

## 2025 SIR Branch 95 Golf Rules

Introduction: As our golf group has evolved over the years, the need to formalize some of the accepted rules of play were introduced to ensure we were all playing within the same general guidelines. They are updated annually, or as needed, and some provisions may be dropped, added, or revised. The following declaration should be considered our local Club rules during regular or *Championship* play for 2024:

### 1. Move The Ball

Players are allowed, on the fairways and rough, to reposition the ball within a **six inch** distance of its original location except in a penalty area. Here the ball must be played as it lies or lifted and dropped with a one (1) stroke penalty. This move is not applicable on the greens nor is it to be used to move the ball from the rough to the fairway or the fringe to the green. However, on the green a ball may be moved to avoid an obvious area in need of repair. The move shall be limited to clearing the bad spot and should place the ball no closer to the hole. You may lift, clean and place anytime you are allowed to move the ball.

### 2. Lost Balls

In Tournament play a ball must be located, or declared lost. The accepted amount of time allowed to search for a ball is three minutes. If not found within the allotted time period, it must be declared lost and a new ball put in play.

Leaf rule: Balls that have been observed to stay in play, but can not be located due to excessive downed leaves, may be dropped without penalty, as near as possible to the spot it was deemed to be.

The following rule will apply for white out of bound stakes, or on holes with no markers: In Tournament play, the golfer must return to the last stroke location, take one (1) penalty stroke, and replay the shot. To save time, *if all players agree*, a replacement ball may be dropped at the best estimate of the location of the lost ball, take a two (2) stroke penalty and continue play. *You still have the option of returning to the last stroke location, take a penalty stroke, and replay the shot.* Or, if you declared and hit a provisional ball, that ball may be placed in play, under penalty of stroke and distance. For red/yellow stakes, see *Water Hazard/Lateral Hazard (penalty area)*.

### 3. Gimmee's

To speed the pace of play, your opponent may declare a gimmee. A gimmee is when a ball is **within 20 inches** of the hole and conceded you would not miss it. If in doubt, measure it with the tape mark on your putter shaft. In the *Championship* series, there are no gimmee's, all balls are to be holed out. If you fail to hole out your final putt, a one stroke penalty will occur.

### 4. Ready Golf

To speed play on the tee, please play ready golf; any player who is ready should tee up and hit off. After everyone has teed off, and for safety reasons, the player furthest from the hole should hit first. At the greens any player not on the putting surface should hit before any player on the putting surface plays. After that, normal courtesy says the golfer who is away putts first. There may be instances when a player is delayed in getting to the green. It is acceptable in this case for one or more on the green to putt out to speed the pace of play. **There are no Mulligan's in Sir golf play.**

**5. Water Hazard ( now called penalty area)**

After entering a water hazard, a ball must be dropped where it entered and no closer to the hole. A one stroke (1) penalty will occur. Selection of the drop location must be on a line extending from the pin and through the location which the ball first entered the penalty area. Distance of the drop from the penalty area is at the discretion of the player. If there is a designated drop zone, then it may be used.

**6. Special rules for water in bunker**

If there is standing water in the bunker, and your ball is in the water or in mud or your stance would place you in the mud, the player has to option to remove the ball from the water and replace it in an area within the bunker, no closer to the hole, without penalty.

**7. Lateral Hazard (now called penalty area)**

A ball may be played from within a penalty area without penalty as long as you do not improve its lie. During the *Championship Play-off's* you may not lift the ball, or improve its lie. You may rotate the ball where it lies to identify it, but if you lift the ball, or improve its lie, a one stroke (1) penalty will occur. In some cases, it may be better to declare it unplayable. Under our club rules, you may take a one stroke penalty, move it back to within two club lengths of the edge of the fairway (red stakes) and resume play.

**8. Manmade object relief**

A ball that comes to rest adjacent to a man-made object (fence, staked tree, cart path, sprinkler head) may be lifted for relief and a drop taken, without penalty, within two club lengths of where the ball came to rest. This does not apply if the fence is a designated "out of bounds" boundary. This should be treated as an unplayable lie.

**9. Unplayable Lie**

With the ball adjacent to a tree, natural boulder, bush or an out-of-bounds boundary fence that precludes normal stance and stroke, the ball should be declared an unplayable lie, lifted and dropped within two club lengths of its original position. A one stroke (1) penalty is taken and play resumed.

**Bunkers:** Each stroke must be counted until the ball is safely out. Picking up the ball and dropping it manually outside the bunker without using your club will result in a two (2) stroke penalty. (Rules of Golf Section 20-7 "Playing from the wrong place.") Also, see # 6 for special rule that may apply.

**10. Marking Your Ball:** For consistency, all golfers must follow Rule 20-1 of "The Rules of Golf."

When a ball is to be marked, the position of a ball to be lifted should be marked by placing a ball-marker, small coin, or other similar object immediately *behind* the ball. (*Not beside it, or placed in front of it.*) The position of the ball must be marked *before* it is lifted. If the ball is lifted first, a one (1) stroke penalty will occur.

**11. Hitting the Wrong Ball**

During *Club Championship* play there is a two-stroke (2) penalty if you hit an opponent's ball, or the wrong ball, or finish the hole playing a ball you did not tee-off with. Balls may be lifted for identification, except in a hazard (penalty area) during *Championship play*.

In non-championship play there will be no penalty for hitting the wrong ball. Should this occur, both players must move the balls back to their original location and replay the shots.

### **12. World Handicapping System:**

Since we compete for prize money, each player's gross score must be recorded on each hole. Posting less than your actual score gives you an unfair advantage over opponents.

The maximum score for each hole played is limited to a net double bogey, calculated as follows:

Par of the hole + 2 strokes + any handicap strokes the player receives on that hole

A net double bogey is equal to the lowest score on a hole for which the player would achieve zero Stableford points. There is no limit to the number of holes in a round where a net double bogey adjustment may be applied.

Posting erroneous scores may result in disqualification.

### **13. Tournament Prize Funds**

Tournament prize funds will be distributed and awarded to the first 3 places if there are 22 or fewer participants in a tournament. If there are 23 or more participants, four places will be awarded.

Cash or Closest-To-The Pin awards will only be distributed to members present at the conclusion of the tournament. If an otherwise qualified participant leaves before the presentation awards, the member with the next lowest score or closest-to-the pin measurement may claim the prize. This rule does not apply to the club championship. A qualified participant who had to leave early due to an emergency will also be awarded an exception.

**Club Championship** - Beginning in October this year, there will be a playoff between all qualifying members to determine a Club Champion. Initially, players chosen to enter the first round of the playoffs will be selected from a list of all active members who have played a minimum number of rounds with the club. For 2023, the minimum number of rounds required is ten (10). An exception will be made for members who had a verified serious illness or surgery during the year that prevented them from playing for an extended period of time.

In the playoff process, the lowest net score, based on each player's handicap index at the time, will be used to determine winners.

An example of players qualifying for the first round in October based on rounds played during the 2023 season might be as follows:

Bob Smith	20	Rob Davis	18	L. Patterson	8	J. Radovich	23
Jack Fox	7	Ed Johnson	20	Jim Hopper	23	Ralph Grove	21
Harold Sharp	14	Bob Flynn	15	Paul Beck	24	B. Dickerson	4
Keith Haley	12	R. Simpson	21	James Green	12	John Wolfe	21

In the above scenario, any player on the list who has played 10 rounds or more will qualify to begin play in the first round of playoffs. Participation is strictly voluntary. The playoff will consist of three rounds of golf at three different golf courses. Should any qualifier choose not to participate in the first round, or subsequent rounds, he would be ineligible from further participation in the playoff process. Should a player participate in the first and second round, but Did Not Play (DNP) in the final round, he would be disqualified.

At one of our regular tournament dates in October, *all* qualified golfers will be eligible to participate in the first round of the Club Championship process. Pairings will be determined by the tournament

chairman. The Club Champion will be determined by the lowest cumulative score played over three rounds, and the player with the lowest total net score after the third round is completed will be declared our Club Champion.

An example on how the final results might appear is as follows:

<u>Player – Net Scores</u>	<u>Round 1</u>	<u>Round 2</u>	<u>Round 3</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Haley	73	70	68	211	Club Champion
Beck	75	68	69	212	Second Place
Fox	70	75	68	213	Third Place
Sharp	72	73	70	215	Fourth Place
Davis	76	75	65	216	
Wolfe	75	70	73	218	
Flynn	73	72	75	220	
Grove	78	73	70	221	
Hopper	66	70	DNP	DQ	
Smith	71	64	DNP	DQ	
Dickerson	69	DNP	DNP	DQ	

Should a tie result at the conclusion of the Championship tournament, we will use the following method to break ties, one in which we go to the scorecard and compare the last 9 holes. See the following example:

Player A has a 28 handicap index and shot 98 with net 70 after 18 holes (50 + 48)

Player B has a 20 handicap index and shot 90 with a net 70 after 18 holes (44 + 46)

Take 1/2 their handicap and deduct it from their score for the last 9 holes

Player A (48 - 14 = 34)

Player B (46 - 10 = 36) Player A is the winner as his net 34 beats net 36.

If still a tie, then use last six holes as tiebreaker, then last three holes, then the 18th hole.

Playoff dates and golf courses each year will be determined by the Golf Chairman.

Prizes will be awarded at either the October or November luncheon and will include:

**First Place: \$50.00 cash prize, and an annual Championship trophy.**

**Second Place: \$30.00 cash prize**

**Third Place: \$25.00 cash prize**

**Fourth Place: \$20.00 cash prize**

Cash prizes will only be awarded to recipients at monthly luncheons. If the recipient is not present at the next two scheduled luncheons to receive the prize, the funds will be returned to the club treasury.

The trophy will have the winners name inscribed on the plaque as the Club Champion.

In addition to bragging rights, the winner may retain the trophy for the ensuing year. The trophy must be made available at our luncheons twice a year for display, to promote our golf Championship Program.