



## NIMAGA NOTES MARCH 2026

### NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome back NIMAGA members to the 2026 golf season! I hope you enjoyed your holidays and winter offseason. Hopefully you were able to get some swings in, whether that was in warmer weather elsewhere or at an indoor facility. If not, get ready to knock off that rust at our Spring Thaw event at Cog Hill, which is coming up very fast. Cog Hill is the start of a great lineup of courses this year, which includes 2 private courses. The Course Selection Committee did a great job giving us a variety of great courses to play this year. The only event which does not have a course yet is the NPC. Stan and Jim are hard at work now trying to find another great venue to host our season ending tournament.

As an organization, we have steadily increased our numbers over the last few years. We have had some of the largest turnouts to tournaments since I have been a member. Thanks to all of you who not only spread the word about NIMAGA to other golfers, but thanks for also making the new members feel welcome. Let's keep up the hospitality with all the brand-new faces we see this year. Please introduce yourself to new members and help guys who may like they are a bit lost in the shuffle. Answer any questions the new members might have. The Board does our best to give them an introduction to NIMAGA in our correspondence, but it's much better to come from a member in person. I think we may see our numbers get up to 200 this year. That won't happen though if we don't keep spreading the word and doing our part. Keep up the good work!

As many of you may know, Ray Reimer has decided to step down off the board. He has contributed a great deal of time and effort to help keep NIMAGA, in my opinion, the best amateur golf tournament organization in the Chicago Area. That is all despite the fact he moved to St. Louis a few years back. He was integral in many things but helping us implement Golf Genius to modernize our organization and how our golf tournaments are run, was one of the most challenging and best things he accomplished. Ray will still be a member this year and continues to help us when needed. He is helping his replacement; Tom Govern get up to speed in all things Golf Genius related, as well as the other duties Tom took over. If you see Ray this year, pat him on the back and say thanks. I'm sure he wouldn't mind if someone bought him a Tito's and Lemonade or two. This is also Tom's first time taking on NIMAGA Notes. He is getting up to speed in his new role a lot faster than I expected, and I appreciate him taking on this role. If you have any suggestions for what you would like in future NIMAGA Notes, let Tom know. As always, you can also email [admin@nimaga.org](mailto:admin@nimaga.org) with suggestions or questions. Don't

forget though, we do have an FAQ section on the NIMAGA website for general questions on anything NIMAGA related.

I hope to see most of you on April 4th at the Spring Thaw. If you play, please stop into the locker room after your round and say hi to me and all the fellow NIMAGA members you haven't seen since last year. Also, if you qualified for the NPC last year, but did not play in it and pick up your glass, I will have them at Cog Hill. Please stop by and get it. I can't promise how long I will hold onto them. If you won't be there and didn't get one, please let me know and I will set one aside for you.

Good luck to all in the 2026 golf season, and all your golf related ambitions this year. Whether it's hoping to win your first tournament, record your lowest score, or knocking some strokes off your index, I wish you all the best. Please read on in the NIMAGA Notes to find out what's in store for this year.

Tom O'Brien

President

## **2026 SCHEDULE**

The 2026 schedule is listed below and posted on the website. A few details remain to be finalized. You can register for all tournaments that are complete on the website.

There are 2 private clubs included this season-- Rolling Green CC on May 18 and Aurora CC on June 29! These tend to fill up earlier than others so sign up soon.

Date	Event	Course
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Sat, Apr. 4	Spring Thaw	Cog Hill
Thu, Apr. 23	April Midweek	Blackberry Oaks
Sat, May 9	May Jamboree	Lake Bluff
Mon, May 18	May Midweek	Rolling Green
Mon, June 8	Senior Open	Oak Grove
Sun, June 14	Summer Classic	Naperbrook
Mon, June 29	June Midweek	Aurora CC
Tue, July 7	Super Senior (65+)	Tanna Farms
Sat, July 11	Freedom Open	Timber Point
Wed, July 22	July Midweek	Prairie Landing

Wed, July 29	NIMAGA Cup	Thunderhawk
Sat, Aug. 8	Club Championship D1	St. Andrews
Sun, Aug. 9	Club Championship D2	St. Andrews
Thu, Aug. 20	August Midweek	Fox Lake CC
Wed, Sep. 2	September Midweek	Highlands of Elgin
Sun, Sep. 13	Patriot Day Classic	Sanctuary
Sat, Sep. 19	Milwaukee Challenge	Fox Lake CC
Sun, Sep. 27	Two-Man Best Ball	Springbrook
Sat, Oct. 3	NPC Day 1	TBD
Sun, Oct. 4	NPC Day 2	TBD

If you have not registered for the season yet you can still do so.

### **Regular Membership - \$90**

- Will start on Monday, March 16 through Tue., Sept 1.
- This membership option will provide CDGA handicap service.

### **Package Membership - \$635**

- Will be available on Thur. Feb 26 through Wed. Mar 25.
- This membership option will provide CDGA handicap service.
- Paid entry fees into our 7 regular tournaments. This amounts to \$129 savings. See the link to this membership program. Go to the NIMAGA website and click on the orange Golf Genius banner page to get registered.

### **WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

NIMAGA is pleased to announce our 2 newest directors who were recently voted on to the Board. Please join us in welcoming both Mick Fleming and Dan Montgomery. They are in the process of getting up to speed in the NIMAGA organization with plans to hit the ground running in 2026.

Welcome aboard gentlemen!

### **NOT ALL PRICE INCREASES ARE BAD...**

We all know how popular golf has become in recent years. This has led to all things golf becoming more expensive. Most notably through more difficult access and fee increases. One increase this season is getting passed back to you in the form of prize certificates/credits. There was a 9% increase to the prize fund that is 100% being passed on to the winners this season. This will take place in the form of more spots paid out. More details coming as it all gets worked out.

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS AND RETURNING MEMBERS**

New members receive a letter from the Board, *WHAT TO EXPECT ON THE DAY OF THE TOURNAMENT*

This letter includes information to help new members become more comfortable when they arrive for the first time at their first tournament. Each month we will post parts of this letter as a reminder for all players. This month we reprint the first 3 sections.

- Tee Times
- Skins
- Closest to the Pin

#### TEE TIMES

- The day following the Registration Closing Date, expect to receive an email asking you to Choose Your Tees. You can only win gross if you play from the longest tee option for your division. If at least 5 or more players do not wish to play from the longest tee option, it will be eliminated, and everyone will play from the shorter tees. If you do not respond to the email, you will be assigned the shortest tee option.
- All NIMAGA Members are required to play in their respective divisions. Pairing and starting times will be assigned on a random basis. Consideration of requested playing partner will be given but there will be no guarantee. Every effort will be made to place those traveling together for tournaments in close groups. Special requests (early/late time, or to be paired close to someone) need to be made when you register, not when the tee sheet is done. Requests may be honored but aren't guaranteed.
- The tee sheet is posted 4-5 days before the tournament on the NIMAGA homepage and emailed to you. There are usually several revisions due to WD's, course issues, weather, etc. Please check the night before / morning of the tournament to confirm your time.
- If an emergency arises and you will be late or missing your time, please send an email to [admin@nimaga.org](mailto:admin@nimaga.org) AND call or text one of the tournament directors (TDs) listed on the tee sheet. Preferably a TD playing in your division.
- If you cancel/withdraw prior to the closing date of the tournament you will receive a full refund. If paid by credit card, a refund will be issued to the credit card. If payment was mailed, you will have a credit that can be applied to a future tournament.
- If you cancel/withdraw once the tee sheet has been published, you will receive a partial refund less prize and overhead. If paid by credit card, partial refund will be issued to the credit card. If payment was mailed; you will have a partial credit that can be applied to a future tournament.
- Try to show up at least 30 minutes before your time.
- Check into the pro shop & pay for a cart if you want one. They aren't always included in the cost.
- The tournament registration page shows whether a cart is included or not.

It is your job to be on the tee before your tee time. If you are late, you can be penalized.

Generally, there is nobody announcing or calling you to the tee box, so be there by your time.

#### SKINS

- There is an optional \$10 Skins game that you can enter.
- Each division's Skins games are separate.
- Skins are open to members not guests.
- The preferred method of entry into Skins is through Venmo prior to tournament day. You can pay cash on the day of the tournament, but Venmo is preferred. A different TD will be collecting Skins for each division. His Venmo account will be on the tee sheet under the times. There will also be

a Skins envelope that will be passed between TD's on the day of collecting cash entries.

- If you don't have Venmo, download it from your app store or enroll here:  
<https://venmo.com/signup/>
- The amount the winners receive depends on how many enter and how many win.

#### CLOSEST TO THE PIN

- There is a free Closest to the Pin contest at every tournament. Guests are not eligible.
- Each division has a separate contest. There may be one or multiple contest holes.
- The rules sheet will have listed which par 3's each division is using for Closest to The Pin.
- The winners get a \$20 PGA Superstore gift card.

#### HOLE-IN-ONE POT

- The NIMAGA Hole-In-One Pot is a cash pot that is collected from participating NIMAGA members (\$1 per event) at each NIMAGA sanctioned event. Participation is optional.
- A member must pay \$1 to the Hole-In-One Pot prior to teeing off on their first hole of the event in order to win a portion of the pot if he gets a hole-in-one at that event.
- Guests are excluded from the Hole-In-One Pot.
- Click on [https://nimaga.org/pdfs/NIMAGA\\_HoleInOne\\_RULES-2022\\_R3.pdf](https://nimaga.org/pdfs/NIMAGA_HoleInOne_RULES-2022_R3.pdf)

for more details and how to pay.

#### **ADVICE FROM LONG TIME MEMBERS**

Listed below is advice from several long-time members of Nimaga. We hope you find these entertaining and helpful:

- Contribute to the skins and hole-in-one pot (Members)...you never know when one might win and get to buy drinks for all your new friends...stick around after playing to meet some great guys...
- Always play "Ready Golf", which does not mean rushing, but to always be ready to play when it is your turn. Most NIMAGA tournaments are Medal Play and there is no penalty for not playing "honors" on the tee box. If you're on the tee and ready to tee off before everyone else, do it. (The exception is when playing in a Match Play tournament when playing "honors" is mandatory.
- For those that aren't used to playing strictly by the rules of golf, there is a self-paced online class from the USGA that covers the basics <https://rules.usga.org/courses/rules-101/> . It is a great resource and reference when you get into those tricky situations on the course and need to understand what options are available to you.
- Communication is a key part of ensuring that you and your group are set up for a great round. Small conversations before you tee off such as who is walking or riding, what ball everyone is playing or is their ball marked, determine if there is someone who wants to enter the scores into the golf genius app, or ask your riding partner if they have any on course preferences such as how far to park the cart from their ball can go a long way in making a round more smooth for everyone.

- You should keep the hole-by-hole scores for all your playing partners. That helps if there are issues when recording official scores after the round.
- Remember that it is each player's responsibility to protect the field by making sure your playing partners are abiding by the rules. There are ways to do this without getting "nasty" about some infraction you've noticed.
- See how many new friends you can make.
- Know the rules we play by and know your options.
- Enjoy it.
- Be early, if possible, to warm up and get your feet wet with the environment.
- Putt Out Always and get in a habit of this even with your buddies.
- In the end, it's just golf and you know this game so be easy on yourself.
- For me, it was always overcoming the whole "tournament" concept, playing your game and having fun.
- Putting too much pressure on oneself can lead to poor play, but more importantly lead to not having fun.
- Playing in Nimaga has made me a better putter now that I actually have to putt everything out.
- While staying relaxed, enjoying yourself is easier said than done, I believe that we, as the Board and Directors, need to reiterate to our membership that the enjoyment of the game should be for all and not just those at the top of the leaderboard.
- Getting to know the new members (and old ones for that matter) should be part of the experience along with golf. Positive feedback is sometimes the hardest to give, but it is the most reassuring to receive.
- If you are in doubt about a rule, ask your playing partners. If there is no consensus or you don't feel comfortable, play two balls, record both scores and talk to the directors after the round.
- Remember to hole all putts. I've seen that miscue too many times. No gimmies.
- I have new golf playing partners on the weekends. I now go on golf trips with guys I met in NIMAGA.

### **DO YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?**

The Board of Directors of Nimaga strives to help keep everyone informed and comfortable while playing Nimaga events. Here is the link to Nimaga [FAQ](#). If you have further questions, we are happy to help. Email [Admin@nimaga.org](mailto:Admin@nimaga.org). We will do our best to get you the answers you need.

### **RULES SECTION**

**NIMAGA Notes will be running a continuing column explaining various Rules situations. Nimaga member Robert Yedinak is the contributing author of this section.**

For the beginning of the season, we thought it would be a good time to review the rules regarding posting scores and reminding everyone that you must post all your valid, adjusted scores throughout the season to ensure fair competition for all NIMAGA members. Remember, NIMAGA will post all tournament round scores. You do not need to post those scores yourself.

Under the World Handicap System (WHS), golfers should post scores, including 9-hole rounds, on the same day of play to ensure an updated Handicap Index, which refreshes nightly. Maximum hole scores are limited to Net Double Bogey, and scores must be posted for all acceptable rounds.

To post scores, golfers typically use the CDGA Mobile App, the GHIN Mobile App, the CDGA website or their national golf associations website (e.g., USGA.org) immediately after their round. Posting on the day of play is critical because your Handicap Index updates daily and contributes to the Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC)

#### Key Score Posting Rules

- **When to Post:** Scores should be posted the same day to allow for Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) adjustments.
- **Maximum Score:** The maximum score on any hole is Net Double Bogey (par + 2 strokes + handicap strokes received). Posting hole-by-hole in an app or website handles this calculation automatically.
- **Holes Required:**
  - **9 Holes:** You must play at least 9 holes for a score to be acceptable. Each 9-hole score now immediately produces an 18-hole Score Differential using an expected score for the remaining holes.
- **10–17 Holes:** If you play more than 9 but fewer than 18 holes (due to darkness or weather, etc.), you must post hole-by-hole for the holes played. The system will add your “expected score” for the unplayed holes to create an 18-hole differential.
- **Incomplete Holes:** If you pick up before holing out (e.g., in match play), record your “likely score” provided it does not exceed your Net Double Bogey limit.
- **Acceptable Rounds:** Scores must be from rounds played under the Rules of Golf.
  - **Exceptions:** Scores made with “preferred lies or “are generally acceptable” but rounds played alone are not.
- **Penalty Score:** Failure to post may result in a penalty score equal to the lowest handicap differential in the player’s record.

#### How to Post

1. Select Course and Tees: Ensure you choose the correct set of tees to account for the specific Course and Slope Ratings.
2. Enter Scores: Choose between Hole-by-Hole (recommended for automatic Net Double Bogey adjustment.) or Total Adjusted Gross Score.
3. Identify Score Type: Mark the round as Home, Away, or Competition (C) as designated by the committee.

For new golfers, you can establish an initial Handicap Index after posting scores from a total of 54 holes (any combination of 9 and 18-hole rounds).

Net Double Bogey is the maximum hole score for handicap purposes, calculated as: Par + 2 strokes + handicap strokes received on that hole. It prevents a single poor hole from unfairly impacting your handicap index.

#### How to Calculate Net Double Bogey

1. Determine Your Course Handicap: Use your Handicap Index and the course rating/slope to find your total strokes.
2. Identify Strokes Received: Determine if you get 0, 1, 2, or more strokes on the specific hole based on the hole's handicap ranking (1-18) on the scorecard.
3. Apply Formula:
  - a. Net Double Bogey = Par + 2 + (Strokes Received).
  - b. Example (Par 5): No strokes received = 7 (5 + 2 + 0).
  - c. Example (Par 4): Two strokes received = 8 (4 + 2 + 2).

#### Key Takeaways

- Maximum Score: Once you reach this number, pick up your ball to maintain pace of play. The exception is tournament rounds, where you must hole out.
- Automatic Calculation: If you enter scores hole-by-hole into a handicap app, it calculates this automatically.
- New Players: If you have not established a handicap, the maximum score is par + 5.

#### Printing Note:

When printing this document, please ensure that your printer settings are configured to print on only one side of each page (single-sided printing). Do not print on both sides.

## A COUPLE OF BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

Like many of you I have collected a fair-sized golf library. Some have not made that much difference in my game, and few are considered my favorites for various reasons. My all-time favorites have nothing to do with the golf swing. These books are more about how to get yourself around the course as easily as possible. There are 2 books I want to mention and recommend here.

If you have been around Nimaga for a while you may know of Nimaga's own Russ Riendeau and his book *The Elephant in the Fairway - How to Lower Your Scores Before You Tee Off & Without Making a Single Swing Change*. You have probably seen previous posts in Nimaga Notes about this book. In case you want to look more into it, here is an [Amazon link](#).

The second book is called *The Tournament Golfer's Playbook- Change your Mind, Change your Life: The Path of a Tournament Golfer*. By Mike Booker

This book has quickly become one of my absolute favorites. Mike Booker was a PGA Tour Player in the late 70's and early 80's. He then became a successful businessman and one of the best all time amateur golfers in Texas.

Mike Booker asks you to decide if you are Tournament Golfer or just a Golfer Who Plays Tournaments. We all want to be tournament golfers or be golfers that win more tournaments. He offers many traits and theories that can help you make that change to a tournament golfer. It doesn't happen overnight, but Mike offers many ways to get you there.

Here is another [Amazon Link](#) to this book.

I don't get anything from referring to you these links. I enjoy sharing good ideas with other golfers. But if you end up liking these books, you can always buy me a drink.

*Tom Govern – Nimaga Board Secretary*

## TOURNAMENT RESULTS

The annual Sim Open is a great early season warm-up and time to reconnect with many Nimaga Members. Consider this next season!

Results - Sim Open

February 12, 2026

### LOW DIVISION

1st Gross Jim Dubay \$70.00

1st Net Michael Choi \$70.00

2nd Net John Francel \$50.00

### HIGH DIVISION

1st Gross Tim Szczesny \$70.00

1st Net Ken Koranda \$70.00

2nd Net Jeff Toth \$50.00

3rd Net

Dennis Joplin

\$30.00

3rd Net

Robert Allen

\$30.00