October 4, 2026

Division I Women's Golf Membership,

RE: Tournament Standards for Regular Season Events

The WGCA, in conjunction with the Division I Women's Golf Oversight Committee, released a tournament operations manual in January 2026 designed to provide tournament hosts with standardized operating guidelines for regular season tournaments. Following these guidelines assures that all regular season events meet the NCAA requirements listed in the pre championship manual and that each event has a consistent application of the Rules of Golf for our student-athletes.

The Committee has worked closely with our NCAA Head Rules Official, Allison Brown, to provide a template for the Notice to Players (NTP) along with the 2023 USGA Rules of Golf & Division I Women's Golf NCAA Hard Card in officiating our regular season events.

The areas of emphasis in this memo include:

- Setting the terms of the competition
  - Defining the scoring area.
  - Defining when a scorecard has been returned.
- Prohibiting practice between holes in stroke play events by Adopting Model Local Rule I-2 and Rule 5.5b
- Adopting a standard measurement of one standard grip length if preferred lies are deemed necessary

Tournament hosts should use the template and adopt the language provided for the NTP. Teams playing in events that have NTP's without this common language should ask to have it added so that all regular season events reflect the same rules used at our national championship.

Please direct any questions you have regarding the standardization of tournament NTPs to Courtney Trimble, CEO, WGCA.

Best of luck with the remainder of your season.

Kari Williams
Chair, NCAA Men's & Women's
Golf Oversight Committee

Kevin Williams
President
Women's Golf Coaches Association

Setting the terms of the competition

The top portion of the NTP should include the event format, tees to be played, defined scoring area, definition of when a scorecard has been returned as well as the specifics of the policy being used or Rule 3.3b(2). The Games Committee and Rules Committee members should also be identified in this section of the NTP (see SAMPLE NTP).

Scoring

Example verbiage for NTP with tee time starts:

> **SCORING:** The scoring area will be located in the tent adjacent to hole #1 teeing area. A scorecard is deemed to be returned when the player has left the scoring area with both feet which is defined by the blue paint dots and lines. *See additional memo regarding when a scorecard is returned.

For shotgun starts where scoring tables are not used with each group – define the scoring area. Card collectors should note on one of the team's scorecards what time the cards were handed in by the coach and when the coach left the scoring area (coach or designated card returner).

Example verbiage for NTP with shotgun starts:

> **SCORING:** At the completion of each round, coaches will gather their team's scorecards ensuring hole by hole scores are correct and both the marker and player have signed the scorecard to attest the accuracy of the information. Following each round, coaches must immediately return their team's scorecards to the SID in the dining room down the hallway from the Pro Shop. For the purpose of applying Rule 3.3b(2), a player's scorecard is deemed to be returned 15 minutes after the scorecard has been accepted by the SID.

Digital/Paperless Scoring

For digital/paperless scoring – define when the scorecards will be deemed returned and a process for players/coaches to report errors or problems with the digital scoring using the same guidelines above.

Example verbiage for NTP with digital and/or paperless scoring:

> **SCORING:** Players listed in the 3rd position of a pairing are tasked with entering scores for the group for Live Scoring in the Scoreboard Live App. At the completion of each round, players will check scores entered ensuring hole by hole scores are correct, and both the marker and player have submitted to attest the accuracy of the information. For the purpose of applying Rule 3.3b(2), a player's scorecard is deemed to be returned 15 minutes after the scorecard has been submitted by the players via the scoring app.

Adopting a Committee Policy for Rule 3.3b(2) which allows changes to be made to a scorecard after the card has been submitted.

The tournament committee must adopt a policy and state it on the NTP or in a memo form that outlines the policy including the scoring area and time frame allowed for changes to be made after the card has been submitted.

Example verbiage for NTP/Memo for Rule 3.3b(2):

Memo for Rule 3.3b(2)

Returning Scorecard: For the purpose of applying Rule 3.3b(2), a player's scorecard is treated as returned 15 minutes (*suggested reasonable time*) after the scorecard has been accepted by the Committee and the player has left the scoring area. The scoring areas for holes #9 and #18 are defined by the tent and blue lines/dots.

Exception: A player's scorecard is returned if *any* of the following four events occur, even if it occurs before the 15-minute time limit has expired:

- Starting times have been released after a cut has been made.
- The player begins their next round.
- Any player has made a stroke to begin a playoff.
- The competition has closed.

Prohibiting practice between holes in stroke play events

The NTP should include the adoption of Model Local Rule I-2 from Committee Procedures, Section 8. This MLR prohibits players from practicing putting or chipping on or near the putting green of the hole just completed.

Example verbiage for NTP:

> **PRACTICE BETWEEN HOLES:** Model Local Rule I-2 is in effect and Rule 5.5b is modified in this way: between the play of two holes, a player must not make any practice stroke on or near the putting green of the hole just completed, nor test the surface of the putting green by rubbing the putting green or rolling a ball.

Standard measurement if preferred lies are deemed necessary

The standard measurement for relief area under preferred lies should be one standard grip length. The tournament OIC/rules committee does have the ability to increase this relief area if it is deemed necessary.

Example verbiage for NTP/Preferred Lies Memo:

> **PREFERRED LIES**
> *Tournament Name*
> *INSERT DATE*
>
> When a player's ball lies in a part of the *general area* cut to fairway height or less, the player may take free relief once by placing the original ball or another ball in and playing from this *relief area*:
>
> - Reference Point: Spot of the original ball.
> - Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: One *Standard grip-length* from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
> - Limits on Location of Relief Area:
>   - Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
>   - Must be in the *general area*.
>
> In proceeding under this Local Rule, the player must choose a spot to place the ball and use the procedures for *replacing* a ball under Rules 14.2b(2) and 14.2e.
>
> Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty* Under Rule 14.7a.

Name of Event
Host & Host Course
Dates of Event

SAMPLE - NOTICE TO PLAYERS

SETTING THE TERMS OF THE COMPETITION

The 2023 USGA Rules of Golf govern play and are supplemented with the 2026 Fall NCAA Hard-Card and Local Rules & Conditions below.

1. FORMAT: 54-hole stroke play tournament. The low four scores of the five counts as the team total score. In case of a tie, there will be a sudden death playoff to determine the individual and team champions. If time or weather does not permit, co-champions will be declared. All announcements regarding the playoff will be made promptly at the pavilion following the final round.

2. TEE MARKERS: ex. *Black Tee Markers.*

3. SCORING AREA: The scoring area will be located in the tent adjacent to hole #1 teeing area. A scorecard is deemed to be returned when the player has left the scoring area with both feet which is defined by the blue paint dots and lines.

*See additional memo regarding when a scorecard is returned.

4. RULES COMMITTEE: *Name the rules committee here and provide contact information for rules officials to be contacted by coach or players for help on the course.*

5. GAMES COMMITTEE: *Choose several coaches/professional staff members to serve on this committee.*

LOCAL RULES SPECIFIC TO YOUR EVENT/COURSE

6. PRACTICE BETWEEN HOLES: Model Local Rule I-2 is in effect and Rule 5.5b is modified in this way; Between the play of two holes, a player must not make any practice stroke on or near the putting green of the hole just completed, nor test the surface of the putting green by rubbing the putting green or rolling a ball.

7. OUT OF BOUNDS (OB): Defined by the inside points at ground level of white stakes, white lines and fencing. In addition, out of bounds is defined by: a) Property fence left of hole #s 2 and 3, behind hole #11 teeing area, right of hole #s 11 and 12, behind hole #14 green and hole #15 tee and right of hole #15 teeing area. b) Railroad tracks including the gravel bed on hole #6. c) On hole #18, defined by white stakes, white fence, rock wall and curbing along the entrance road to the club house.

8. IMMOVABLE OBSTRUCTIONS (IOs): Include but are not limited to: a) All artificially surfaced roads and paths including adjacent curbing or rocks. Curbing and bordering adjacent to cart paths are considered a single immovable obstruction. b) Grass and trees completely encircled by a concrete or mulch path are considered part of the cart path and therefore a single immovable obstruction. c) Restroom area right of hole #15 and surrounding mulch, rock edging and cart path are a single immovable obstruction. d) Relief for ball in penalty area: Relief under Model Local Rule F-24 may be available for interference within one club-length of the edge of a penalty area, but only when the ball touches or lies on the obstruction or the obstruction interferes with the area of intended swing on hole #17 for the bridge in the red penalty area. Consult a referee. e) Immovable obstructions within or adjacent to each other are treated as a single obstruction.

9. IMMOVABLE OBSTRUCTIONS CLOSE TO THE PUTTING GREEN: Model Local Rule F-5.2 is in effect when both the ball and the obstruction are in part of the general area cut to fairway height or less.

10. INTEGRAL OBJECTS: Stacked rocks and boulders are integral to the golf course from which free relief is not allowed.

LOCAL RULES SPECIFIC TO YOUR EVENT/COURSE

11. DROPPING ZONE (RED PENALTY AREA): a) Dropping Zones - Hole #13: If during play a ball is in or it is known or virtually certain that a ball that has not been found lies in the Red Penalty Area on hole #13, the player may: (i) proceed under Rule 17.1d; or (ii) as an additional option, drop the original ball or another ball, under penalty of one stroke, in the designated Dropping Area: (a) on hole #13 forward teeing area.

12. SANDY AREA BETWEEN HOLE #5 and HOLE #17: The prepared area of sand containing love grass between hole #s 5 and 17 is part of the general area and is not a bunker.

13. OVERHEAD POWER LINES: Model Local Rule E-11 is in effect for hole #11. If it is known or virtually certain that a player's ball hit the power line, the player must replay the stroke.

14. TEMPORARY IMMOVABLE OBSTRUCTIONS (TIOs): Model Local Rule F-23 is in effect. TIOs include but are not limited to all championship-related signage and starting tents. Additionally, a player may use "either side" relief when proceeding under this Local Rule.

15. AUTOMOTIVE TRANSPORTATION: Prohibited except as allowed by the 2026 NCAA Fall Hard Card.

16. PACE OF PLAY: See separate memorandum regarding pace of play. Pace of Play Review Committee Members are: *The tournament committee should adopt a pace of play model and provide it to the players/coaches. You should list the names of the rules officials that will serve on the pace of play review committee.*