



NIMAGA NOTES – MARCH 2019

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hard to believe golf is just around the corner but it is and nothing says the start like the Chicago Golf Show and NIMAGA Dome Night on Monday, March 4 Addison Links and Tees.

I joined NIMAGA 15 years ago because I wanted to try my hand at competitive golf and the organization back then (and still today) was the lowest cost membership and entry fees. We have a very attractive NEW Member cost \$25 which includes the handicap service and the ability to enter NIMAGA tournaments. If you know of anyone who enjoys golf and wants to take the next step, please recommend NIMAGA.

Frank R. Fiarito – NIMAGA President

NIMAGA GOLF DOME NIGHT

Be sure to mark your calendars for our season opening event for 2019. NIMAGA will be hosting a dome night at Addison Links & Tees on Monday, March 4th starting at 6:30 pm. You will be able to hit balls and re-connect with your fellow NIMAGA members.

NIMAGA will provide pizza and hitting bays for everyone for the low-low price of \$15.00 We will also be raffling off entry into 2 NIMAGA tournaments.

So, make it a point of joining us and get ready for the upcoming 2019 season.

NEW HANDICAPPING SERVICE

The NIMAGA board has selected the **Golf Handicap Network** run by **Handicomp, Inc.** as our handicap service provider for 2019. Our previous handicap service provider, **Interstate Golf Handicaps**, has closed its doors and recommended our new provider.

It should be a seamless transition as all existing member data has already been imported into the new system and is ready to go.

When you join or rejoin **NIMAGA** you will receive your **Golf Handicap Network** login credentials in an email message.

The **Golf Handicap Network (GHN)** is a more robust application as you can readily see from the numerous screen shots at <http://www.nimaga.org/handicomp/>.

Also included is the **Golf Mobile Network (GMN)** that supports score entry and lookup from any **Apple** or **Android** mobile device.

Check out the new information on the NIMAGA website and if you have any questions please contact the **Handicaps Chairman** via email at handicaps@nimaga.org.

NIMAGA COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is getting more and more important these days and especially so with NIMAGA. We have been trending towards a greater use of emails and text to let our members know the latest news.

So, we want to notify everyone to insure that NIMAGA has your most recent email address and cell phone number in our files. Also, please be sure to check your email spam and junk folders to make sure that you allow emails from different NIMAGA members so that you don't miss a communication that might help you during an event or a later starting time due to bad weather.

PRIZES AND PRIZE ELIGIBILITY

Prizes in NIMAGA tournaments consist of prize certificates which are redeemable at many pro shops and sporting goods stores throughout the Chicago area. The prize certificates are distributed at or mailed out after each tournament. Generally, about the top 30% of the entrants in each division will receive prizes. The number and amount of prize certificates awarded in each tournament is determined by the number of entrants in the tournament. In addition to the prize certificates, the winners of each division receive a plaque commemorating his achievement.

The NIMAGA board strongly recommends that each NIMAGA member report all accumulated scores every two weeks excluding tournament scores which will be reported by the Tournament Director. NIMAGA Tournament Directors will report all regular and midweek scores to Handicoms.

In order to be fully eligible to win prizes in a NIMAGA tournament, a member must have recorded on the Handicoms handicap revision sheets, the following number of scores:

<u>Event/Date</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Min Scores</u>	<u>Entry date</u>	<u>GHN Rev Date</u>
Spring Thaw (4/5)	Apr	none	3/27	3/15
Apr Midweek (4/23)	Apr	none	4/14	4/15
Inaugural Par 3 (4/28)	Apr	none	4/20	4/15
May Jamboree (5/4)	May	none	4/24	4/15
May Midweek (5/14)	May	at least 1	5/6	5/1

NIMAGA Cup (5/19)	May	at least 2	5/10	5/15
Summer Classic (6/2)	June	at least 2	5/23	5/15
June Midweek (6/17)	June	at least 3	6/8	6/1
Senior Open (6/27)	June	at least 4	6/18	6/15
July Midweek (7/9)	July	at least 5	7/1	7/1
NIMAGA Club Chp (7/20-21)	July	at least 6	7/10	7/15
August Classic (8/4)	Aug	at least 6	7/26	7/15
August Midweek (8/19)	Aug	at least 7	8/10	8/1
Pats Day Classic (9/7)	Sept	at least 9	8/29	9/1
NIMAGA Plyr Chp (9/14-15)	Sept	at least 9	9/1	9/1
2 Man Better Ball (10/6)	Oct	at least 10	9/27	10/1

Any member who does not fulfill the foregoing requirements for a tournament, will be eligible in that tournament to win no more than the \$15 minimum prize.

NEW MEMBERS – a new member is not eligible to win more than a \$15 prize in any NIMAGA tournament until his handicap being used for the tournament reflects at least five scores made as a member during the current year and has completed a NIMAGA tournament for his NIMAGA handicap.

Please check the NIMAGA website for all of the details.

C&G MATCH PLAY TOURNAMENT

Entries are now being accepted for the **2019 C&GMPT**. You can find information (rules and entry forms) on the NIMAGA website. We will also have entry forms available at the NIMAGA Dome Night.

I'm sure you have heard about this event that continues throughout the calendar year (for those lucky enough to advance). We are in our 12th year.

Please be aware of the 2 significant rule changes that will be implemented in 2019:

- 1) In order to establish C&GMPT eligibility, a participant must have done BOTH of the following:
 - Complete 1 NIMAGA event AND post 2 scores to the IGH Handicapping service by the end of the first round of the C&GMPT
 - If this requirement is not met, the player will be deemed ineligible for the C&GMPT, the first round match will be a forfeit and the entry fee will NOT be reimbursed.
- 2) C&GMPT matches will NOT be allowed during regular NIMAGA stroke play events.
 - We do not want to negatively impact pace of play during stroke play events

We hope that you consider entering this event.

RULE CHANGES FOR 2019

The rules are changing for 2019 and the NIMAGA Board is actively addressing how to best communicate the rules changes to the membership. The Board will be discussing this in future meetings and we will summarize and highlight the rule changes on the website, NIMAGA Notes and through the use of 2019 rule change cheat sheets (we are exploring this one). So, for now, check out a summary of the rule changes below (from GolfWorld Magazine) and keep your eye open for more on this topic from the NIMAGA Board.

The new, modernized Rules of Golf have been [finalized and released](#) by the USGA and R&A, and will go into effect at the beginning of 2019. Though the general premise for this update was to clarify the sport's notorious ambiguity around its guidelines, let's be honest: rules language can still be hard to process. Luckily for you, we have everything you need to know about the new Rules of Golf right here. Please check out the NIMAGA website for more details.

The number of rules has considerably shrunk

In order to streamline and simplify the sport's regulations, there are now 24 rules, down from 34.

There were tweaks from the initial modernized proposal that was released in 2017

Four, to be exact. After the first draft was submitted to the public, the governing bodies took feedback from the golf community. The alterations are a response to what they heard.

One change is designed specifically for the recreational golfer

Regarding out of bounds or a lost ball. Instead of stroke and distance, a new local rule allows the option of dropping a ball in the vicinity of where the original was lost or out of bounds, including the nearest fairway area, with a two-stroke penalty. Basically, if you blow your first drive into the woods, you no longer have to hit your third from the tee box. Instead, you can play your *fourth* from the fairway—basically, the best case scenario (save for a hole-in-three) with your third shot. This was done to help pace of pace.

This rule will not be in play at the professional level, or other elite competitions.

Another tweak: The height of your drop

Although the initial proposal had a player taking a drop from any length above two inches from the ground, the new rule stipulates drop be taken from knee height, still a significant change from the current shoulder level.

There's also no longer a penalty for a double-chip

Somewhere, T.C. Chen is smiling. Golfers will now just count the hit as one stroke.

Club-length, not inches, will be the measurement for relief

One of the March 2017 proposals called for either a 20-inch or 80-inch standard, but golfers responded by saying "How are we going to actually measure that?" The governing bodies agreed, going back to club lengths instead.

Aside from the tweaks, other proposals in the first draft from March 2017 will be implemented

These touch on six main areas: ball-moved penalties, relaxed putting-green rules, relaxed rules for water hazards, pace of play, player integrity and rules in the bunker.

The big takeaways from this are:

No more penalty for accidentally moving a ball on the green

You are still penalized, however, if it is "virtually certain" you caused it to move on purpose.

You can putt with the flagstick in

Not only has the penalty for putting to an unattended flag been eliminated, you can go at it without having it removed at all.

You can repair all the damn spike marks your heart desires

As well as repair animal or other damage on the green.

Another penalty removed: touching the line of the putt

However, caddies are not allowed to stand behind or serve as an extension of the line.

You can now move impediments in bunkers and water hazards

There's also no penalty for touching the ground or water in a penalty area. In the sand, however, you cannot ground the club right *next* to the ball.

However, if you're "generally" touching the sand with the club, that's OK.

An extra relief option has been added for an unplayable ball in a bunker

Yep, more good news for those that struggle in the sand. You can play the ball to be outside the sand with a two-stroke penalty.

The Rules also give your integrity some latitude

A player is given "reasonable judgement" when estimating or measuring a spot, point, line, area or distance. Your placement will be upheld, even if video evidence later shows it wasn't in the exact right spot.

You also are no longer required to announce when you are lifting a ball to identify or see if it's damaged

The new Rules are really trusting you on this, buddy. Don't blow their faith in you.

You're no longer allowed five minutes to look for a lost ball

Your search party now has three minutes. Let's be honest, you weren't going to find it in five, anyway.

And a player can take no more than 40 seconds to play a stroke

A change made to help speed of pace of play, although admittedly this one could be a tad hard to enforce at the amateur ranks.

LET'S SPEED IT UP

A major topic from the Annual Members Meeting was maintaining a good pace of play throughout the round. Everyone needs to pick-it-up to reduce the overall time that we are spending on the course. We don't want to be those guys who need 5 ½ hours to finish. Here is a set of tips that we all need to employ to get done faster. There will be more of these communicated throughout the 2019 season.

PACE OF PLAY TIPS

- Always keep up with the group ahead of you.
- Turn off those cell phones.
- Without interfering with the others in your group, do as much of your preparation as possible before it is your turn to play.
- Be ready to play when it is your turn. Limit practice swings. From the time you select your club until you actually hit your shot, you should take no more than 20 seconds.
- Shorten that pre-shot routine.
- If you aren't ready to play when it is your turn, encourage one of your fellow players to play.
- Limit your time searching for lost balls. The rules allow you 3 minutes in 2019.
- Carry a spare ball(s) in your pocket so that you do not have to go back to your bag when you need to hit a provisional ball.
- Take more than one club to your next shot if you are going to leave your bag.
- When in doubt, hit a provisional ball. Eliminate the need to go back to where you hit your last shot.

- If your next shot is with your pitching wedge or sand wedge, automatically take your putter with you.
- Leave golf carts at a point beside the green that is in route to the next tee (usually behind the green).
- On the green, begin lining up your putt and reading the break as soon as you reach the green. When it's your turn to putt, be prepared to step right up and take the stroke.
- Don't bother marking lag putts - go ahead and putt out if it's short enough.
- If you are the first in the cup, pick up the flagstick so that you can replace it after the last person has puttied out.
- All players in the group should be aware of clubs that are left around the green. Be sure to alert your foursome to pick up clubs.
- Mark your scorecard at the beginning of the next hole, not on the green.
- Never hold up play because you're in the middle of a conversation. Put the conversation on hold, take your stroke then, continue the conversation.
- Watch your playing partner's ball so that you can help him find it, in case he didn't see it during the hit.
- Wave up groups on par 3s when appropriate.
- If you are riding in a cart, hold onto the club and return to your seat in the cart. Then, put that club back when they go to pull the club(s) for their next shot. It even works when leaving a green - take the putter with you and put it away on the next tee.

CALL TO ALL MEMBERS

Just because the 2018 NIMAGA season is over, that is no reason to stop recruiting your family and friends to join this organization. We all need to be advocates for NIMAGA and promote it whenever possible. NIMAGA is an organization run by volunteers. We all have a stake in keeping NIMAGA alive and flourishing. If you know someone who may be interested in tournament golf, let them know about your experience in NIMAGA. The more members we have, the more beneficial it is to everyone.

2019 SCHEDULE

2019 TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE			
Date	Day	Tournament Name	Golf Course
Apr. 6	Sat.	Spring Thaw	Cog Hill #1 (Trevino)
			Cog Hill #2 (Palmer)
			Cog Hill #3 (Player)
Apr. 23	Tue.	April Midweek	Pine Meadow
Apr. 28	Sun.	Inaugural Par 3 Event	Lake Park
May 4	Sat.	May Jamboree	Randall Oaks (Palmer & Trevino)
			Whisper Creek (Player)
May 14	Tue.	May Midweek	Village Links of Glen Ellyn
May 19	Sun.	NIMAGA Cup (Qualify)	Bonnie Brook
June 2	Sun.	Summer Classic	Springbrook (Palmer & Player)
			Links of Carillon (Trevino)
June 17	Mon.	June Midweek	Bowes Creek
June 27	Thu.	Senior Open (Age 50+)	St. Andrews #1
July 9	Tue.	July Midweek	Steeple Chase
Jul. 20	Sat.	NIMAGA Club Championship	Bartlett Hills (Low)

			Palatine Hills (High)
Jul. 21	Sun.		Sanctuary (Low)
			Bartlett Hills (High)
Aug. 4	Sun.	August Classic	Heritage Bluffs
Aug. 19	Mon.	August Midweek	Turnberry
Sep. 7	Sat.	Patriots Day Classic	Whisper Creek (Palmer & Trevino)
			Phillips Park (Player)
Sep. 14	Sat.	NIMAGA Players Championship (Qualify)	Pinecrest
Sep. 15	Sun.		
Sep. 28	Sat.	Milwaukee Challenge (Limited)	Bristol Oaks GC
Oct. 6	Sun.	Two-Man Better Ball	Broken Arrow (High)
			Prairie Landing (Low)