

# APAC Hickory Golf Championship Guidelines

## The following Rules will be applicable at The 2026 Australian Hickory Open Championship

### Purpose

The purpose of these Guidelines is to:

- Promote enjoyment of Hickory Golf
- Improve pace of play
- Maintain fairness
- Encourage international participation
- Preserve the spirit and traditions of the game

Unless modified below, the Rules of Golf as approved by the R&A and USGA apply.

## 1. Lost Ball / Out of Bounds / Unplayable Ball

To maintain pace of play:

As per the Rules of Golf a **maximum three (3) minute search**, if the ball is not found, out of bounds or unplayable, the player may take relief for a one (1) stroke penalty.

The player may drop:

- If lost near where the ball was last seen; or
- If unplayable within 2 club lengths of its position, or
- If OOB on the line where the ball crossed out of bounds.

The dropped ball must not be nearer the hole.

Where a Dropping Zone is marked by the Committee, players may use it.

### No Provisional Balls

- Provisional balls are not played in APAC Hickory events.

## 2. Bunkers and Penalty Areas

**All penalty areas are treated as Red Penalty Areas.**

For a one-stroke penalty:

- Players may take relief outside bunkers or penalty areas.

- Relief must not be nearer the hole.

### **Grounding the Club**

- Grounding the club in Penalty areas is permitted as per the Rules of Golf.
- Grounding the club in bunkers is **NOT** permitted as per the Rules of Golf.

## **3. Dropping Procedure**

When taking relief, when taking a penalty:

- Drop within two club lengths;
- Use any club up except your Putter, (*This is R&A Rule*)
- The ball must come to rest within the relief area.

## **4. General Penalties and Play**

**All penalties under Local Rules are one stroke unless otherwise stated.**

Players must:

- Count every stroke;
- Hole out on every hole;
- Play the ball as it lies whenever possible.
- If in an unplayable (or difficult) position, relief may be taken as per Rule 1 above.

### **Not Permitted**

- Mulligans
- "Gimmies"
- Deliberately improving the lie
- Sharing clubs during play (except when replacing a broken club under Rule 5 below)

## **5. Clubs**

**Permitted clubs must be in line with the guidelines as published by the Tournament Committee**

### **Broken Clubs**

If a club breaks during normal play:

- A replacement club may be borrowed from a playing partner, or from any other person.

## 6. Golf Balls

Any currently conforming golf ball may be used.

### Recommendation

Softer compression golf balls are encouraged to:

- Protect wooden club heads;
- Reduce damage to antique equipment.

## 7. Handicaps

The handicap system used for each event will be determined by the Tournament Committee.

### Recognised Hickory Handicaps

No adjustment applies to:

- Players with recognised 'Hickory handicaps' through WHS, SOHG, BHGS, AGHS or equivalent organisations;
- Players whose normal playing handicap is derived entirely from Hickory play.

## Steel to Hickory Handicap Adjustment

Players (Amateurs and Professionals) using a standard WHS handicap will receive the following stroke adjustments:

### WHS Handicap Hickory Adjustment

Lower than 2.5	Scratch
2.4 to 3.4	+3 strokes
3.5 to 8.4	+4 strokes
8.5 to 14.4	+5 strokes
14.5 to 18.4	+6 strokes
18.5 and above	+7 strokes

### Maximum Handicap

- Men: Maximum Index 27
- Women: Maximum Index 36

The Tournament Committee may adjust handicaps if required for fairness.

## 8. Ties and Playoffs

Where a playoff is required:

- If practical, a sudden death play off..., if not:
- A chip off, or other method as determined by the Committee, with the closest to the pin will determine the winner unless otherwise advised by the Committee.

## **9. Spirit of the Game**

Hickory Golf is based on:

- Honesty
- Respect
- Camaraderie
- Sportsmanship
- Preservation of golfing traditions

Players are expected to:

- Play in good spirit;
- Assist with pace of play;
- Respect fellow competitors and officials.

## **10. Tournament Committee**

- Shall be appointed by the relevant tournament organiser.
- Names will be provided prior to the start of the event.
- All rulings and interpretations are at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.
- The decision of the Tournament Committee is final.

# Notes and Clarifications

## R&A and USGA Rules

The Rules of Golf apply except where modified by these Local Rules.

## Preferred Lie (Winter Rules)

- The Committee may implement this Rule in certain circumstances, such as poor fairway conditions.
- The ball should be marked and may be placed within 30cm (1foot) of its original position without penalty. (this distance may be varied by the Committee, depending on conditions)

## Pace of Play

Players should:

- Be ready to play;
- Limit ball searches to three minutes;
- Keep up with the group ahead.

## Equipment Compliance

- Equipment will be in line with the Rules published by the Tournament Committee
- The Tournament Committee reserves the right to inspect equipment at any time.

## Recommended Translation Guidance

For international events:

- Local language summaries are encouraged;
- Simple wording should be used in player briefings;
- Diagrams and examples are recommended for relief procedures.

***APAC Hickory Golf***

***Preserving the Traditions of the Game Across the Pacific Rim***