

## **Golf Rules**

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics golf competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon The Rules of Golf as approved by the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews (R&A) and the Royal Canadian Golf Association (RCGA). These rules shall govern all competition except when in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Canada Sports Rules. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Canada Sports Rules shall apply.

### ***SECTION A***

## **Official Events**

- 1) Level 1 – Individual Skills Competition
- 2) Level 4—Individual Stroke Play Competition [9 hole]
- 3) Level 5—Individual Stroke Play Competition [18 hole]

Note: Some events may or may not be offered at the Provincial and National Games. Special Olympics Canada and the Canadian Sports Council will decide which event will be held at the National Games.

### ***SECTION B***

## **General Rules and Modifications**

The following are maximum averages for each level of competition that will be enforced at all sanctioned competitions. Scores not meeting these criteria may be subject to disqualification.

Level 4 – average of 70 or lower

Level 5 – average of 120 or lower

## 1. Level 1 – Individual Skills Competition

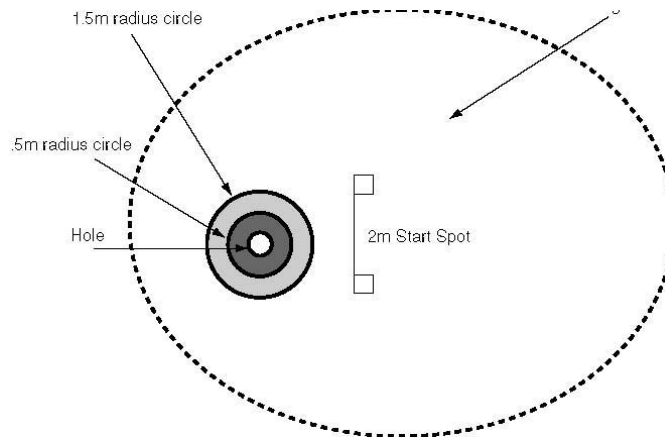
The purpose of the Individual Skills Competition is to allow athletes to train and compete in basic golf skills. The development of these key skills is necessary prior to advancing to Level 4-5. A maximum of 140 points may be scored in Level I, if the bunker shot is included. An example of the Individual Skills Competition Scoresheet can be found in the Addendum to the Golf Rules.

**NOTE:** For the following skills events: short putt, long putt, chip shot, pitch shot, bunker shot. When taking your 5 attempts and movement of the ball occurs, you should remove the ball prior to the next attempt to avoid interference.

- a. Short Putt (Maximum 20 points)
  - 1) Purpose — To measure the athlete's ability to putt, focusing on the Short Putt.
  - 2) Equipment
    - a) A regulation putting green with a properly marked (target) hole.
    - b) Five balls.
    - c) A chalker may be used to mark the circle targets around the hole; and
  - 3) Description
    - a) A target hole is selected and two circles are placed around the hole. The first circle shall have a radius of 0.5 meter and the second shall have a radius of 1.5 meters from the hole.
    - b) The athlete will have five attempts from a clearly marked spot, 2 meters from the hole.
    - c) The short putt should be set up on a green with as flat a surface as possible.
  - 4) Scoring
    - a) The athlete will have five attempts to putt the ball at the hole from a line 2 meters (6.56 feet) from the hole, scoring points according to where the ball comes to rest.
    - b) The athlete will score one point for making a stroke at, and striking the ball. (A swing and a miss count as one attempt, and the athlete receives a score of zero).
    - c) A second point is scored if the ball stops on or within the 1.5 meter (4.92 feet) circle.
    - d) A third point is scored if the ball stops on or within the 0.5 meter (1.64 feet) circle.

- e) If the ball goes in the hole, a total of four points will be awarded for that attempt.
- f) The Short Putt score shall be the sum total of the five attempts.

### SHORT PUTT

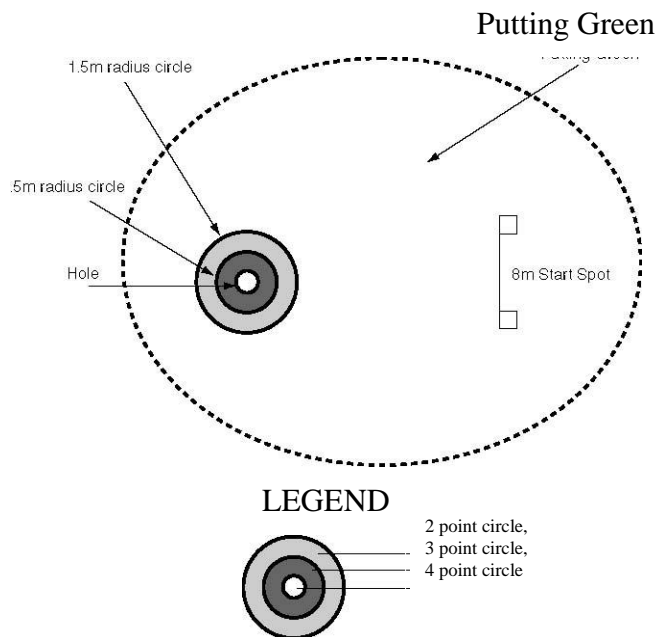


- b. Long Putt (Maximum 20 points)
  - 1) Purpose — To measure the athlete's ability to putt, focusing on the Long Putt.
  - 2) Equipment
    - a) A regulation putting green with a properly marked (target) hole.
    - b) Five balls.
    - c) A chalker may be used to put target circles around the hole.
  - 3) Description
    - a) A target hole is selected and two circles are placed around the hole. The first circle shall have a radius of 0.5 meter and the second shall have a radius of 1.5 meter from the hole.
    - b) The athlete will have five attempts from a marked spot, 8 meters from the hole.
    - c) The Long Putt should be set up on a green with as flat a surface as possible. Note: Putting up hill is recommended.

4) Scoring

- a) The athlete will have five attempts to putt the ball at the hole from a spot 8 meters from the hole, scoring points according to where the ball comes to rest.
- b) The athlete will score one point for making a stroke at, and striking the ball. (A swing and a miss count as one attempt, and the athlete receives a score of zero).
- c) A second point is scored if the ball stops on or within the 1.5 meter circle.
- d) A third point is scored if the ball stops on or within the 0.5 meter circle.
- e) If the ball goes in the hole, a total of four points will be awarded for that attempt.
- f) The long putt score shall be the sum total of the five attempts.

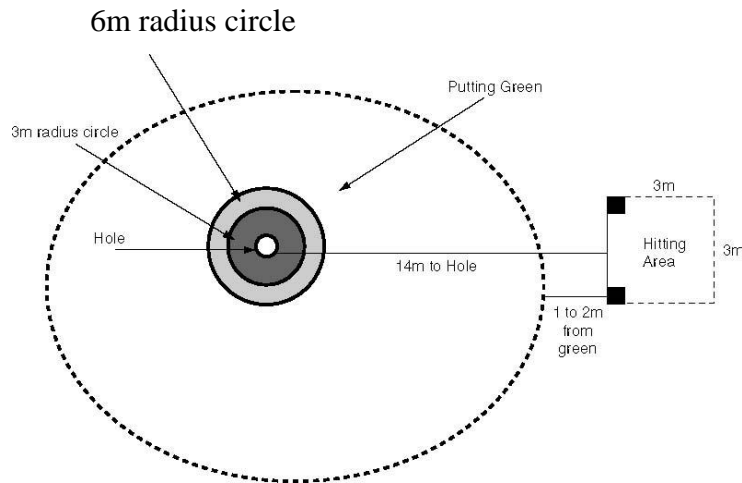
**LONG PUTT**



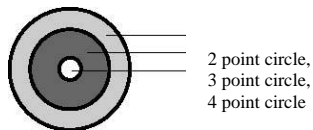
c. Chip Shot (Maximum 20 points)

- 1) Purpose — To measure the athlete's ability to hit chip shots 14 meters from the hole. Woods and putters are not permitted for this skill.

- 2) Equipment
  - a) An appropriate number of golf balls based on the number of competitors (it is recommended that five balls per player be available to eliminate having to retrieve balls)
  - b) A putting green with a clearly marked target flag and hole.
- 3) Description
  - a) A chipping area is set up which includes a 3 meters by 3 meters square hitting area 14 meters from the hole. The chipping area should be 2 meters from the edge of the green.
  - b) A 3-meter radius circle and a 6-meter radius circle will be placed around the hole.
  - c) A safely marked hitting area, 3 meters by 3 meters square, chalk and marker.
  - d) The athlete is instructed to chip the ball at a designated hole, getting it as close to the hole as possible.
- 4) Scoring
  - a) The athlete will attempt five shots at the target, scoring points according to where the ball comes to rest.
  - b) The athlete will score one point for making a stroke at and striking the ball. (A swing and a miss count as one shot and the athlete receives a score of zero for that shot).
  - c) A second point is scored if the ball comes to rest inside the 6-meter (19.68 feet) circle around the hole.
  - d) A third point is scored if the ball comes to rest inside the 3 meter (9.84 feet) circle around the hole.
  - e) A fourth point is scored if the chip shot comes to rest in the hole.
  - f) The total score from the five attempts will be the athlete's final score for the Chip Shot.
- 5) Diagram (Chip Shot):



### LEGEND



#### d. Pitch Shot (Maximum 20 points)

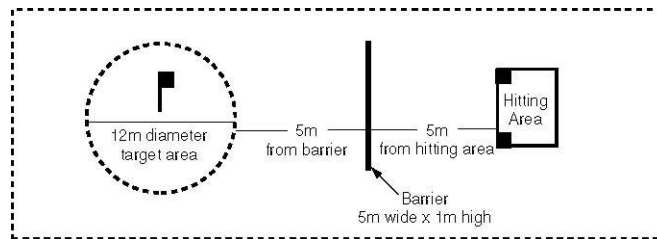
- 1) Purpose — To measure the athlete's ability to hit controlled pitch shots in the air in the proper direction to a defined circular target area.
- 2) Equipment
  - a) An appropriate number of golf balls based on the number of competitors (it is recommended that five balls per player be available to eliminate having to retrieve balls)
  - b) A marked hitting area; paint, chalk, or cones.
  - c) Shag bags or tubes to retrieve balls at station.
  - d) A target flag and hitting mat or artificial surface.
  - e) A banner, sign, net or barrier that measures 1 meter (3.28 feet) high by 5 meters (16.40 feet) wide. Two 2-meter (6.56 feet) poles can be used to support the banner, sign, net or barrier.
- 3) Description
  - a) A target area shall be a circle with a 6-meter (19.68 feet) radius.
  - b) The distance from the hitting area to the 1-meter (3.28 feet) high barrier shall be 5 meters (16.40 feet).
  - c) The distance from the 1-meter (3.28 feet) high barrier to the target area shall be 5 meters (16.40 feet).

- d) The athlete shall make five attempts. The athlete is instructed to pitch the ball over the barrier at the designated target area.

**NOTE:** The skill station should be located in a restricted area such as the driving range in order to provide the safest environment. If an unrestricted area is used, then the area should be roped off and clearly identified for volunteers, spectators and athletes.

4) Scoring

- a) The athlete will attempt five shots at the target, scoring points according to where the ball lands.
- b) Athletes will score one point for making a stroke at and striking the ball. (A swing and a miss count as one shot and the athlete receives a score of zero for that shot).
- c) A second point is scored if the ball goes over the barrier and between the upright poles.
- d) A third point is scored if the ball lands inside the 12-meter circle and rolls out, or if the ball lands outside the 12-meter circle and comes to rest inside the circle.



- e) A fourth point is scored if the ball lands inside the 12-meter circle and comes to rest inside the circle.
  - f) The Pitch Shot score shall be the sum total of the five attempts.
- e. Bunker Shot (Maximum 20 points)

This skill is considered optional and may be included in ISC at the discretion of the Program.

- 1) Purpose — To measure the athlete's ability to hit controlled shots from a bunker in the air in the proper direction to a defined circular target area.
- 2) Equipment
  - a) An appropriate number of golf balls based on the number of competitors (it is recommended that five balls per player be available to eliminate having to retrieve balls)
  - b) A defined hitting area in a bunker or manufactured area with sand, paint or chalk, and markers;

- c) Shag bags or tubes to retrieve balls at station.
- d) A target flag, hitting mat or artificial surface covered with sands, paint, chalk or marker in the bunker from which to hit.
- e) The rim of the bunker (bunker face) should be at least 1 meter high and 5 meters wide. If not, a banner, net or barrier should be constructed such that from the bunker hitting area a ball must clear 1 meter in height. Two 2-meter support poles should be used to support the banner, sign, net or barrier. Poles should also be used to designate 5 meters scoring width on the bunker face.

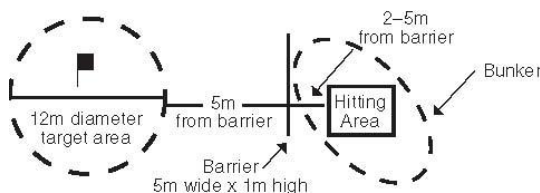
3) Description

- a) A target area shall be a circle with a 6-meter radius.
- b) The distance from the hitting area in the bunker to the 1-meter barrier or bunker face shall be 5 meters.
- c) The distance from the 1-meter high barrier or bunker face to the target area shall be 5 meters.
- d) The athlete shall make five attempts. The athlete is instructed to pitch the ball out of the sand and toward the designated target area.

**NOTE:** The skill station should be located in a restricted area such as the driving range in order to provide the safest environment. If an unrestricted area is used, then the area should be roped off and clearly identified for volunteers, spectators and athletes.

4) Scoring

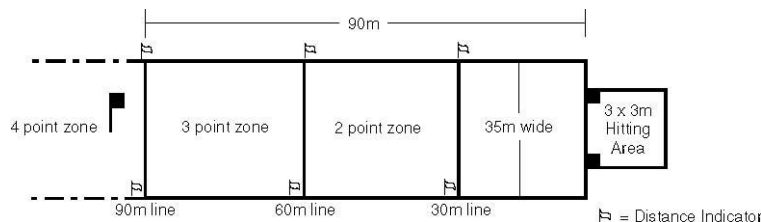
- a) The athlete will attempt five shots at the target, scoring points according to where the ball lands.
- b) Athletes will score one point for making a stroke at and striking the ball. (A swing and a miss, or “grounding” the club, counts as one shot and the athlete receives a score of zero for that shot).
- c) A second point is scored if the ball goes over the barrier or bunker face and between the upright poles.
- d) A third point is scored if the ball lands inside the 12-meter circle and rolls out, or if the ball lands outside the 12-meter circle and comes to rest inside the circle.
- e) A fourth point is scored if the ball lands inside the 12-meter circle and comes to rest inside the circle.
- f) The Bunker Shot score shall be the sum total of the five attempts.



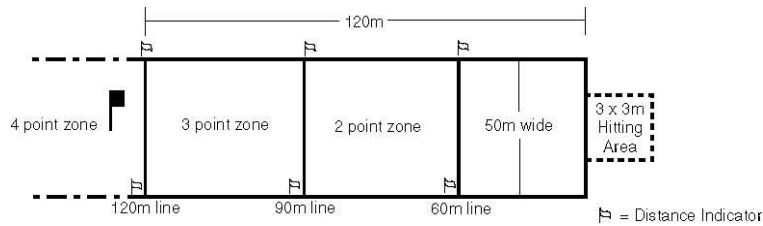


f. Iron Shot (Maximum 20 points)

- 1) Purpose — To measure the athlete’s ability to hit an iron shot for distance within a set hitting area.
- 2) Equipment
  - a) An appropriate number of golf balls based on the number of competitors (it is recommended that five balls per athlete be available to eliminate having to retrieve balls).
  - b) Marking paint or chalk, and marker to mark hitting area and boundary lines (1/2-inch cord or rope can be substituted for marking boundary lines, making them more visible).
  - c) Hitting mat or carpet, tees, helmets, a safety zone for scorekeepers to stand in and shag bags or tubes to retrieve balls (if necessary); and
  - d) A target flag and eight cones or other visible markers to identify distance locations.
  - e) Athletes may use an Iron or Hybrid/Rescue Club for either an Iron shot, but not both.
- 3) Description — The athlete may choose to hit the ball off a tee, a mat or the ground. The athlete is instructed to hit the ball from the teeing area toward a designated flag in the hitting area, trying to keep the ball within the boundary markers and achieving a distance of more than 90 meters.
- 4) Scoring
  - a) The athlete will attempt five shots at the target, scoring points according to where the ball comes to rest.
  - b) Athletes will score one point for making a stroke at and striking the ball. (A swing and a miss count as one attempt and the athlete receives a score of zero for that shot).
  - c) Two points are scored for a ball that comes to rest between the 30 meters and 60 meters lines within the 35-meters wide boundary lines.
  - d) Three points are scored for a ball that comes to rest between the 60 meters and 90 meters lines within the 35-meters wide boundary lines.



- e) Four points are scored for a ball that comes to rest beyond the 90 meters line within the 35-meters wide boundary lines.
- f) The athlete's score for the Iron Shot shall be the sum total of the five attempts.
- g. Wood Shot (Maximum 20 points)
  - 1) Purpose — To measure the athlete's ability to hit a wood shot for distance within a set hitting area.
  - 2) Equipment
    - a) An appropriate number of golf balls based on the number of competitors (it is recommended that five balls per player be available to eliminate having to retrieve balls).
    - b) Marking paint or chalk, and marker to mark hitting area and boundary lines (a 1/2-inch (1.27 cm) cord or rope can be substituted for marking boundary lines, making them more visible).
    - c) Hitting mat or carpet, tees, helmets, a safety zone for scorekeepers to stand in and shag bags or tubes to retrieve balls (if necessary); and
    - d) A target flag and eight cones or other visible markers to identify distance locations.
    - e) Athletes may use a Fairway Wood, or Driver and if they did not use a Hybrid/Rescue Club for their iron shot, then they can use it for the Wood shot.
  - 3) Description — The athlete may choose to hit the ball off a tee, a mat or the ground. The athlete is instructed to hit the ball from the teeing area toward a designated flag in the hitting area, trying to keep the ball within the boundary markers and achieving a distance of more than 120 meters.
  - 4) Scoring
    - a) The athlete will attempt five shots at the target, scoring points according to where the ball comes to rest.
    - b) The athlete will score one point for making a stroke at and striking the ball (a swing and a miss count as one attempt, and the athletes receives a score of zero for that shot).
    - c) Two points are scored for a ball that comes to rest between the 60 meters and 90 meters lines within the 50-meters wide boundary lines.
    - d) Three points are scored for a ball that comes to rest between the 90 meters and 120 meters lines within the 50-meters wide boundary lines.



- e) Four points are scored for a ball that comes to rest beyond the 120 meters line within the 50-meters (164.041 feet) wide boundary lines.
- f) The athlete's score for the Wood Shot shall be the sum total of the five attempts.

## 2. Level 4 Golf—Individual Stroke Play Competition

### a. Purpose for this Level of Play

- 1) This level is designed to meet the needs of those Special Olympics golfers who wish to play individually in a tournament where the stipulated round is nine holes.
- 2) While the player should be capable of playing independently, it is strongly recommended that the player provide their own caddie for tournaments and competitions. The player and caddie must be able to walk during the entire nine-hole round. If the player cannot provide its own caddie, the following options could be made available for the athlete:
  - i. Play without a caddie
  - ii. If the Organizing Committee has a pool of volunteer caddies, use one of the volunteer caddies

**Note 1:** Caddies do not have the right to protest. Coaches can be caddies but if they are this would take away their right to protest.

**Note 2:** At National Games, the delegations coaching staff will consist of 1 Head-Coach per team (for Teams who have 2 or more players) and as many caddies as there are athletes. There will be no associate coach positions allocated to Teams. Teams who have only one athlete will consist of 1 Head-Coach that will also play the role of caddie. In this situation, the caddie would have the right to protest.

### b. Form of Play

- 1) The form of play shall be stroke play competition.

### c. Scoring

- 1) If a 10th stroke is played without holing the shot, the player shall record a score of 10x and proceed to the next hole.

- 2) Scoring (marking of cards)—Athletes should be taught to keep score and, whenever possible in competition, serve as a marker for a fellow competitor. The

Tournament Committee may also appoint a volunteer or caddie to serve as a marker. The competitor will be responsible for verifying his/her own score and signing his/her scorecard.

d. Ties

- 1) First-place ties shall be decided in the following manner:
  - a) Of the players tied for first place, the player with the fewest number of 10x scores shall be declared the winner.
  - b) If a playoff is not feasible, the matching of scorecards is recommended. There are many options for matching cards, which can be found in the USGA and R & A Rules of Golf under Appendix I Part C: Conditions of Competition—How to Decide Ties. Please note that the tie-breaking method must be stated in the Conditions of Competition prior to the start of the tournament.
- 2) All other ties shall remain as ties and all players should be presented with the same award.

e. Stipulated Round

- 1) A stipulated round shall be nine holes.
- 2) At the discretion of the Tournament Committee, a championship may be contested over one, two, three or four rounds.

f. Tournament Venue Selection

- 1) The selection of the golf course shall be at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.
- 2) The committee should consider the degree of difficulty and its impact on the conduct of the tournament.

g. Golf Course Set Up

- 1) The golf course shall be set up at the discretion of the Tournament Committee. They are encouraged to provide appropriate teeing ground locations on each hole for the Special Olympics players using the following guidelines:
  - a) Avoid any shots that require the golfer to carry a distance of greater than 47 meters (50 yards) over hazards or other obstacles, anywhere on the golf course.

- b) Create holes that do not exceed following measurements:
  - Par 3: 140 meters (150 yards)
  - Par 4: 326 meters (350 yards)
  - Par 5: 419 meters (475 yards)
- 2) The Tournament Committee should define teeing grounds for female players.
- h. Registration and Divisioning
  - 1) Each player shall register by submitting a verified handicap or the most recent six scores over nine holes.
  - 2) The scores must be accompanied by the par for the course for each score.
  - 3) All scores must be verified by signature of the golf professional, Club Secretary or golf Association Director.
  - 4) If a classification round cannot be played, the Tournament Committee may use these scores to establish divisions for tournament play.
  - 5) In cases that allow for classification rounds, the Tournament Committee shall have the discretion of finalizing divisions based on information available to them.
- i. Equipment
  - 1) Each player is responsible for providing his/her own equipment, including:
    - a) A set of clubs (including at least one wood, one iron and one putter);
    - b) A golf bag;
    - c) Golf balls; and
    - d) A pitch mark repairer.
- j. The decision to offer the use of power golf carts will be left to the discretion of the specific Tournament Committee. At any international event, athletes will be expected to walk. A case may be considered for using a power cart during World Games competition upon presentation of a medical certificate to the World Games Committee.

### **3. Level 5 Golf—Individual Play**

- a. Purpose for this Level of Play
  - 1) This level is designed to meet the needs of those Special Olympics golfers who wish to play individually in a tournament where the stipulated round is 18 holes.

- 2) This level will challenge the golfer on a golf course with few, if any, modifications.
- 3) While the player should be capable of playing independently, it is strongly recommended that the player provide their own caddie for tournaments and competitions. The player and caddie must be able to walk during the entire nine-hole round. If the player cannot provide its own caddie, the following options could be made available for the athlete:
  - i. Play without a caddie
  - ii. If the Organizing Committee has a pool of volunteer caddies, use one of the volunteer caddies

**NOTE 1:** Caddies do not have the right to protest. Coaches can be caddies but if they are this would take away their right to protest.

**NOTE 2:** At National Games, the delegations coaching staff will consist of 1 Head-Coach per team (for Teams who have 2 or more players) and as many caddies as there are athletes. There will be no associate coach positions allocated to Teams. Teams who have only one athlete will consist of 1 Head-Coach that will also play the role of caddie. In this situation, the caddie would have the right to protest.

b. Form of Play

- 1) The form of play shall be stroke play competition.

c. Scoring

- 1) If a 10th stroke is played without holing the shot, the player shall record a score of 10x and proceed to the next hole.
- 2) Scoring (marking of cards)—Athletes should be taught to keep score and, whenever possible in competition, serve as a marker for a fellow competitor. The Tournament Committee may also appoint a volunteer or caddie to serve as a marker. The competitor will be responsible for verifying his/her own score and signing his/her scorecard.

d. Ties

- 1) First-place ties shall be decided in the following manner:
  - a) Of the players tied for first place, the player with the fewest number of 10x scores shall be declared the winner.
  - b) If a playoff is not feasible, the matching of scorecards is recommended. There are many options for matching cards, which can be found in the USGA and R & A Rules of Golf under Appendix I Part C: Conditions of Competition—How to Decide Ties. Please note that the tie-breaking method must be stated in the Conditions of Competition prior to the start of the tournament.

- 2) All other ties shall remain as ties, and all players should be presented with the same award.
- e. Stipulated Round
- 1) A stipulated round shall be 18 holes.
  - 2) At the discretion of the Tournament Committee, a championship may be contested over one, two, three or four rounds.
- f. Tournament Venue Selection
- 1) The selection of the golf course shall be at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.
  - 2) The committee should consider the degree of difficulty and its impact on the conduct of the tournament.
- g. Golf Course Set Up
- 1) The golf course shall be set up at the discretion of the Tournament Committee. They are encouraged to provide appropriate teeing ground locations, using existing tee locations where possible, to challenge the players on the course as it was designed to be played, with some consideration for the following:
    - a) Avoid carry of greater than 140 meters (150 yards) over hazards or other obstacles.
    - b) Holes can be played from existing tee locations that do not exceed following measurements:
      - Par 3: 165 meters (175 yards)
      - Par 4: 372 meters (400 yards)
      - Par 5: 490 meters (525 yards)
  - 2) The Tournament Committee should define teeing grounds for female players.
- h. Registration and Divisioning
- 1) Each player shall register by submitting a verified handicap or the most recent six scores over 18 holes.
  - 2) The scores must be accompanied by the par for the course for each score.
  - 3) All scores must be verified by signature of the golf professional, Club Secretary or Golf Association Director.
  - 4) If a classification round cannot be played, the Tournament Committee may use these scores to establish divisions for tournament play.

- 5) In cases that allow for classification rounds, the Tournament Committee shall have the discretion for finalizing divisions based on information available to them.
  - i. Equipment
    - 1) Each player is responsible for providing his/her own equipment, including:
      - a) A set of clubs (including at least one wood, one iron and one putter);
      - b) A golf bag;
      - c) Golf balls; and
      - d) A pitch mark repairer.
    - j. The decision to offer the use of power golf carts will be left to the discretion of the specific Tournament Committee. At any national or international event, athletes will be expected to walk. A case may be considered for using a power cart during National or World Games competition upon presentation of a medical certificate to the National/World Games Committee.



Addendum 1

Score sheet to be added later