

2026 Santa Ana Golf Association (SAGA) Policies

In addition to any published Conditions of Play, Local Rules and Notices to Competitors, the following policies will be effective for the 2026 season.

To encourage participation in club tournaments, the goal of the Santa Ana Golf Association (SAGA) is to provide an equitable, fair, and enjoyable competition for all of our members. The following policies should help achieve this goal.

Club Championship, President's Cup, SAGA Invitational

Club Championship Trophy Eligibility - All blue flight players are eligible to win the Club Championship trophy based on their gross score. Lowest overall gross score in any blue flight wins the Club Championship. Ties for the Club Championship only will be broken by a sudden death playoff starting on whichever course and hole the Committee designates. All other ties will be a scorecard playoff per our current policy.

If a player plays in the blue gross flight, they can only win gross flight payouts and the trophy if they have overall low gross score. Unless flights are combined, if a player plays in a blue net flight, they can only win blue net flight payouts based on their net score (adjusted based the exceptional score policy) and the trophy if they have the overall low gross score.

SAGA Invitational, Member Guest or Appreciation Tournament Handicap Policy - Guests with non-GHIN handicaps or GHIN handicaps from golf associations other than the Sun Country Amateur Golf Association will be subject to a SAGA Committee (hereafter known as the *Committee*) review to establish a valid tournament handicap index. The *Committee* reserves the right to adjust a player's tournament handicap based on this review. All members must play in at least one SAGA tournament during the 2026 season to be eligible for the SAGA Invitational or Appreciation tournaments. All participants must post at least three GHIN scores in the 12 months prior to the Invitational or Appreciation tournaments.

All Tournaments

Tournament Deadlines – The following are the 2026 tournament deadlines, fees, and payment policies.

- For all Saturday tournaments: The deadline to sign up will be the Wednesday before the tournament by 5 pm.
- For all Wednesday tournaments: The deadline to sign up will be the Saturday before the tournament by 5 pm.
- The entry fee for all tournaments is \$25 per day (lunch no longer provided for most tournaments). 100% of all tournament fees will be returned as prizes. Match play will be \$45.
- The SAGA must release tournament tee times back to the course after the deadlines shown above. Late entries are not guaranteed entry into a tournament and entry will be on a space available basis. You will be notified of your status by Mark Vitale, the Tournament Director.
- Call or e-mail your entry or bring cash or check on the day of the tournament. Please provide all information that is on the entry form when you e-mail or call.
- When you bring cash or check to the tournament, please deposit it in the provided container.
- If you sign up for a tournament and you need to cancel you must email Mark, Skip and Paul. If you cancel the day before a tournament, you must also call the pro shop and let them know. If you fail to follow these procedures you will be considered a "no-show" and you will be required to pay the tournament entry fee. The entry fee must be paid before you can participate in another SAGA tournament.

- For all tournament information or issues, please call or e-mail Mark Vitale at 505-301-4678, vitalemp555@gmail.com , Skip Haines at 505-867-1780, skiphaines@comcast.net or Paul Hatin at 505-999-7666, paulhatin@yahoo.com. Other board members do not have tournament information.

Tournament Tees – We recommend a player play tournaments from the tees they normally play from in daily play. You may move up or back in any particular tournament; however, your course handicap will change by plus or minus 3-5 strokes based on the World Handicap System calculation.

Committee Handicap Review: The purpose of handicapping is to create equity. Equity takes proactive attention to handicapping in order to bring fairness to club events. Because the primary concern of the *Committee* is to protect the field, the right of the *Committee* to adjust handicaps, whether for members or guests, will need to be exercised at times. To ensure a level playing field where all members feel they have a chance of winning if they play well, the *Committee* has a responsibility for making certain that each player's handicap reflects their true playing potential. The *Committee* will continue to enforce USGA World Handicap System (WHS) handicap policy by proactively reviewing player's scoring records using the USGA Handicap Review Tool throughout the golfing season and, as necessary, modifying handicaps.

It is USGA policy to have players post rounds in GHIN as soon as possible after the round is played. Any question of failure to post all valid and adjusted WHS scores, either via the handicap computer or the Internet, failure to post scores in an timely manner, round manipulation, posting of numerous higher than normal away or Internet scores, several exceptionally low competition (C) scores, a C score average over several recent months that is lower compared to the player's current handicap or consistently lower competition scores in major club tournaments may prompt a reassessment of a player's handicap index resulting in a handicap adjustment or penalty score. Continued violations may result in withdrawal of the player's handicap index.

Per the USGA Rules of Handicapping manual, the *Committee* may review all aspects of a player's handicap history including, but not limited to, the items listed above. Based on this review, the *Committee* may adjust a player's handicap prior to a tournament or post a penalty score. Before a handicap is adjusted, the player will receive a notification e-mail that explains the reduction. The player may immediately explain in writing or in person, the circumstances or mitigating factors surrounding the proposed handicap adjustment. When a final decision has been made to modify a player's handicap it will be applied, as a minimum, to the next tournament that they enter. This final decision may not be appealed. If the reduction applies to a specific period rather than an individual tournament it may be identified by an "M" in the GHIN system. A penalty score may be applied without discussion with the player and it may appear as a "P" score in the scoring record. You may provide signed scorecard evidence to refute this "P" score.

WHS Handicap Adjustment

It is the USGA policy to adjust a score on a hole based on the player's handicap as a method to prevent inflated handicaps. Under the WHS, a player may score a maximum net double bogey on a hole. That is, if you get a stroke or two on a hole, you can add those to the double bogey score to arrive at the maximum allowed score for the hole. Adjusting a hole score to a net double bogey can be done either automatically, when hole-by-hole score entry is used, or by the player, when submitting an adjusted gross score for the round.

Tournament Flights and Payouts: The *Committee* will have net flights that play from the blue, white and green teeing grounds in each tournament. The SAGA may have a blue or white gross flight or a white/green hybrid flight in individual tournaments only. If there are less than 3 players in any gross flight they will be

moved to the appropriate net flight. The *Committee* will attempt to keep the flight sizes from 10-12 players with handicaps within 5 strokes in each flight but that is not a hard requirement. Approximately one third of each flight should place in the prize money. Ties for gross and net prizes will be broken using a scorecard playoff starting on a hole designated by the *Committee* and then going backward.

Pace of Play (Included in Conditions of Play and Local Rules): Our most significant issue has been the slow pace of play. Over the past few seasons we have encouraged players to play at a faster pace and the pace has improved significantly. We still need to continue to continue this trend. *The USGA Rules of Golf*, Rule 5.6, Unreasonable Delay; Prompt Pace of Play, states in part: "You must not unreasonably delay play, either when playing a hole or between holes and a round of golf is meant to be played at a prompt pace." The Committee has designated that you must play your tournament round in 4 hours and 30 minutes or less and maintain your position on the course to avoid penalties. See our Conditions of Play and Local Rules for the complete policy on slow play enforcement and penalties.

Any questions or comments regarding the above should be forwarded to Mark Vitale, Tournament Chairman, at 505-301-4678 (vitalemp555@gmail.com) or Warren Von Worley, Vice President, at 505-350-4801 (wvon@comcast.net).

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