

**EDGA COVID-19  
PLAYER INFORMATION PACKET**

**MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP**



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## Conducting this Competition

The keys to safely conducting a golf competition are to maintain appropriate social distancing and providing a “touchless” golf experience before, during and immediately after the tournament. These tournament guidelines follow closely the existing guidelines published by the United States Golf Association and are in alignment with those published for recreational golf. Until such time that restrictions on social gatherings are modified, certain elements of any competition, such as award ceremonies, scoreboard areas, group meals, social gatherings, and shotgun starts are prohibited.

The objective of the EDGA is to effectively manage the movement of our players to maintain all social distancing space between them, volunteers and staff needed to conduct the competition. The outline below is an extensive, yet not exhaustive, guide of the protocols to be taken in order to conduct a tournament.

### Arrival

1. The general policy is that players are NOT allowed to arrive at the golf course more than 60 minutes prior to their starting time. If a player arrives to the facility prior to this time, he or she must stay in the immediate vicinity of one’s vehicle. The player may use this time to change shoes, stretch, get their equipment ready and otherwise prepare for the tournament round.

### Warm Up/Practice Facilities

1. We are restricting the number of competitors on the practice tee and putting green at any one time.

Players will be assigned a window to access to the practice facilities on a limited time, priority basis that commences 10 minutes after their assigned arrival time and ends 10 minutes before their starting tee time. The intent of the policy is to provide a flow through the practice tee, short game area, and putting green. Every player should have a fair and equitable opportunity to warm up prior to play. Please be respectful of fellow players when preparing to play.

- a. Players are first allowed on practice areas within 50 minutes of their tee time. The suggested flow should begin with the practice tee for 20 minutes, then to the short game area and/or putting green for the remainder of time before reporting to the tee. This will retain social distancing and prioritize access to each area.
- b. The number of players allowed on the putting green or in short game area will be restricted to the number of holes that have been cut in the greens.
- c. Social distancing protocols must be followed in designated practice areas.
- d. Practice at the host facility after a player’s round is complete is prohibited.

### Golf Carts

1. Carts are mandatory for this competition and the current mandate is for one player per cart, unless two players live in the same household, or if the player has a caddie.

### Starting Format

1. All events will be Tee Time starts to reduce the number of people congregating in one area to comply with social distancing protocols.

## Online Access

1. Tee times and pairings will be available online, the day before each round of the event. Additionally, the match play tee times will be posted on the scoreboard.

## Starting Tees

1. Players should check in at their starting tee as soon as practical (generally immediately after the group in front of them has left the teeing area).

## Starting Play

1. Starting tee times will be used, as "Shotgun" starts are prohibited.
2. The number of players at the starting hole is restricted to the players who are scheduled to tee off at that time and starting location (Rules officials, if necessary are permitted be at a tee and will follow Social Distancing guidelines).
3. All normally distributed paperwork will be provided to each player in their player package. This package will include the scorecard the player is marking for, a rules sheet, and a pencil. Players will receive this package with their cart.
4. Other equipment that is normally provided for players on the first tee, such as tees, pencils, marking pens, etc. will be eliminated.
5. All scoring will be done as normal, a marker will record scores for a fellow competitor, except that players will not exchange cards or sign cards at the end of the round. Players will verbally attest to their score and it will be posted.

## Playing the Competition Round

1. Social Distancing
  - a. Regardless of a player's position on the golf course, a player and his caddie, if applicable, must maintain six (6) feet of distance between themselves and other players.
  - b. This includes when preparing for a shot, walking down the fairway/rough, on the teeing ground, on the putting green, and all other locations.
2. Holing Out
  - a. To allow players to remove the ball without touching the hole, a hole insert will be used.
3. Flagsticks
  - a. Players must NOT deliberately touch the flagstick under any circumstance. Attending of the flagstick as outlined in the Rules of Golf is *suspended* until further notice.
  - b. Flagsticks are required to be left in hole. A "hole liner" that allows the ball to fall below the surface of the putting green but will limit the vertical drop (compared to traditional liners will be used. The hole liner used will allow the player to remove the ball with minimal, if any, touching of the hole).
4. All bunker rakes will be removed from bunkers and will be included with the motorized golf cart.
5. Caddies are permitted and it is suggested that they forecaddie whenever possible. All rules and guidelines that apply to the player also apply to the player's caddie.
6. Spectators are prohibited. An exception may be made for the finals.
7. Officials and Volunteers will be required to wear PPE in circumstances where following social distancing practices is challenging.
8. Competitors take note of the phone number for the pro shop if they need to reach out for assistance while on the course. That number is 814.838.9942

## Weather Delays

1. In the event of any weather delay, players should not utilize or congregate in on course shelters unless it is the only option for immediate shelter from dangerous weather. All players, and their caddies if applicable, should return to the clubhouse and then to their vehicle.
2. Weather notifications:
  - a. In the event of a dangerous weather situation, a single continuous horn blast will be used to indicate a discontinuance of play. All players must park their cart at the designated cart staging area or near their vehicle and proceed directly to their vehicles. Players should mark the position of their ball prominently, such as with two or three tees.
  - b. In the event of a suspension of play three consecutive horn blasts will be used to indicate a stoppage of play. Players may complete a hole started but may not start a new hole. All players must then park their cart at the designated cart staging area or near their vehicle and proceed directly to their vehicles. Players should mark the position of their ball prominently, such as with two or three tees.
  - c. Two short horn blasts will signal the resumption of play. Communication regarding resumption of play will also be announced from the pro shop area.

## Conclusion of the Round

1. Immediately upon completing the round scores must be returned. ONE group will be allowed to enter the "scoring area" at a time. Players will maintain 6 feet of distance between them.
2. Each player will review his/her scores with the marker and then players/markers will verbally attest to the score and "submit" them to tournament staff, all under proper social distancing protocols. All scoring will be recorded on the scoreboard. Players will not exchange cards or sign cards at the end of the round.
  - a. After verbally verifying one's scores and leaving the scoring area, a player's scorecard is deemed returned
3. All results will be available online.
4. Once players leave the scoring area, they must return to their car and exit the property upon completion of the round and/or within a reasonable amount of time..
5. If a playoffs is necessary it will be conducted on the course using proper social distancing protocols at 4:00pm. If there is a weather delay during the qualifying round this time may be changed. Players concerned about a playoff should check with the pro shop before they leave the course or call the pro shop to find out when the playoff is being held and what scores are playing off.
6. Awards ceremonies, such as a trophy presentations will be conducted using proper social distance, if possible.
7. Gift certificates will be available to the player in the pro shop. Only those who qualify and win at least one match will qualify for a prize.

## Other Items

1. Food & beverage is available at the host facility, the players may pick up "to go" items from clubhouse.
2. Snacks will NOT be provided by the EDGA. However, the EDGA will encourage the host facility to have easy access to snacks, bottled water and other beverages at the clubhouse, at the turn.
3. Host facilities will be asked to remove all on-course coolers. The EDGA will NOT provide water bottles to players. Golfers should bring an adequate supply of water for the round with them.

4. If the facility has not removed ball washers and benches from the golf course, players will be asked to refrain from using these items.

### EDGA COVID-19 Procedure & Policy

The guidelines that follow are being adopted by the Erie District Golf Association. These guidelines are based on recommendations of WHO, CDC, and the Directive Health Measures from local, state, and federal governments. A player or his or her caddie who blatantly disregards these guidelines may be subject to disqualification from the tournament and removal from the grounds of the host facility. These guidelines are subject to change pursuant to advisories from the CDC and/or executive orders from the Governor's Office of Pennsylvania.

1. DO NOT play if you feel sick or have been in contact with someone who has tested Positive for COVID-19 in the last two weeks.
2. Stay a minimum of 6 feet away from all others at all times.
3. DO NOT touch or handle any tournament supplies or equipment that is not yours.

### EDGA Code of Conduct Policy

The EDGA hereby establishes this Code of Conduct to complement Rule 1.2 in the Rules of Golf and the Terms of the Competition.

1. Cell Phones - The use of cell phones, smart phones and pagers during competitions is permitted so long as it is within the confines of Rule 4.3
2. Willful damage of the golf course or golf course property
3. Club throwing or unnecessary club tossing
4. Offensive or unbecoming language
5. Public criticism of golf course or verbal abuse of EDGA staff, officials, volunteers, host club staff or other contestants
6. Potential endangerment of others
7. Flagsticks – Player must not deliberately touch or remove the flagstick.

### Penalties for breach of Code of Conduct

1st Offense: Warning

2nd Offense: General Penalty (2 strokes)

3rd Offense: Disqualification

## 2020 Event FAQ

Q1: Can the EDGA modify the *Rules of Golf* to conduct its events given COVID-19 pandemic?

A: The EDGA has been conducting its events under the Rules of Golf since 1921. No Committee running a Championship or Tournament can modify the Rules of Golf if it desires to consider the results of that event to be "official". However, the Rules of Golf do permit the Committee (i.e., EDGA) some discretion to introduce *Local Rules* to its events to maintain the integrity of the competition, in consideration of special circumstances that will impact the playing of the competition. The USGA and R&A provide guidance to the Committee through the publication of *Model Local Rules*.

Q2: Why is the EDGA mandating the use of carts?

A: Given government and CDC/WHO restrictions and guidelines with respect to Social Distancing, the use of carts assists the EDGA in protecting the health and safety of its competitors and volunteers in the event of inclement and/or dangerous weather conditions that require the golf course to be evacuated.

Q3: Is touching the *Flagstick* contrary to governmental or CDC/WHO best practices?

A: Yes, but touching the *Flagstick* is instinctive to most golfers. Therefore, the EDGA has introduced into its *Code of Conduct*, as permitted by Rule 1.2b the prohibition for a player to deliberately touch the *Flagstick*. Compliance will be monitored by our Rules Officials and a Player may be subject to penalty, if Warnings on compliance are ignored by the Player or his or her caddie.

Q4: Ball Holed:

A: A ball must be holed under the *Rules*, the EDGA is currently evaluating ways to minimize inadvertent touching of the *Flagstick* when a *Player* retrieves the ball after it has been holed. The Equipment Rules do not permit an attachment to the *Flagstick* to facilitate the retrieval of a ball that has been holed.

Q5: How do I keep informed of the EDGA plans and implementation of Local Rules?

A: Please access Championship Central on EDGA.org for updates to the FAQ's and Terms of Competition.