



RULES AND FORMAT

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Core values

We aim to uphold the values of golf, including

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Competitiveness
- Friendship

Mission Statement

Our mission is to create a fair competitive environment for golfers of all skill levels. We inspire and encourage golfers to do their very best and strive to play their personal best on and off the golf course.

Deposits

- Deposits are required to secure a player's spot in the tournament. This ensures that each player is guaranteed a position to compete.
- The deposit amount will be specified for each tournament and must be paid by the stated deadline to confirm participation.

Cancellations

- The Pin High Amateur Tour (PHAT) is required to give golf courses a firm player count. As a general rule, this count must be confirmed at least **2 weeks prior** to the tournament date.
- It is imperative that all members understand this policy, as PHAT is LOCKED into the confirmed number of players, and the course charges PHAT for that minimum player count.
- **Cancellation Policy:**
 - If you cancel after the specified date, the tour will incur the cost of your green fees.
 - Therefore, if you cancel after the cancellation date, you will be charged a cancellation fee.



- **Additional Fees:**
 - Blue Golf (the tournament management system) charges PHAT **10% of the total registration cost** for any cancellation. As a result, there will be a small cancellation fee to cover PHAT's costs if you cancel at any time after registration.

Tour Schedule

- **National events (Majors)**
 - **National Majors**
 - The tournament will be at least a two-day, 36-hole contest.
 - Players must be members, have played in at least three local events, and have a validated PHAT tournament index.
 - **National Championship Tournament**
 - The tournament will be at least a two day, 36-hole contest.
 - Players must be members, have played in at least three local events, and have a validated PHAT tournament index.
- **Chapter Tour Schedule**
 - Each chapter must have a minimum of eight to thirteen tournaments.
 - There is no limit to the number of tournaments each chapter can play. For example, Florida could have a longer season than the Iowa schedule.

Handicap Committee

- The committee's primary purpose is to place new players and unvalidated players in the appropriate division.
- The committee will be made up of the Handicap President, three local chapter owners, and five PHAT player members (one per division).
- **Tour Index**
 - The players' index will be determined by using the differential handicap of each round in the PHAT system. To calculate this number, we will average the 8 lowest rounds from the last 20 rounds and then multiply it by .96. This will serve as your tournament index:
 - The maximum number of tournaments is 20. When the 21st tournament is played, the oldest score will be dropped, and the index will be recalculated using the top 8 differential scores.
- **Validated Index**
 - A player's index will be validated after their 4th PHAT tournament round.
- **Divisions**
 - There will be 5 divisions.

Tournament	Best Scores
Rounds	Used
3	0
4	2
5	2
6	3
7	3
8	3
9	4
10	4
11	4
12	5
13	5
14	6
15	6
16	6
17	7
18	7
19	8
20	8

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- Division handicap ranges:
 - D1 – (up to 4.9)
 - D2 – (5.0 – 9.9)
 - D3 – (10.0 – 14.9)
 - D4 – (15.0 – 19.9)
 - D5 – (20.0 – higher)

Divisional Placement

- **New members**

- Vetting - The process of vetting will include various factors such as GHIN, other tour handicaps/Indexes, contacting local courses, club championship scores, and other tournament scores. When using GHIN, the player's lowest handicap within the past 52 weeks will be a significant factor in determining which division they will be placed in.
- New members will be assigned to the division that best matches their playing ability. The final decision on this placement will be made by the tournament handicap committee. Their decision-making process may involve conducting phone interviews with the player, considering GHIN, local course information, club championship scores, and other tournament indexes/scores.
- If the handicap committee is unable to verify a new member's handicap, the new member will be placed in Division 1 to ensure fairness for the other participants. It is the player's responsibility to provide a verifiable handicap, not PHAT.
- After the completion of the 3rd PHAT tournament round, the player will be placed in the Division where they achieved their lowest score.
 - For example, if the player's differential indexes are 14, 9, and 13, they will be placed in Division 2.

Division Movement

- **Existing Members with validated indexes**

- Members will be placed in the division their index indicates the day after the final round of the national championship tournament or their local finals. Whichever is the latest in the season.
- Members will only be moved if they request self-promotion. Otherwise, members will stay in the division they are placed in at the beginning of the tour season.
- Members are allowed to request to move up a division. **If that request is granted, they will NOT be allowed to move back down until the beginning of the next season.**

Stroke Back Rule

- PHAT aims to promote improvement among its members and does not intend to punish them for getting better. The organization wants its members to score higher, but it also acknowledges the need to maintain fair competition within each division. Instead of automatically promoting a

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player when they reach the divisional line, the player has the option to either move up to the higher division or give strokes back to the field they are currently competing against.

- The stroke ratios for giving strokes back to the field below the divisional line are as follows:
 - to 1.0 below division line: 1 stroke
 - to 2.0 below division line: 2 strokes
 - 2.1 to 3.0 below division line: 4 strokes
 - 3.1 to 4.0 below division line: 6 strokes
 - 4.1 to 5.0 below division line: 8 strokes

This trend continues with a 1:2 stroke ratio for every stroke below 2.1.

- If a member decides to self-promote to a higher division, they will only be allowed to transfer 80% of their Player of the Year points into the higher division.
- PHAT believes this method to be the fairest in the amateur tournament industry. It ensures that each member does not miss out on the Tour's Player of the Year race, while also maintaining fair competition for all participants.
- This system also protects the field. For example, if a member has an 11.5 handicap in Division 4 and shoots an 84, their adjusted score will be 90 (84 + 6), placing them in the middle of the 15-20 handicap level.
- The member's actual score will be used to determine their tournament index.

Tournament format

- **Stroke play**
 - All tournaments will be stroke-play format unless otherwise noted in the tournament details on the tournament information page on the website or app.
- **Format**
 - Division format will be gross strokes.
 - Each division will play stroke play against the other players within their division.
 - Gross scoring will be used within these divisions.
 - The only exception is when the stroke back rule is being used for a player that has an index below the division line.

Out of Division Scoring

- **Existing validated member**
 - Due to the structure of our divisions. Out of division scoring from an established member will not fall into a DQ status. However, this score will affect their handicap tournament index. See rule: Stroke Back Rule
- **New Member**
 - If a new member or guest player wins in divisions 2-5, they will be disqualified if their score is 2 strokes below the division line and outside of 3 strokes from the next placed

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player. This rule is in place to prevent new members from deceiving PHAT and division members by playing in the wrong division.

- If a tournament director suspects that a player intentionally added strokes to their round to avoid disqualification or to inflate their handicap, the player will be disqualified and given a warning. They will also be automatically moved to the division that the tour believes is the appropriate fit for them. The player will remain in that division until the end of the season, at which point they can request to be moved down if they wish.
- Once a player has a validated index, they will not be disqualified for shooting outside of their division. However, if they have less than 5 rounds, they can be battlefield promoted.

Battlefield promotions

- Only new members or members that are not validated or have played less than 5 rounds are eligible for a battlefield promotion.

Disqualification

- **Breaking the Rules**
 - Any player that is caught intentionally cheating will be given a 2-tournament suspension. A \$100 citation will be issued to the player. Citation will have to be paid before the player is allowed to return in good standings. The citation funds will be donated to the foundation.
 - All citations will be given to Major Ed Empower the Veterans Foundation as a charitable donation. Must show proof of payment to regain good standings with PHAT and be allowed to play on the tour.
 - If a player returns and continues to violate the rules PHAT has the right to remove the player from the tour without a refund of membership fees.

Caddie Policy

- Caddies are allowed as long as it's not slowing down pace of play or causing undue issues on the course.

Spectators

- Spectators are welcome; however, they must be respectful of the course and other players. They should not disrupt the pace of play.
- If spectators intend to ride in a cart, it is recommended that they contact the course directly to ensure there are enough carts available.



Tour Event Prizes

- Trophy, tour credit, cash gift cards and various prizes provided by sponsors at discretion of chapter owners and national office.
- Cash – Cash is available to the D1 players up to \$1,000 per tournament.

Prize Pool

- Determined based on size of field.

Trophies

- Division winners - Trophies will be awarded to each division winner.

Pairings

- Will be posted on the app prior to the tournament date.
 - A player can request a pairing; all pairings are at the discretion of the tournament director.
 - Pairing will be done by tee box assignments as best possible to keep up pace of play.

Tour Event Scoring

- All scoring will be stroke-play unless otherwise stated in the tournament details.
- Each pairing will be required to enter in live scoring after each hole is completed.
 - This will assist PHAT with keeping pace of play moving forward.

Triple Bogey Max

- Divisions 2-5 will play triple bogey max.
 - This is strictly a pace of play rule.

Tee Box Assignments

- Tee Box 1
 - (D1) Men's
- Tee Box 2 -
 - Men's D2-D5
 - Seniors D1
- Tee Box 3
 - Seniors D2-D5
 - Super Seniors D1
 - Women D1
- Tee Box 4

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- Super Seniors D2-D5
- Women D2-D5

Tie breakers

- If 1st place has a tie within the division
 - Each Player will be awarded equal points (for example if 2 players' tie. If 1st is 500 points and 2nd is 400 points both player will be awarded 450 points.
 - USGA Score back rules will determine who gets awarded the trophy.

Seniors

- Players 50 and over are allowed to play in the senior division, however if the player is younger than 60 the player will be hitting from the open division tee box.
 - Male players 60 and over will be hitting from the senior tees.

Super Seniors

- Males 70 and over will be considered super seniors
- Tee Box
 - D1 Super Seniors – Tee box will be the regular senior tees
 - D2-D5 Super Seniors – Tee Box is the Ladies D2-D5 Tees

Points Policy

- Players will receive points based on how they place in the field. Points will also be determined by the size of the division field and if it's a single day or multiple day tournament.

Player of the Year Race

- **Local Player of the Year Race Calculations**
 - **1-day, (18-hole events)**
 - Best 8
 - Point Value = X1
 - **Elevated Event**
 - Best 2
 - Point Value = X2
 - **2-day (36-hole event)**
 - Top 2 best
 - **Local championship**
 - Point Value = 2.5

Local events refer to any tournament that is not classified as a National Tournament. This means that a member from Colorado can earn local Player of the Year (POY) points by participating in an event held in



Iowa, which will contribute to their standings in the Colorado local Player of the Year race. PHAT encourages players to explore different chapters and foster new friendships through their participation.

- **National Player of the Year Calculations**
 - Local Chapter events
 - Refer to local POY Calculations above
 - National events
 - National Majors – Best 2 – point value = x3
 - National Championship – Point value = x3

USGA Rules

PHAT will use the USGA rules of golf for all tournaments unless stated otherwise in PHAT's rules and format policy.

Non-Penalty Areas

- **No mow/fescue/wooded areas**
 - In the event a ball is lost in these areas and the area is not marked Red/yellow or white the player can take a lateral or back of line drop at the point of entry into the non-marked area with a 1 stroke penalty. This is a PHAT rule to assist with pace of play and not a USGA rule.

Rule 18 – Stroke and Distance: Ball lost or Out of Bounds; Provisional Ball

- **18.1 - Relief Under Penalty of Stroke and Distance Allowed at Any Time**
 - At any time, you may take [stroke-and-distance](#) relief. Once you put another ball [in play](#) under penalty of [stroke and distance](#), your original ball is no longer [in play](#) and must not be played. This is true even if your original ball is then found on the [course](#) before the end of the three-minute search time.
- **18.2 - Ball Lost or Out of Bounds: Stroke-and-Distance Relief Must Be Taken**
 - A. When Your Ball Is Lost or Out of Bounds
 - **When Ball is Lost.** Your ball is [lost](#) if not found in three minutes after you or your [caddie](#) begin to search for it. If a ball is found in that time but it is uncertain whether it is your ball:
 - You must promptly attempt to identify the ball and are allowed a reasonable time to do so, even if that happens after the three-minute search time has ended.
 - This includes a reasonable time to get to the ball if you are not where the ball is found.

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- If you do not identify your ball in that reasonable time, the ball is LOST.
- **When ball is out of Bounds.** Your ball at rest is out of bounds only when all of it is outside the boundary edge of the course.
- B. What to do when your ball is lost or out of bounds
 - If your ball is *lost* or *out of bounds*, you must take *stroke-and-distance* relief by adding one penalty stroke and playing a ball from where the previous *stroke* was made (see [Rule 14.6](#)).

Exception – Player May Substitute Another Ball under Other Rule When It Is Known or Virtually Certain What Happened to Ball.

● 18.3 Provisional Ball

- A. When Provisional Ball Is Allowed
 - If your ball might be *lost* outside a *penalty area* or be *out of bounds*, to save time you may play another ball provisionally under penalty of *stroke and distance*.
 - **But** if you are aware that the only possible place your original ball could be *lost* is in a *penalty area*, a *provisional ball* is not allowed and a ball played from where the previous *stroke* was made becomes your ball *in play* under penalty of *stroke and distance*.
- B. Announcing Play of Provisional Ball
 - It is not enough for you only to say that you are playing another ball (or are playing again).
 - You **MUST** use the work “Provisional” or otherwise clearly indicate that you are laying the ball provisionally under Rule 18.3
 - If you did not announce this (even if you intended to play a *provisional ball*) and played a ball from where the previous *stroke* was made, that ball is your ball *in play* under penalty of *stroke and distance*.
- C. Playing Provisional Ball Until it Becomes the Ball in Play or is Abandoned
 - **Playing Provisional Ball More than Once.** You may continue to play the provisional ball without losing its status as a provisional ball so long as it is played from a spot that is the same distance or farther from the hole than where your original ball is estimated to be.
 - **When Provisional Ball Becomes the Ball in Play.** Provisional ball becomes your ball in play under penalty of stroke and distance in either of these two cases:
 - When your original ball is lost anywhere on the course except in the penalty area or is out of bounds.
 - When your provisional ball is played from a spot nearer to the hole than where your original ball is estimated to be.
 - **When Provisional Ball Must Be Abandoned.** When your provisional ball has not yet become your ball in play, it must be abandoned in either or these two cases:

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- When your original ball is found on the course outside a penalty area before the end of the 3-minute search time.
- When your original ball is found in a penalty area or is known or virtually certain to be in a penalty area. You must either play your original ball as it lies or take penalty relief.

Pace of Play

- **4 hours and 30 mins**

- Golf courses have allowed us to use their facilities, but they require us to finish playing within the course designated pace of play. This is a standard rule that the golf course enforces for PHAT. PHAT can assist groups that are playing at a slower pace by providing advice on how to speed up their game when players notify us or when we observe slow play. Here are some suggestions for foursomes to help maintain a good pace of play:
 - The entire group stays on the tee box and watches each player's tee shot.
 - If you are not playing cart golf. Drop off player 1 at their ball and player 2 drives to their ball while player 1 is going through their pre shot routine and hits their approach ball. Player 1 then walks to Player B's area while Player B is going through his/her shot routine.
 - Be ready on the green. Read your putt while another player is reading and getting ready to putt. Once the player finishes putting, you're ready.
 - Don't take more than 3 minutes to look for a ball. Keeping pace of play is expected and required by every player of the tour.
- If we cannot keep pace of play, we will have to charge more to purchase tee times the course was not able to sell, due to our slow play. Additionally, with slow play we risk the course banning us from future play.

Distant Measuring Devices

- **Range Finders**

- Rangefinders are permitted during tournament play.
 - Slope and wind measuring
 - Using slope and wind measurements is permitted.
 - Arccos is permitted.
 - Multiple devices are **NOT** permitted. You are only allowed to use one device. Do not use Arccos and then pull your rangefinder out to measure the pin. **THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF SLOWING DOWN PACE OF PLAY**
 - Slowing down the pace of play due to using any measuring device is **NOT** permitted – **BE READY WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT YOUR BALL TO REVIEW THE DATA.**



Weather

- Inclement weather is certainly not favorable for the tour, but we are dedicated to making every effort to ensure that the tournament runs as scheduled. Your understanding and cooperation in dealing with any weather-related issues are greatly appreciated.
- All communications regarding weather updates will be issued by the tournament chapter director through the app system, utilizing the bulk texting feature. This ensures that all players receive the same information promptly.
- If weather conditions prevent PHAT from completing the round, the event will officially conclude based on the most holes played by division. If this approach is not feasible, the tournament may be rescheduled.
- While PHAT strives to complete all events as planned, it is important to note that no refunds will be provided due to inclement weather that affects the tournament's completion. However, if the course issues a refund to the tour, that amount will be prorated and provided to players as tour credit.

