

Golf

Sport Manual

2026-27 Edition

4.8 Golf

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4.8.1 Regular Season Procedures

4.8.1.1 Rules of Competition

4.8.1.1.1 Competition Rules. United States Golf Association (USGA) Rules of Golf, as modified by the FHSAA, are the official rules for all golf matches, except where it may be necessary to apply Local Rules due to circumstances or unforeseen conditions.

(a) A team shall be comprised of four, five or six players. All coaches of teams involved in a match must agree to the designated number of players who will comprise a team. If a school wishes to play more than four players in a match it must so stipulate in the "terms and conditions" section of the Contract for Interscholastic Athletic Contest. When the number of players is not stipulated in the "terms and conditions" section of the contract, a school shall play no more than five (5) players. In all matches, however, the four lowest individual scores combined shall determine the team score.

(b) A match shall be conducted on a stroke play basis or a match play basis. Only scores conducted on a stroke play basis will be used in the calculation of player and team iWR (iWanamaker Rankings). Teams shall be informed of a tie-break procedure prior to the start of any regular season match and/or invitational tournament.

(c) Maximum score of nine (9) strokes per hole is in effect in all regular season contests. Players taking a maximum score on any hole should be eligible to score and/or advance as an individual from the respective round of competition. Players taking a maximum score shall count individually and for the team if applicable. A '9' shall be entered on the digital scorecard via the FHSAA Golf App on any applicable hole during competition.

(d) Exhibition or practice play during a match is strictly prohibited. Only those students who are properly entered shall participate in a match. This does not prohibit the playing of junior varsity matches in conjunction with a varsity match.

(e) All participants must abide by the dress code as established by the golf course on which the match is being played.

(f) The use of caddies, including teammates, is prohibited.

(g) Players are permitted to use pull-carts if desired. The use of motorized carts or other vehicles by players is prohibited. An exception may be made for an individual player who, because of a permanent physical handicap or disability, needs the use of such equipment to compete. The player's school must submit a request for the exception in writing to, and it must be approved by the Executive Director in advance of the competition. A school with a player who has been granted this exception must notify the host school of the player's special need in advance of the competition.

(h) Distance measuring devices may be used under the guidelines of the USGA Rules of Golf.

(i) In stroke play. USGA Rule 20.1c(3) may be used when uncertain what to do (playing a second ball), and the tournament/match director or tournament committee must be consulted before a player involved signs, returns his/her scorecard and exits the scoring area.

(j) A player who deliberately throws any piece of equipment during competition shall be disqualified (ejected) immediately for misconduct. The disqualification (ejection) shall be reported to the FHSAA Office by the host school or tournament director using the "Unsporting Conduct Incident Report" (Form AT6).

(k) Any player that displays unsporting behavior, uses profane language, inappropriate gestures or taunts an opponent at any time during the match shall be disqualified for unsporting conduct and ejected from the match. See FHSAA Bylaw 7 and FHSAA Policy 30.

(l) Betting by players and coaches is strictly prohibited. A player who violates this rule shall be disqualified from further participation in the match or tournament. A coach who violates this rule must be reported to the FHSAA Office by the host school or tournament manager using the "Unsporting Conduct Incident Report" (Form AT6).

(m) At the end of tournament/match play, each player in the assigned group must go directly from the final hole to the check-in area to verify the individual score for each player, and sign and submit the scorecard to a tournament/match official. All areas of question with regard to the right play procedure or scoring must be submitted to the tournament/match director at this time to be resolved prior to players signing their scorecards and exiting the scoring area.

(n) A competition is considered to have closed when all players have submitted their scorecards to the tournament/match director and the results are officially announced.

4.8.1.1.2 Coaching & Advice During Competition

(a) Coaches only will be allowed to give advice under the following provisions:
  (1) Only two (2) designated team coaches may give advice.
  (2) USGA Rule 10.2 "Advice and Other Help" must be used.
  (3) Advice may be provided anywhere on the course except on the putting greens. Only players are permitted to step onto the putting greens.

(b) Coaches who elect to give advice to their players during matches must not make rulings on matters of play that are the responsibility of the event director or tournament committee. A player in violation of USGA Rule 5.6, Unreasonable Delay; Prompt Pace of Play, will be assessed a one-stroke penalty for the first offense, a two-stroke penalty for the second offense, and disqualified for a third offense.

(c) No players, parents or spectators shall be allowed to coach or give advice to any player who is competing during regular season matches or matches in the Florida High School State Championship Series.

(d) Parents and spectators of participating golfers must remain in the rough or on golf paths and 50 feet away from the golfers. Use of golf carts by spectators during matches is under the jurisdiction of the event director.

4.8.1.1.3 Unsporting Conduct Reports. Event hosts and/or officials must report acts of unsporting conduct by players and coaches to the FHSAA Office using the "Unsporting Conduct Incident Report" (Form AT6).

4.8.1.1.4 Season Management via iWanamaker.

(a) **Team Management.** Member schools shall populate, update, and manage all player rosters throughout the season. This is available using the FHSAA Golf App.
  (1) Head coach set up of their member school account must be completed by the Friday prior to the start of Preseason Classics at 5:00 PM.
  (2) Roster set up is due August 10, 2026, by 5:00 PM. The roster may be edited/managed throughout the season.

(b) **Regular Season Results Reporting.** All regular season tournament and match hosts shall create each contest and report contest results utilizing the FHSAA Golf App (iWanamaker). Rounds used for state series qualification shall be players only live scoring using the FHSAA Golf App. Results shall be reported within 24 hours of the completion of each contest. FHSAA strongly recommends that players-only live scoring be employed in every contest and complete results be reported immediately following the close of competition.

(c) Post-Season Results Reporting and At-Large Advancement.
  (1) All post-season results shall be submitted and reported via the FHSAA Golf App and iWanamaker website.
  (2) At-large state qualification shall be determined using iWanamaker.
  (3) Players-only hole-by-hole live scoring is required in all rounds of State Series competition.

(d) **Digital Scorecards.** The use of digital scorecards by players on their personal device is strongly recommended via the FHSAA Golf App (iWanamaker). Live scoring is strongly recommended for all events. Live scoring is required of all post-season events.
  (1) § 1006.20 (2) (o), F.S. - "The FHSAA must ensure that athletes may request exemptions or accommodations from real-time scoring requirements not later than 72 hours before a sanctioned event. If a request is made within the prescribed time, the FHSAA must provide access to accommodations for such participants."

4.8.2 Florida High School State Championship Series Procedures

4.8.2.1 District Meeting

4.8.2.1.1 Meeting Agenda. In addition to section 3.4.2, the following items of business must be addressed at the district meeting:

- Determine if a sub-district qualifying tournament(s) will be played. Sub-district tournaments may be played during the week preceding the designated week for the District Tournament. If a sub-district tournament is to be played during the earlier week, all participating schools must submit their official entry

lists to the district tournament manager not later than 5 p.m. Monday of the designated week on the FHSAA calendar.

- Adopt a procedure for determining the pairings for the tournament.
- Adopt a method for deciding individual and team ties. If a sudden death playoff or the matching scorecards method is to be used, the hole(s) to be played or compared in the tie-breaker must be designated.
- Develop an alternative plan for competition in case of inclement weather.
- Discuss the host provisions for region tournaments and the deadline date.

4.8.2.2 Tournament Structure and Time Schedules

4.8.2.2.1 District Tournaments

(a) **Time Schedule and Site**
  (1) **Time Schedule.** To be determined at district meeting.
  (2) **Site.** To be selected at the district meeting.
    i. Yardages
      - Girls 5200-5600 yards
      - Boys 6400-6800 yards

(b) **Sub-District Tournaments.** Sub-district tournaments are part of the district tournament and are subject to all regulations pertaining to district tournaments. Sub-district tournaments may be played during the week preceding the district tournament. If a sub-district tournament is to be played, all participating schools must submit their official entry lists to the district tournament manager by e-mail not later than 5 p.m. Monday of designated week on the FHSAA calendar.

4.8.2.2.2 Regional Tournaments

(a) **Complexes.** Competition will be conducted in four regional complexes in each classification. Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4 will comprise the Region 1 complex; Districts 5, 6, 7 and 8 the Region 2 complex; Districts 9, 10, 11 and 12 the Region 3 complex; Districts 13, 14, 15, and 16 the Region 4 complex. One tournament will be conducted in each regional complex.

(b) **Sites.** Current regional tournament sites are listed on FHSAA.com.
  (1) Yardages
    i. Girls 5200-5600 yards
    ii. Boys 6400-6800 yards

(c) **Coaches Meeting.** A coaches meeting will be held at the tournament site 30 minutes prior to the first tee time to confirm pairings and to cover items of information or rulings that are necessary for the administration of the tournament.

(d) **FSGA/USGA Officials.** Each regional tournament site is required to have an FSGA/USGA official on site if there is one available.

4.8.2.2.3 Florida High School State Championship Finals

(a) **Dates and Site.** Dates and location for the State Championship Tournament will be posted on the Golf page of the FHSAA website.

(b) **Coaches Information.** A pre-tournament coaches information packet will be placed on Home Campus for coaches of all schools with participants in the Florida High School State Championships. The head coach from each school, or his/her representative, shall be required to view this information.

4.8.2.2.4 Advancement of Teams and Individuals

(a) **District Tournament to Regional Tournament.** The top two lowest scoring teams and the top two lowest scoring individuals who are not members of the top two lowest scoring teams in district tournament shall advance to the regional tournament to which they are assigned.

(b) **At-Large Qualifiers to the Regional Tournament.** An additional four teams and four individuals, not on those teams, will advance to each regional tournament based upon score, slope, and course rating in the best six 9-hole qualifying rounds in the regular season (SiWR) and at the district tournament (DiWR). The formula is (SiWR + DiWR = TiWR). Any ties resulting in more individuals or teams advancing to the regional tournament shall be broken using the "card count back" method until the tie(s) is/are broken starting with the "back 9" and continuing with the "back 6", "back 3", and 18th hole of the district tournament.

(c) **Regional Tournament to Florida High School State Championships.** The top two lowest scoring teams and the top two lowest scoring individuals, who are not members of the top two lowest scoring teams, in the regional tournament shall advance to the Florida High School State Championships.

(d) **At-Large Qualifiers to the Florida High School State Championships.** An additional eight teams and eight individuals, not on those teams, will advance to the Florida High School State Championships based upon score, slope, and course rating in their best six 9-hole qualifying rounds in the regular season (SiWR), at the district tournament (DiWR) and regional tournament (RiWR) rounds across all regions (TiWR). The formula is (SiWR + DiWR + RiWR = TiWR). Any ties resulting in more individuals or teams advancing to the Florida High School State Championships shall be broken using the "card count back" method until the tie(s) is/are broken starting with the "back 9" and continuing with the "back 6", "back 3", and 18th hole of the regional tournament.

4.8.2.3 Tournament Regulations

4.8.2.3.1 Teams. A team consists of four or five players. The four lowest scores shall determine the team score.

(a) A school may enter an individual golfer(s) in the district tournament to compete for the individual championship if the school is unable to enter a team of four or five players.

(b) Each team that qualifies for the Florida High School State Championship Series, in addition to its four or five players, may be accompanied by a maximum of one (1) alternate. The alternate may not be used once tournament play begins. No alternate is permissible for contestants who qualify on an individual basis.

(1) The coach is permitted, at their discretion, to substitute a player in a 36-hole event after the completion of 18 holes. This is limited to one substitution per event.

(c) **Minimum Contest Requirement for Individual Sports**. To be eligible for participation in the Florida High School State Championship Series in Golf, an individual student shall compete in a minimum of 54-holes during contests (matches, tournaments, invitationals, etc.) for the current regular season, unless a written request for a waiver is approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee. For the purposes of meeting the minimum contest requirement, "compete" is defined as having a result in any regular season golf interscholastic event. A mark indicating that an athletic endeavor was not attempted (DNS or similar) may not be considered in meeting the minimum contest requirement. (FHSAA Policy 10.3.2)

4.8.2.3.2 Format. All Florida High School State Championship Series tournaments shall be conducted on a stroke-play basis. The team having the lowest aggregate score at the conclusion of the prescribed number of holes will be the team champion. The individual player having the lowest score at the conclusion of the prescribed number of holes will be the individual champion.

(a) **District Tournaments.** One round, 18 holes. Each district shall adopt a method for breaking individual and team ties. If a sudden-victory playoff or the matching scorecards method is to be used, the hole(s) to be played or compared in the tie-breaker must be designated. If no tie-breaker occurs in a district where one is required for state series advancement, the tie(s) shall be broken using the "card count back" method until the tie(s) is/are broken starting with the "back 9" and continuing with the "back 6", "back 3", and 18th hole. If a team tie-break is required, up to five players shall compete in the playoff.

(b) **Regional Tournaments.** One round, 18 holes. In the event of a tie for the first- and second-place team or individual qualifiers, a sudden-victory playoff shall be used to determine the qualifiers who will advance to the Florida High School State Championship Series. The hole(s) for the sudden-victory playoff will be determined by the tournament committee and will be part of the information provided at the pre-tournament coaches meeting. If no tie-breaker occurs in a district where one is required for state series advancement, the tie(s) shall be broken using the "card count back" method until the tie(s) is/are broken starting with the "back 9" and continuing with the "back 6", "back 3", and 18th hole. If a team tie-break is required, up to five players shall compete in the playoff.

(c) **Florida High School State Championship**s. Two rounds, 36 holes. In the event of a tie for the individual or team championship, a sudden-victory playoff shall be used to determine the champion. The hole(s) to be used for the sudden-victory playoff will be determined by the tournament committee and will be announced at the pre-tournament coaches meeting. If a team tie-break is required, the second-round scoring players (up to five) shall compete in the playoff. In the event emergency situations, such as inclement weather, making it necessary to reduce the number of holes from 36, the tournament committee shall determine the final number of holes to be counted for scoring. All leading players must have played the same holes up to the cut-off point established by the tournament committee.

4.8.2.3.3 Pairings & Tee Times

(a) **District Tournaments.** Each district shall establish a method for determining pairings and tee times at the district meeting. Seeding for teams and individuals shall be determined solely by the rating established (iWR) during regular season competition. FHSAA strongly recommends that all tournaments start before 11 am.

(b) **Regional Tournaments.** Pairings and tee times will be based on the completed district tournament scores, slope and course ratings (DiWR) from the district tournament round and the best six 9-hole rounds from the regular season (SiWR). The host school will determine and e-mail tee times to schools with qualifying teams and individual competitors by 9 a.m. Friday of Week 16. FHSAA strongly recommends the use of tee times off holes 1 & 10 or off of hole 1 for all region tournaments similarly to the method used at the state finals. All regional tournaments shall start before 11 am.

(c) **Florida High School State Championships.** Pairings and tee times for the first round will be based on the combined regional tournament scores, slope and course ratings (RiWR) from the regional tournament round, the district tournament round (DiWR), and the best six 9-hole rounds from the regular season (SiWR). Pairings will be listed on FHSAA.com and the FHSAA Golf App. The top six (6) teams seeded shall start on the same hole in the final round of the state championships. Pairings for the second round will be based on the first-round scores. It is the responsibility of the coach to locate the pairings and tee times on the FHSAA golf website and the FHSAA Golf App.

4.8.2.3.4 Faculty Supervision. A member of the faculty shall accompany a school's team or individual contestant to all competition in the Florida High School State Championship Series.

4.8.2.3.5 Jury of Appeals. A Jury of Appeals consisting of five coaches and/or athletic directors from five different participating schools shall be appointed by the manager of each Florida High School State Championship Series event. A member of the Jury of Appeals whose team or individual contestant is a party to an appeal must recuse himself/herself and be replaced until the appeal is concluded. The decision of the Jury of Appeals shall be final. The Jury of Appeals shall not set aside any rule.

4.8.3 Local Rules and Terms of the Competition

The current Rules of the United States Golf Association govern play. Complete text of Rules and Committee Procedures may be found in the current "Rules of Golf." Disregard Local Rules printed on club scorecards or posted at the course.

Unless otherwise noted, the penalty for breach of a Local Rule or Term is:

- Match play -- Loss of hole; Stroke play -- Two strokes.

4.8.3.1 Local Rules

4.8.3.1.1 Out of Bounds.

(a) Defined by course-side points, at ground level, of white stakes, lines, roads, and perimeter fence posts.

(b) The ground on the homeowner's side of a red penalty area is out of bounds.

(c) When a paved road or curb defines out of bounds, a ball that is on or beyond the road or curb is out of bounds even though it may lie on another part of the golf course.

4.8.3.1.2 Penalty Areas.

(a) When a penalty area is bounded by out of bounds, the penalty area edge extends to and coincides with the out of bounds line.

(b) When a penalty area coincides with out of bounds, Model Local Rule B-2.2 is in effect allowing an additional relief option on the opposite side of a red penalty area equidistant to the reference point.

(c) When the outside edge (non-golf course side) of a road or path defines the edge of a penalty area or out of bounds, the road or path is an immovable obstruction.

4.8.3.1.3 Ground Under Repair. Defined by white lines. Other areas of ground under repair, even when not marked, include:

(a) French drains (trenches filled with stones or the like)

(b) Large or hard ant hills on the course

White lined areas of ground under repair tying into immovable obstructions are treated as a single obstruction.

4.8.3.1.4 Relief from Seams of Cut Turf. Model Local Rule F-7 as prescribed in Section 8 of the Committee Procedures is in effect. If a player's ball lies in or touches a seam of cut turf or a seam interferes with the player's area of intended swing:

(a) Ball in General Area: The player may drop a ball under Rule 16.1b
(b) Ball on Putting Green: The player may place a ball under Rule 16.1d

Interference does not exist if the seam only interferes with the player's stance.

4.8.3.1.5 Integral Objects

(a) When located within penalty areas, artificial walls and pilings are integral objects unless otherwise provided in the Notice to Players.
(b) When closely attached to trees, wrappings, electrical wire, and cables are integral objects.

4.8.3.1.6 Edging Grooves Near Putting Greens. Model Local Rule F-19 as prescribed in Section 8 of the Committee Procedures is in effect. The edging grooves around the aprons or fringes of putting greens are ground under repair. If a player's ball lies in or touches a groove or a groove interferes with the area of intended swing:

(a) Ball in General Area: The player may drop a ball under Rule 16.1b (drop a ball)
(b) Ball on Putting Green: The player may place a ball under Rule 16.1d (place a ball)

4.8.3.1.7 Immovable Obstructions Near Putting Greens. Model Local Rule F-5.2 as prescribed in Section 8 of the Committee Procedures is in effect. Relief is available only when the ball and the immovable obstruction lie in a closely-mown area, the ball lies in the general area, and an immovable obstruction on or within two club-lengths of the putting green and within two club-lengths of the ball intervenes on the line of play between the ball and the hole. (Drop ball within one club-length of complete relief)

4.8.3.1.8 Loose Impediments. Wood chips and mulch are loose impediments.

4.8.3.1.9 Distance Measuring Devices. Distance measuring devices may be used under the guidelines of the USGA rules of golf.

4.8.3.1.10 Maximum Score. Maximum score of 9 strokes per hole is in effect. Players electing to take a maximum score on any hole during the Florida High School State Championship Series shall be eligible to score and/or advance as an individual from the respective round of competition.

4.8.3.1.11 Alternative to Stroke and Distance for Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds. Model Local Rule E-5 as prescribed in Section 8 of the Committee Procedures is in effect. Alternative to Stroke & Distance for Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds is in effect.

4.8.3.1.12 List of Conforming Driver Head and Golf Balls. Optional restrictions under Section 8 of the Committee Procedures are in effect. Model Local Rules G-1 and G-3.

4.8.3.1.13 Missing Player or Marker Certification. Model Local Rule L-1 as prescribed in Section 8 of the Committee Procedures is in effect.

4.8.3.1.14 Transportation. When players are required to walk, a player who will play, or has played under stroke and distance is authorized to ride on motorized transportation.

4.8.3.1.15 Animal Near Ball. Model Local Rule E-13 as prescribed in Section 8 of the Committee Procedures is in effect.

4.8.3.1.16 Pace of Play. See separate memorandum to players for pace of play guidelines, when applicable.

4.8.3.1.17 Suspension of Play Due to a Dangerous Situation. Model Local Rule J-1 as prescribed in Section 8 of the Committee Procedures is in effect. All practice areas are closed during suspension for a dangerous situation until the Committee has declared them open. Failure to comply may result in revocation of entry.

4.8.3.1.18 Signals for Suspension of Play.

(a) Discontinue Play Immediately: One prolonged signal note
(b) Discontinue Play: Three consecutive short signal notes, repeated
(c) Resume Play: Two short signal notes, repeated

4.8.3.2 Terms of the Competition.

4.8.3.2.1 Official Event. In the Florida High School State Championship Series, an official event may be constituted by reverting to the results of an earlier round. In the event emergency situations, such as inclement weather, make it necessary to reduce the number of holes from 36, the Jury of Appeals shall determine the final number

of holes to be counted for scoring. All leading players must have played the same holes up to the cut-off point established by the Jury of Appeals.

4.8.3.2.2 Playoffs. If necessary to determine a champion at the Florida High School State Championship Series, a hole-by-hole playoff will be held. If a team playoff is necessary, all five (5) players that competed in the final round will play the assigned hole and the low four (4) scores will count towards the team score on that hole. If an individual playoff is necessary, the playoff will begin after all scores are accepted. If a player is involved in a team playoff, and an individual playoff, the playoffs will be held separately.

4.8.3.2.3 When Competition is Final. The competition is final when the winner has been announced, or, in the absence of a prize ceremony, when all scores have been approved by the Committee.