

# PGT Rules and Regulations

2012 (updated) Pittsburgh Golfers Tour LLC, Rules of Play and organization.

## INTRODUCTION

Management has adopted this guide for use by its members and guests. It is the responsibility of each member to become familiar with the rules and regulations in this guide, and to cooperate with staff and other members in this administration.

The Pittsburgh Golfers Tour is first, last and always an organization devoted to creating exceptional competitive golf experiences for its members. Golf is one of the few sports where performance and enjoyment of the game is unusually dependent upon each player's understanding and abiding by the rules. Perhaps even more importantly, it's a sport where enforcement of the rules is almost totally dependent upon each player's sense of fair play. As golfers, we willingly accept this responsibility for knowing and abiding by the rules and reminding playing partners of possible or actual infractions and penalties. The PGT will institute local rules only when necessary to preserve the integrity of competition or to improve the quality of the golf experience for members.

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## MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be available to all golfers 16 years of age or older.

Membership dues are based on the calendar year and are refundable up to thirty days from receipt of payment.

Members compete with members of same skill level by handicap in flighted golf tournaments. The number of players in each event determine the number of flights. Each flight will be adjusted per event based on the number of players. At least 15 players need to be in each flight. Most events will be Net score events based on handicap. Full field events will normally have four flights (15-20 per flight). Members choose to compete as either Amateur or Non-Amateur/Professional. Amateurs compete for prizes that are not to exceed six hundred dollars in retail value and are not equivalent of money or readily convertible to money. Non-Amateurs/Professionals compete for cash.

In the event any member of this club shall commit any act which reflects discredit or disrepute thereon, or shall refuse or neglect to comply with the rules and regulations adopted by PGT management, its duly appointed officers, or any golf course, such member shall be subject to suspension or expulsion.

Members are responsible for any damage they cause to themselves, any other person, any property or machinery during their participation in a PGT tournament.

Members agree to indemnify and not hold the PGT, its Officers, Directors, or Employees responsible in any way for accidents or injuries that may occur to them while participating in an event staged by the PGT. Players are held to abide by the particular course rules and regulations that a PGT event is held on.

Members agree to pay the PGT a thirty \$30 dollar fee for any check of theirs returned.

## GENERAL

All competitions will be governed by the current USGA Rules of Golf, PGT Local Rules, and the Local Rules of our host golf courses. Any Local Rules for the course being played will be distributed at the day's registration table.

An excellent aide in learning the rules is *The Rules of Golf* (illustrated and explained) by Tom Watson. The latest edition is sold in many bookstores. We will usually have one on hand at every event. We'll also have the USGA's *Decisions on the Rules of Golf*, to hopefully settle all disputes. In the case of any disagreements, PGT procedure is covered in Local Rule 9 (Disputes/Rulings).

## PGT TWO PROPOSITIONS

"Dear Playing Partner, um... er...I think you just goofed."

We recognize that it can be awkward and difficult to tell a fellow competitor that he or she has just broken a rule and must now take a penalty stroke. It can also be embarrassing when you are the one penalized. Try to remember that we are all trying to: 1) maintain the high standards of competition, and 2) protect the field so that we are all playing the same game.

Therefore, let's agree to two propositions that will make enforcement a bit less uncomfortable.

**PROPOSITION #1:** We believe that every member is committed to play by the Rules and expect everyone else to do the same.

Therefore, any time members break a rule, we will assume it is only because they may have misunderstood the situation or options. And, since it was unintentional, they would appreciate learning from their mistakes. And yes, unfortunately, they will have to accept the penalty strokes.

**PROPOSITION #2:** Not even the pros are sure of every rule in every situation.

Therefore, we will feel free to ask fellow competitors for assistance in interpreting the Rules at any time. We further agree to abide by the interpretations of the majority of those players involved, and accept the decisions of the PGT Director or Official in charge.

## PGT LOCAL RULES

1) **FAIR PLAY.** It is every competitor's duty to **PROTECT THE FIELD.** Anyone not correcting another player is also breaking the rules and may be subject to disqualification.

2) Naturally, **NO GIMMES, NO MULLIGANS.**

3) **PLAY THE BALL AS IT LIES.** Every time we play, it is a tournament. Therefore, unless specifically stated otherwise, we will play the ball as it lies, at all times. There is no improvement of the lie. This is one of the most basic rules of golf. Whenever course conditions warrant, as determined by the course superintendent, or PGT officials, PGT Winter Rules (the lift and clean option, see below) will be posted at the starter's table on tournament day. It rarely happens.

**\*When PGT "Winter Rules" or "Preferred Lies" are specified for Tournament play\***

A ball lying in your own fairway may be marked, lifted, cleaned, without penalty, and placed within one club length where it originally lay, not nearer the hole, and so as to preserve as nearly as possible the stance required to play from the original lie. A ball so lifted is back in play when it has been replaced.

4) **Lifting an Embedded Ball.** Anywhere "through the green", except in loose sand, a ball embedded in its own pitch mark in the ground may be lifted, cleaned, and dropped without penalty, as near as possible to the spot where it lay but not nearer the hole. (See Rule 20).

"Through the green", is the whole area of the course except:

1) The teeing ground and the putting green of the hole being played.

2) All hazards on the course.

5) **Lost Ball Rule** (for Flights 3, 4, and 5 only). When a ball is lost and that ball is not lost in a

hazard or not out of bounds, the player may take a one stroke penalty, and drop a ball anywhere along the line of flight of the original ball (as agreed on by a majority of the player's playing partners), This will save time, when players lose a ball, haven't hit a provisional ball, and have to return to where they played their original shot from. This rule will not be used for the start of the 2006 season. It will be revisited and possibly revised prior to being reinstated.

6) **EQUITABLE COMPETITION--HANDICAPS.** The PGT Handicap Committee will do its utmost to record and maintain fair handicaps for the entire membership. The Committee will evaluate, and if deemed necessary, alter the handicaps of members whose handicaps do not reflect their tournament playing record. It is a fundamental assumption of the PGT and the USGA that every player will try to the best of his/her ability in every event, and throughout the event; and that he/she will abide by good sportsmanship, and refrain from distracting, impeding, or otherwise encumbering the play of fellow competitors.

The normal maximum stroke allowance in a tournament event is 30. The PGT is empowered to make exceptions to this rule.

7) **TIEBREAKERS.** When announced, playoff for first place only will be decided on the course by a sudden death elimination (continuing in the designated format for that event). All other ties will be settled on the card, according to the USGA Rules of Golf, starting with the number one handicap hole and continuing in the order of most difficult holes until the tie is broken.

8) **PENALTIES.** The PGT follows all USGA Rules in relation to penalties and disqualification for rules infractions in both stroke and match play. **SLOW PLAY AFTER A WARNING WILL INCURE PENALTY STROKES. SLOW PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE MONITORED BY COURSE MARSHALS AND PGT OFFICIALS.** see below.

9) **DISPUTES/RULINGS.** In the case of any disputes, follow PGT procedure in this order: 1--if you have any doubts about your situation, discuss it among ALL members of you playing group. 2--If you cannot come to a majority decision, play the ball in question as it lies. ALSO, play a second ball from the area most appropriate to the rule in question. Record both scores. When you turn in your score card, report the incident to the PGT Official on duty. All disputes will be settled in the clubhouse by the PGA professional, a majority decision of present Rules Committee Members , the PGT Official on duty, or by a majority decision of an impromptu committee of 5 Members, in that order.

10) **CHEATING.** Any member may be removed from the Club by the Director for what appears to be a willful breach of the Rules, including cheating or misrepresentation of any sort. Ignorance is not a defense.

#### 11) **PACE OF PLAY: Introduction**

The single most aggravating issue in golf is **SLOW PLAY**. We intend for all PGT Members to learn and apply the principles of ready play in every event. No one should ever have to rush a shot. But no player's actions should interfere with any other's timely completion of the game or enjoyment of the event. The following PGT RULES have been created to enhance the overall playing experience for all competitors in our tournaments.

#### **PACE OF PLAY Definitions:**

**READY GOLF--**Instead of the common practice of farthest from the pin playing first, we believe that it is best to **HIT WHEN YOU ARE READY**, even if you are twenty yards ahead of your playing partner. If you're ready, and your playing partner is not , go ahead and hit your ball. It is a good idea to announce to your group that you intend to hit.

**OUT OF POSITION--**If your group falls one full hole behind(par 4 or 5)you are considered out of position. This is the definition set by the USGA and adopted by the PGT.

CONTINUOUS PUTTING: Naturally, the person furthest from the pin putts first. But in the PGT, you are urged to exercise the OPTION of continuous putting. We highly encourage this practice. Continuous putting is when you continue putting until you hole out, unless you are in someone else's line.

11a) READY GOLF. We will play Ready Golf at all times.

11b) --POSITION: All groups of competitors are expected to maintain their position relative to the group in front throughout the round. Any group OUT OF POSITION will be given an official group warning by a roving PGT Official or a Course Marshall and then must complete the next three holes in 40 minutes or less. Failure to comply will result in a two-stroke penalty for everyone in the group. Exception: if after the group warning is issued, an individual in the group is twice clocked taking more than 45 seconds to play from when it is his/her turn, that person will be penalized two strokes and the group warning will be lifted. A third violation will result in disqualification of the individual.

Remember it is your responsibility to monitor the group ahead of you, not the group behind. The following overused statement is often heard "We are not holding up the group behind." If you were current with the group in front, then the group behind would be handled according to the PGT Slow Play Policy.

## 12)RANGEFINDERS

In accordance with USGA decision 14-3/0.5, Local Rule Permitting Use of Distance-Measuring Devices, the PGT is adopting the following rule with regards to the use of rangefinders.

Any competitor may use a device that measures distance ONLY in any PGT Event. However, the use of devices that gauge or measure other conditions that might affect a player's play (e.g., wind or gradient) are not permitted even if those features are turned off. Furthermore, the sharing of the actual device or that information obtained from the device, and player taking a measurement for another player, will not be permitted. Penalties for breach of this rule are as follows. Using a device that is not distance only will result in disqualification per rule 14-3. Sharing a device or information derived from a device, will result in loss of hole during Match Play, and a two stroke penalty for each infraction during Stroke Play, and MAY result in disqualification at the discretion of the PGT per rule 33-7.

This rule is in effect for the start of the 2006 season on a trial basis and may be amended.

13) NEW RULES. This body of Rules may be amended at any time when the membership feels the need. No new rules will be applied retroactively.

--End of PGT Local Rules--

## ETIQUETTE & FASTER PLAY

Most golfers aren't even aware of all the time they waste. But it takes no time for one foursome to slow down the entire course. By parking carts in the wrong place. By not lining up putts when their partners are putting. By not being ready to hit. Faster play doesn't mean rushed play at all. It just means keeping up with the group ahead of you.

Simple etiquette will increase everyone's enjoyment of the game, and will usually mean faster play. If you are unfamiliar with the general etiquette of golf, ask your playing partners to help you out before you get to the first tee.

Most infractions are unintentional. These are the most frequent: stepping in the line of someone's putt; failing to mark your ball if you're clearly in someone's way; failing to pull the flag if you're closest to the hole; failing to replace the flag if you're the first to hole out; casting a shadow over someone's lie or line; talking or moving while someone is hitting; hitting out of turn (sometimes the doctrine of ready golf may not apply); marking your score on the green instead of at the next

tee. Golf etiquette is mostly common sense.

Rules of golf etiquette as outlined in Section 1 of the USGA Rules of Golf shall be practiced.

Please pay attention to the following:

1. Play without delay
2. Replace divots
3. Repair ball marks on greens
4. Rake and smooth footprints in bunkers and replace rakes within bunkers
5. Do not enter or exit bunkers from the high side

Conduct unbecoming any golfer, ie; profanity, throwing of clubs, balls or any action poorly reflecting the PGT, will not be tolerated. A warning will be issued once and thereafter fines and penalties may be assessed by the Director. A member can and will be expelled from the PGT if this behavior continues.

#### DRESS CODE

Players should follow the guidelines of most courses requiring a dress code. Appropriate clothing such as golf shoes and collared shirts must be worn for all PGT tournaments. Items of clothing specifically not permitted at PGT tournaments are: blue jeans, cutoff shorts, running or gym shorts, tank tops, tube tops and gymnasium type sweatsuits. Please take the time to represent yourself and the PGT in the best possible light. Clubs may refuse to let you play if you are dressed improperly.

Tournament entry may be denied to anyone not following the above guidelines and their tournament entry fee will be forfeited.

#### PGT TOURNAMENT ENTRY GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

##### TOURNAMENT ENTRY

Most tournaments require pre-payment of entry fee at least 7 days in advance of the tournament date to guarantee a space. Check entry forms for specific entry cutoff dates. If you send payment after the cutoff date, we suggest you call the office for confirmation.

Tournament fields are filled on a first come, first served basis.

##### HOW TO ENTER TOURNAMENTS

- 1) Fill out an online registration or tournament entry coupon for each event you wish to play. Include your check or credit card information and send to the PGT office. You are not entered until we receive your payment. Payment must be received by the cutoff date. If we receive your payment after the entry due date, we may put you on a waiting list, or return your check. Once you are known and familiar with the PGT, payment will be accepted at the registration table at the day of the event. Credit from past events is encouraged to be kept and used for future events.
- 2) You may pay collectively for multiple tournaments with one check, just fill online registration or a coupon for each tournament.
- 3) Telephone entries will be accepted with credit cards. A 4% charge will be added to all credit card charges because much of the received entry fee is paid back out.
- 4) Payment may be made on the day of the tournament with the PGT at the course only if the Member has a valid credit card number on file at the PGT office. Payment at the course may be in the form of credit card, cash or check.
- 5) All players will have their own account kept of credits and debits. Credits from winnings or paid amounts can be used for any purpose. When money is requested from an account, a \$3 postage, processing and handling fee is added, or taken out of the balance.

Starting Times and Pairings: Starting Times will be made available after noon the day before the Tournament on the office answering system and the PGT website ([www.pgtgolf.com](http://www.pgtgolf.com)).

Members are responsible for getting this information.

Check-In for Tournaments: Participants are required to check in with the PGT at the Tournament site 30 minutes prior to their tee time.

Player Late for Tee Time: Late arrivals will be assessed a 2 stroke penalty and be allowed to compete in a manner convenient to the PGT. (subject to PGT discretion)

#### REQUESTS

You may request an earlier or later tee time in your flight and we will attempt to accommodate all requests. Groupings will be for Early, Middle, or late requests. An early tee time request will not guarantee a FIRST tee time, just the first few groups if possible. Workers, including rules officials, scorers, and/or starters and registration players obviously have to go off respectively.

#### PAIRINGS:

1) If you want a particular playing partner, let us know. We'll try to accommodate your requests. If there's someone you don't want to play with, we'll try to honor that, too. We hope, however, you'll want to meet many new players.

2) We will usually match you with people of similar handicaps. We will pair groups for the purpose of "protecting the field" Not everyone in your group will be players who you play with regularly.

#### PLAYER CANCELLATION:

In most tournaments, members may withdraw from a tournament and receive a full refund or credit by canceling their reservation thru the PGT office before noon two days before the tournament. If you cancel and this procedure is not followed, then your tournament fee will be forfeited, --UNLESS another PGT member fills your spot. Check tournament entry information sheet for specific refund cutoff dates.

#### EXCEPTIONS

If you can find a member of the PGT to take your place, that member must call the PGT office and verify his or her replacement. Then that cancellation will not count against you.

#### EVENT CANCELLATION / Rain Policy:

1) We will play in RAIN, SHINE, SNOW, HAIL, or LOCUST SWARMS. Please bring the appropriate clothing if stormy weather is predicted. The only time the golf club will refund our money is if the superintendent closes the course. If you have any doubts, keep calling the course the morning of the event. You cannot cancel within 48 hours of the scheduled event or you will be charged the full tournament entry fee.

2) If there is an insufficient number of players signing up for any tournament, we may cancel. Entrants will be notified, and you'll receive a full refund of your entry fee.

3) When Play is Delayed: If play is delayed for any reason and all players cannot finish their rounds, the PGT has the right to cancel the tournament. If a full flight has completed a minimum of 9 holes, then the results in that flight will be official. If the tournament fails to be 9 holes, the players will be refunded their entry fees minus applicable course fees and a \$10 administration fee.

#### TOURISTS

"Tourists" entry entitles the member or guest to a tee time but no tournament entry. "Tourists" are eligible to play all Day Games. Designated Amateur Class players will also play for a reduce rate and not be eligible for tournament winnings.

#### SOFT SPIKES

All players should be prepared to play in soft spikes at all events.

#### TOURNAMENT WINNINGS

Tournament winnings will be mailed to winners following the tournament at the winner's request. Winnings will always be available to be picked up at future events. Non-amateurs/Pros will receive checks or tournament credit, and amateurs will receive merchandise certificates from their choice of local golf shops working with the PGT.

#### SKILLS CONTEST / DAY GAMES

Skins, closest-to-pin, long drive, and other side games will be offered at most tournaments. These are optional and are cash in, cash out. Winners will be paid at the course. The PGT will retain 5-8% of all skills contest pots. All skill contest entries are to be paid in cash only.

#### GUEST POLICY:

You may bring one, two, or three guests to most events. The following restrictions apply, however:

\* A guest will play as a "Tourist" only

\* The same guest may not attend more than two regular season events (this does not include member/guest events) a year without joining.

#### MEMBER / GUESTS EVENTS

Guests must have a valid USGA handicap to participate.

A member may form a team with another member in these events.

These events do not count as the only event guests are allowed to play before joining.

#### NEW MEMBER REFERRALS

Members will receive a \$30 tournament credit for each new member they introduce to join the PGT at the New Member rate .

#### NEW MEMBERS

New Members who do not have a GHIN index will submit past verified scores to establish an index. The first event played by a new member will be added to the best scores of those submitted and the new member will then be eligible for tournament winnings for their next event. New member's first event is not eligible for tournament prize pool or net day games.

#### PGT HANDICAP INDEX

A GHIN and PGT handicap index will be kept and players will play to their lowest number. The PGT index is a combination of past PGT Tournament event scores. The differential (calculated by the established formula) for the past PGT events and the best two from the last two years will be averaged for the PGT Index. The number of past PGT tournament scores to establish this PGT Index is a minimum of five and a maximum of ten.