

IRN Tour: Rules & Policies

RULES OF PLAY

Play is governed by the Rules of Golf and its Interpretations, along with these Local Rules and Conditions. These are subject to changes or amendments by the IRN Tour Rules Committee.

- Disqualification Modification:
 - The IRN Tour Disqualification Policy (DQP) states that if a player incurs a breach of the Rules of Golf that would typically result in disqualification, they will instead receive a maximum score of 10 on the hole where the breach occurs.
 - If the round or hole has already been completed, the Rules Committee will decide where to apply the penalty score of 10.
- Maximum Strokes:
 - A player may take no more than “Double Par” on a hole.
 - Once double par is reached, the player must pick up their ball and wait for others in the group to finish.
 - The maximum score of double par includes any penalties incurred on that hole.
- Time of Starting/Late to Tee (Rule 5.3a):
 - Players must start at their assigned starting time.
 - If a player arrives more than five minutes late to their tee time, the DQP penalty (score of 10) applies to that hole and any other missed holes.
 - Players cannot join a group during the play of a hole; they must join on the next tee.
- Practice Between Holes (Rule 5.5b - Committee Procedures):
 - Practice between holes is NOT authorized in stroke play competitions.
 - Penalty: Two strokes per hole where a breach occurred, applied to the next hole played after the unauthorized practice.
- Pace of Play:
 - Each player must play without undue delay, meaning no more than 40 seconds per shot.
 - The first player to play from a given area (tee, fairway, green) gets an extra 10 seconds.
 - Caddies should help players hit each shot without unreasonable delay (Rule 5.6) and refrain from over-coaching.
 - A pace of play card system may be used to identify groups that are behind or out of position. Refer to the Pace of Play Policy for details.
- Distance Measuring Device (Rule 4.3):
 - Players may use a device to obtain distance information.
 - If a device is used to gauge or measure other conditions that might affect play (e.g., slope, elevation change, wind speed), it's a breach of Rule 4.3.
 - Penalty:

- First breach: Two-stroke penalty.
 - Each subsequent breach: DQP Penalty.
- Green Reading Materials:
 - Permitted if produced in or after 2022, or if they conform to USGA specifications.
 - Use of non-conforming materials will result in a penalty.
- Cell Phones & Electronic Devices:
 - May only be used by players or caddies for:
 1. Accessing tournament information.
 2. Obtaining yardages via GPS apps or wind direction using the phone's compass.
 3. Contacting the rules hotline.
 4. Emergency situations.
 5. Entering scores in 18Birdies, if live scoring is available.
 - Cell phones may not be used for any other purposes.
- Unsigned Scorecards:
 - If a player returns a scorecard without player or marker certification, the penalty will be two strokes.
 - IRN Tour reserves the right to change these rules.

THE COURSE

- Out of Bounds (OB):
 - Defined by white stakes or fence posts (nearest inside points at ground level) or a white line on the ground (the line itself is OB).
 - A ball coming to rest on or crossing any public road is considered out of bounds, even if it lands on another part of the golf course.
 - Any additional methods for designating OB will be listed on an IRN Tour Local Rules sheet.
- Penalty Areas:
 - Either red or yellow, defined by corresponding lines or stakes.
 - Stakes are removable obstructions.
 - If no lines are present, stakes define the Penalty Area.
 - If a body of water is unmarked, the edge of the Penalty Area is where the ground begins to slope down to the water's edge.
- Dropping Zone:
 - An optional relief area enclosed by a white line with "drop zone" or "DZ" printed inside.
 - A dropping zone is not ground under repair. The line itself is in the dropping zone.
 - A ball dropped within the dropping zone must remain within it to be in play.
- Ground Under Repair (GUR):
 - Enclosed, white-lined areas define GUR (the white lines are also considered GUR).
 - Other unmarked areas of GUR include: French drains (trenches filled with stones), fire ant beds, and mounds caused by burrowing animals.
- Sod Seams (Relief for Lie of Ball Only):
 - Sod seams are GUR in the General Area, and all seams in a given area are considered the same seam.
 - Relief is available for the lie of the ball only, not for stance or swing.
- No Play Zones:
 - The committee may designate areas like flower beds as No Play Zones.
 - Relief from these areas is mandatory.
 - Penalty for playing from a No Play Zone: General Stroke Play penalty of 2 strokes.

TOURNAMENT ROUNDS

- Stipulated Rounds:
 - If an event needs to be shortened, the competition will consist of the following for all players.
 - 9-hole competitors: 5 holes must be completed in order to score the tournament
 - 18-hole competitors: 9 holes must be completed by all players in order to score the tournament
- Result of the Competition:
 - The result is officially announced once all scores have been posted on the official scoreboard and approved by IRN Tour.
- How to Decide Ties:
 - Ties for 1st place will be broken with a sudden death playoff.
 - If a sudden death playoff cannot start within 30 minutes of the final group being scored, or if it's prevented by weather or darkness, the winner will be decided by a scorecard playoff using the score in the final round.
 - If still tied, the winner is determined by the last nine holes, then last six, then last three, and finally the last hole. If players are still tied, continue backwards from the last hole.
 - For 18-hole players, the "last nine holes" refers to holes 10-18, "last six" to 13-18, etc.
 - Ties for all other awards will not be broken.

Code of Conduct

Players, caddies, and spectators are expected to display proper etiquette and behavior at all IRN Tour events. IRN Tour aims to provide a positive experience for everyone and reserves the right to dismiss any player, caddie, or spectator at any time for any reason during the event.

- Code of Conduct Violations (include, but are not limited to):
 - Abusive language
 - Club throwing
 - Cheating
 - Disrespect of volunteers or officials
 - Abuse to the golf course or facilities
 - Littering
 - Any other conduct unbecoming of a player or caddie.
 - Penalty for violations may include: Warning, Two-stroke penalty, DQP penalty, actual disqualification of the player, or removal of the caddie.
- Tobacco & Alcohol:

- Tobacco and alcohol use by players or caddies, including electronic cigarettes, is not permitted during the event.
 - First offense: Warning.
 - Subsequent offenses: Code of Conduct penalty.
- Dress Code:
 - Only acceptable golf attire is permitted.
 - PLAYERS AND CADDIES are prohibited from wearing:
 - Shoes with metal spikes
 - Short shorts
 - Swimwear
 - Denim of any kind
 - T-shirts
 - Tank tops
 - Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
 - Those not appropriately attired will not be permitted to participate.

CADDIES & SPECTATORS

- Caddies:
 - Players eight years old and younger must be accompanied by a caddie.
 - Caddies must be at least 15 years of age or older, unless authorized by the Committee.
- Marking & Replacing (Caddies):
 - Caddies are authorized to mark and replace the player's ball where the Rules permit the ball to be lifted and replaced.
 - HOWEVER, in rules instances that require a drop, ONLY the player is permitted to drop the ball (remember: drop is from knee height).
- Caddie Use of Carts:
 - Players must walk during play of each hole.
 - Caddies for 9-hole players may rent a cart to shuttle 9-hole players between holes. After reaching the tee, players must walk until completion of the hole. The caddie may leave the bag on the cart or carry it.
 - Caddies for 18-hole players may not use carts unless approved by the Tournament Director in extreme situations (ADA Caddie Cart policy).
 - Penalty: Two strokes per hole where a breach occurred, up to a maximum of four strokes. Additional breaches will incur a Code of Conduct Policy penalty. If a breach occurs between two holes during an 18-hole round, the penalty applies to the next hole.
- Spectator Cart Policy:
 - Cart availability depends on the host course.
 - A valid driver's license is required to operate a golf cart.
 - Carts must be operated in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines. Passengers must be seated inside at all times.
 - Carts must follow the host facility's cart path rules.
 - First offense: Warning.
 - Subsequent offense(s): May result in removal from the golf course.
- Pull Carts:
 - Manual and electric pull carts are allowed unless prohibited by the golf course.
- Spectator Policy:
 - IRN Tour recommends that spectators stay behind their group at all times and remain on the cart path.
 - Spectators may not give players advice during the round.
 - Spectators are not permitted to walk in the fairway or on the greens.
 - First offense: Warning.
 - Subsequent offense(s): May result in removal from the golf course.