

GOLF INTERPRETATIONS

WIAA Tournament

QUESTION: **Is there a minimum distance for the girls to play?**

INTERPRETATION: The WIAA does not have a minimum, nor a maximum length for WIAA tournament courses. The Golf Coaches Association of Wisconsin does recommend a course in the neighborhood of 5200 yards for tournament play.

QUESTION: **Can we play winter rules in the fairway?**

INTERPRETATION: With junior tournaments it is always our WIAA preference to play summer rules no matter what the circumstances are. We have found there to be many rule situations with juniors whenever winter rules or allowing movement of the ball the in fairway by junior players is allowed. If at all possible, marking those areas that are in the poorest condition would also be appreciated. We have found incorporating these strategies with the level of rule knowledge players generally have in the WIAA tournament series to allow tournaments to run far smoother.

QUESTION: **Does the WIAA office provide the pairings for Regional meets?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, now that entries and team averages are collected at the WIAA office, the WIAA is able to provide pairings based upon year-long averages for Regional Golf meets.

Amateur Status

QUESTION: **Can a PGA Professional allow a son or daughter to accept a free round of golf at another course because the parent is a PGA Professional? Can friends of the son or daughter accept free rounds if they play with the son or daughter?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, sons and/or daughters are able to accept free rounds of golf because they are the sibling of a PGA Professional.

No, friends with remaining high school eligibility of a son or daughter of a PGA Professional are not able to accept a free round of golf. Acceptance of this type of gift can only be identified as a violation of Amateur Status regulations.

Non-school Competition

QUESTION: **Can a girl compete on the second day in a two-day non-school tournament when her school team also has their first meet of the season on the second day of the non-school event?**

INTERPRETATION: WIAA Sr. High School Handbook regulations, page 37, Article VI, Section 1, 2), indicates: “A student who was a member of a school team in a given sport during the previous year may not delay reporting for the school team beyond the school’s official opening day of practice in order to continue nonschool training or competition, except in the fall-sponsored sports of tennis, golf and swimming, provided the delay does not extend beyond the first interscholastic meet.”

If the student-athlete is not able to attend the first school meet of the school season, she is in violation of this regulation. In this situation, not attending the first meet of the season can only be identified as a delay that does extend beyond the first interscholastic meet.

QUESTION: **Can my daughter continue to work with a PGA Golf professional during the WIAA high school season?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, WIAA regulations do not prevent practice outside of the school team. However, I strongly recommend that you and your daughter discuss this additional practice with your high school coach. Due to additional risk of injury, loss of additional study time, and potential differences in coaching philosophies it is always best to discuss a student-athlete’s practice away from the school team with the Head Coach.

QUESTION: **We are organizing a charity golf scramble to raise money for our daughter’s brother’s health matters. The scramble can only take place during the WIAA girl’s regular season. Our daughter is on her school’s girl’s golf team. Can she participate in this scramble?**

INTERPRETATION: No, WIAA Sr. High School Handbook, Article VI, Section 1, A., indicates: “It is the philosophy of this Association that a student owes loyalty and allegiance to the school and team of which he/she is a member during the season of a given sport. A student becomes ineligible in a sport for the remainder of the season for competing in nonschool game, meet or contest in the same sport during the season of practice and competition established by the school.

First, please be aware fundraising events of this type were developed with intentions of adults being involved, not student-athletes. Event organizers are always encouraged to contact the WIAA office prior to establishing a date for an event should high school student-athletes be asked to participate. In most instances, issues can be resolved through these advanced discussions and recommendations provided to meet the desires of the organizers.

QUESTION: **We are organizing a small golf scramble for our church towards the end of August, perhaps six or seven foursomes will be involved. Are there any problems if members of the golf team participate in the event?**

INTERPRETATION: Yes, there are potential hazards for members of the golf team and for student-athletes at your high school.

First of all, even the smallest of golf scrambles/events must be considered to be non-school competitions. WIAA regulations prevent student-athletes from participating in events like this during the WIAA season of play. If

this event were being held this coming weekend, girls on the school golf team could not participate because their WIAA season has begun.

Boys, who will be on the boys golf team, or other school teams can participate in a non-school event that is held outside of the WIAA boy's spring golf season.

Of more importance, student-athletes are not able to accept prizes awarded for their play during the event--longest putt, closest to the pin, long drive, winning first, second or third place, etc. They may accept entry gifts so long as these gifts are given to all the participants. Student-athletes may accept nonintrinsic/utilitarian rewards like trophies, medals, certificates (not gift certificates), and they can enjoy dinner/lunch with the other parishioners.

QUESTION: **We are investigating a nonschool competition violation. I just wanted to clarify - do the boys need to sit out today or are they suspended once the information is received and acted upon by the WIAA?**

INTERPRETATION: If you believe there has been a violation - then they are ineligible from the time the violations occurred. If they play as ineligible players – then the event and/or their contributions - are forfeit. Best practice - may well be to sit the boys until you can sort out completely.

QUESTION: **Our boy's golf team members are interested in having "Captain's Practices" this fall. I told my coach I am checking with you but that it would most likely be okay as long as: 1. Neither our varsity nor JV coach provided any instruction to them - that this is to be a voluntary activity (attendance isn't taken, etc.). 2. The kids cannot receive any perks, such as free play at the course because they are members of the team (students who have their own membership/family membership, etc. at the course would have those rights to use, but others would have to pay greens fees). Please advise.**

INTERPRETATION: Current rules and interpretations would prohibit this. Rules of Eligibility, Art. VI, Section 2 - Out of Season, p.38/ C-2 indicates there are no restrictions against student's voluntarily assembling in the summer time. This is the specific text that allows for "Captains" practices.

Then, go back and read Section 2, Preamble A. "may not resemble school's team practicing/competing." Also then read over Bylaw Art. II, Section 1 and 2.

Bottom line, I must advise great caution and diversity of athletes assembling.

QUESTION: **Can a girl golfer sub in a women's golf league?**

INTERPRETATION: During the summertime period and during the school year, outside of the school season, girls can sub and/or participate in golf leagues. It is during the school season that girl's may not participate in non-school tournaments and events

Once again, of more importance, student-athletes are not able to accept prizes awarded for their play during the event--longest putt, closest to the pin, long drive, winning first, second or third place, etc. They may accept entry gifts at tournaments where the participants are not selected or so long as these gifts are given to all the participants. Student-athletes may accept nonintrinsic/utilitarian rewards like trophies, medals, certificates (not gift certificates).

QUESTION: **Can a girl play in the Jr. PGA Championship, August 13-16 in Maineville, OH?**

INTERPRETATION: This is a tournament that has been recognized by the USGA and AJGA as a National tournament for high school aged golfers. The WIAA has allowed high school golfers to compete in this event so long as they meet the requirements as found in the WIAA Sr. High School Handbook, Rules of Eligibility, Article VI--Nonschool Participation, Section 1.

These requirements include having achieved one of the top five places in the previous year's WIAA state meet, or defeated in subsequent competition a person who achieved one of the first five places in the previous WIAA state meet.

QUESTION: **Can a girl play in a Future World Collegiate Tour event in late September during the girl's school season?**

INTERPRETATION: No, this tournament is identified as one of many events on this organizations calendar of tournaments. It does not meet the criteria allowed by the WIAA membership for participation by student-athletes participating in the high school regular season. A girl who competes in this tournament is not able to continue to compete in the remainder of the 2008 WIAA high school season.

QUESTION: **Can boys on the high school golf team play in a fundraising scramble in late September?**

INTERPRETATION: Language does not exist to prevent golfers from participating in these events. However, high school golfers should understand that events of this sort are meant for players who have completed their high school eligibility. A high school student-athlete's eligibility, especially golfers, can be truly jeopardized through the acceptance of prizes at these events.

As mentioned above, of more importance then participating in these events, student-athletes are not able to accept prizes awarded for their play during the event—longest putt, closest to the pin, long drive, winning first, second or third place, etc. They may accept entry gifts so long as these gifts are given to all the participants at events they have not had to qualify or been selected. Student-athletes may accept/receive an award which is symbolic (nonmerchandise) in nature like trophies, medals, certificates (not gift certificates), ribbons, and badges. Please review the WIAA Amateur Status

regulations found in the WIAA Sr. High School Handbook, pages 34-35, for additional information.

Home Course

QUESTION: I need to make sure I understand the golf ruling on practice at home courses. Our golf team has declared AAA Country Club as a home course and would like to practice there. We will be playing a match there later in the week. Am I correct in telling the coach that he can practice on this course or have I misinterpreted the rule? Please let me know so I don't cause a problem. Thanks.

INTERPRETATION: So long as the course is a reasonable distance from the school, we generally use 25 miles as a reasonable distance, and school administration approve of the course, a school can identify up to three courses as their home course. If a course is designated as a home course, school golf teams are able to practice and compete on these home course(s). A complete list of home courses for each school golf team can be found on the WIAA School Center under Girls Golf.

QUESTION: I have a question about golf Regionals. It is a little confusing as to the use of a regional site and the three home courses. I guess I need to know if we can practice or save a match as part of our 14 and have a meet at the regional site if it is marked as one of our home courses. It is more than 25 miles away though, which seems to be a stipulation of the WIAA. The reason I ask is because most all of the other schools in our regional will have played that course because that is where the AAA conference has their conference meet. In this case all the other schools except School B and School C will have played at least 18 holes on the regional site, and have a definite advantage over us two that have not. What is the ruling??

INTERPRETATION: The course is well over the 25-mile distance considered for home course approval. Consequently, it is not a course that can be identified as a "home course" for your school golf program.

The options that you have available include:

1. Schedule a meet with a school golf team that identifies this course as a "home course" and is hosting a meet at this course.
2. Use one of your 14 allowed meets to take the team to this course for a practice session.
3. Players are allowed to go to the tournament course on their own, with family/friends, etc. without a coach in attendance.

Coaching During Meets

QUESTION: While a player is at address on the tee box, can a coach tell the player to "aim left?"

INTERPRETATION: Yes, a coach is allowed to provide instruction while a player is at address. Strategic advise like "aim left" is allowed.

Coaches are not able to "align" players while they are at address. This

includes moving them to the proper alignment.

QUESTION: **Are coaches now allowed to go on the tee box at any time?**

INTERPRETATION: WIAA coaching regulations have now been rewritten and coaches are allowed to be on the tee box at any time.

QUESTION: **Can a coach stand behind a player and help them with their alignment or are coaches in violation of USGA Rule 14-2b?**

INTERPRETATION: Coaches are allowed to help line them up. Obviously, coaches then have to move off the line before they initiate the swing. This is just like how a caddie helps the player line up. You see this quite a bit on the LPGA tour.

Rule 14-2b actually doesn't prohibit a coach from doing this. It does refer to "assistance", but "In making a stroke." So as long as the coach is off the intended line of play once the player begins the stroke, there is no problem.

Also, Umbrellas - again similar to a caddy, Coaches are allowed to hold the umbrella while they are getting ready to play the shot - ex. putting the tee in the ground, lining up a putt, etc. But we then have to get out of there as they play the shot ("in making a stroke").

Rule Allowances

QUESTION: **Can a golfer pat down the grass behind his/her ball when it is on the apron of the green, seemingly improving their lie and their intended swing?**

INTERPRETATION: USGA Rule 13-2 reflects this rule. Certainly a golfer is able to use the bottom edge of their club to check their lie below their ball. It is likely the grass behind the ball will rebound back into place or close to its original position. However, if a player were to step behind the ball or do something to make certain the grass behind the ball remains flat, then a rule violation has occurred and a two-stroke penalty is assessed.

QUESTION: **We have a golfer who regularly experiences a bloody nose. How do you handle these delays when she has an episode of this kind?**

INTERPRETATION: USGA Decision 6-8a/4: The matter is up to the Committee. Rule 6-8a(iv) permits a player to discontinue play because of sudden illness and the player incurs no penalty if he reports to the Committee as soon as practicable and the Committee considers his/her reason satisfactory. It would seem reasonable for a Committee to allow a player 10 or 15 minutes to recuperate from such a physical problem but ordinarily allowing more time than that would be inadvisable.

QUESTION: **Can a 10-stroke limit be put in place for a non-conference tournament? How about for a conference tournament?**

INTERPRETATION: WIAA Season Regulations, 15., a., indicates: "The host school or a conference will determine the type of play (match, medal or combination match-medal) governing competition." This includes regulations pertaining to stroke limits.

If the meet is a non-conference event, then the host school can be allowed to adopt a regulation like a 10-stroke limit.

If it is a conference meet, a conference regulation needs to be a part of a conference's by-laws in order for this type of rule to be used.

QUESTION:

I am holding a girls high school scramble during the WIAA Girls Golf season, with up to 16 other high school teams. It counts as one of our 14 WIAA matches.

Can I give medals for flags events for this meet?

INTERPRETATION:

Yes, medals can be given for flag events. WIAA Season Regulations, 15., a., indicates: "The host school or a conference will determine the type of play (match, medal or combination match-medal) governing competition." This includes regulations pertaining to events.

I encourage caution with this practice. It tends to suggest that school golf meets/tournaments are like fundraising scramble events. By no means do I wish to suggest these fundraising scrambles are a bad idea, but they simply are not intended for high school student-athletes.

Individual Participation

QUESTION:

My son who is starting 6th grade is one of the best golfers in the world for his age and will be attending the Hank Haney (Tiger Wood's coach) golf academy during the school year in South Carolina for the next 6 years but I had a thought of bringing him back for the 4th quarter to play on the golf team when he starts High School.

My second question is, if he were to continue to improve and had a chance to win state as an 8th grader, if he were accepted by the school and coach, could he play on the team but would only be allowed 4 years of eligibility right?

INTERPRETATION:

High school student-athletes are allowed to attend specialized athletic academies and/or schools and then are allowed to return and participate/compete on their high school team. Currently, there are actually a number of criteria that must be met:

1. Parents must have their primary residence in the school district.
2. The student-athlete does not compete in any school competitions while attending the academy/school.
3. The student-athlete must be enrolled as a full-time student at the high school he/she participates and meets academic eligibility requirements.
4. For male student-athlete's, they must report to the school team at the start of the golf season (first practice).
5. We would also caution you about preserving your son's amateur status. If he secures an agent, signs a contract and/or accepts, receives or

directs to another any sort of cash or merchandise (clubs, clothing, shoes, etc.) he will jeopardize his high school eligibility.

Regarding 8th graders playing on high school teams, WIAA Season Regulations, 17., b., indicates: "A school may not allow its students in Grades 9, 10, 11 and/or 12 to compete against another member school's students in Grade 8 and/or below." Student-athletes are allowed to compete on high school teams after they have entered 9th grade.

You are correct in identifying that high school student-athletes have four years of eligibility. This four-year "time clock" begins once they enter ninth grade.

QUESTION:

My JV coach took our JV golf team to a dual with another school on Tuesday. Apparently, two of my varsity members went to watch the match and, because of two open spots, were invited to play with the other school's JV #1 and #2 players. So, they did without their scores "being counted." So, my question is: Would this count towards the allowed 14 matches? If so, I'll make adjustments in what events the two girls play in the future. I appreciate your help with this matter.

INTERPRETATION:

Yes, WIAA Season Regulations, Girl's Golf, 7., a., indicates: "A student who participates at both the varsity and non-varsity levels during the season may not participate in more than 14 meets." Even though their scores did not "count," this meet does have to count as one of their 14 allowed meets during the regular season. If the High School Girl's Golf team has scheduled 14 meets during the 2008 WIAA Girl's Golf season for the varsity team, both girls are now able to compete in 13 of those varsity meets.

QUESTION:

We had a girl quit the girl's golf team leaving us with four players for our team. Can an 8th grader be allowed to compete on our high school girl's team?

INTERPRETATION:

No, WIAA Season Regulations, Girls Golf, page 25, 17., b., "A school may not allow its students in Grades 9, 10, 11 and/or 12 to compete against another member school's students in Grade 8 and/or below."