGA scorecard playoff rules.

Seniors

- Players 50 and over are allowed to play in the senior division, however if the player is younger than 60 the player will be hitting from the open division tee box.
 - Players 60 and over will be hitting from the senior tees.

Points Policy

- Players will receive points based on how they place in the field. Points will also be determined by the size of the division field and if it's a single day or multiple day tournament.

Player of the Year Race

- **Local Chapter points**
 - Best 8 - (1-day) tournaments.
 - Best 3 - (2 day) tournaments
 - Regional Major
 - Local championship
 - A member can accumulate points by playing in other chapter tournaments that will contribute to their local membership POY.
- **National Player of the Year**
 - Regional Major
 - Local championship tournament
 - Best 2 National Majors
 - National Championship tournament
 - Best 5 (1) day local tournaments
 - Best 2 (2) day local tournaments



USGA Rules

HLAT will use the USGA rules of golf for all tournaments unless stated otherwise in HLAT's rules and format policy.

Non-Penalty Areas

- **No mow/fescue/wooded areas**
 - In the event a ball is lost in these areas and the area is not marked Red/yellow or white the player can take a lateral or back of line drop at the point of entry into the non-marked area with a 1 stroke penalty. This is a HLAT rule to assist with pace of play and not a USGA rule.
 - If a player hits a provisional ball because they are not sure if the ball is lost in the general area or out of bounds, and it is determined that the ball is actually in one of these areas without a penalty, the player is not permitted to play the provisional ball. This rule is in place because HLAT is treating these areas as if they are marked with red stakes. Additionally, a player is not allowed to take a provisional ball if it is known or highly likely that the ball is in a penalty area.

Pace of Play

- **4 hours and 30 mins**
 - Golf courses have allowed us to use their facilities, but they require us to finish playing within the course designated pace of play. This is a standard rule that the golf course enforces for HLAT. The HLAT can assist groups that are playing at a slower pace by providing advice on how to speed up their game when players notify us or when we observe slow play. Here are some suggestions for foursomes to help maintain a good pace of play:
 - The entire group stays on the tee box and watches each player's tee shot.
 - If you are not playing cart golf. Drop off player 1 at their ball and player 2 drives to their ball while player 1 is going through their pre shot routine and hits their approach ball.
 - Be ready on the green. Read your putt while another player is reading and getting ready to putt. Once the player finishes putting, you're ready.
 - Don't take more than 3 minutes to look for a ball. Keeping pace of play is expected and required by every player of the tour.
 - If we cannot keep pace of play, we will have to charge more to purchase tee times the course was not able to sell, due to our slow play. Additionally, with slow play we risk the course banning us from future play.

Distant Measuring Devices

- **Range Finders**
 - Rangefinders are permitted during tournament play.
 - Slope and wind measuring
 - Using slope and wind measurements is permitted.



- Arccos is permitted.
 - Multiple devices are **NOT** permitted. You are only allowed to use one device. Do not use Arccos and then pull your rangefinder out to measure the pin. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF SLOWING DOWN PACE OF PLAY
- Slowing down the pace of play due to using any measuring device is NOT permitted – BE READY WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT YOUR BALL TO REVIEW THE DATA.