

# FALL CUP MATCHES

2026 PAMPHLET

## 1. ABOUT

The Fall Cup season will consist of three match days at host clubs and will culminate in the Fall Cup Championship, where a gross and net championship team will be crowned. The Fall Cup Championship field will consist of each region's winning team sending six players to compete in a Four-Ball stroke play format. It is expected that all region winners will field a team for the Fall Cup Championship.

## 2. FORMAT

### Teams:

Each team consists of six active female golfers on the GHIN® roster of the club or course the team is representing. Each player on a team must be affiliated with and represents their home club and team. All players on a team must have an active Handicap Index® at that team's club as of two days prior to the match day.

Mass Golf Members from Affiliate Member Clubs are eligible to participate and form a team after gaining consent from a Member Club willing to host that team's match. Member Clubs may host matches for more than one team.

For clubs fielding more than one team, any player affiliated with that club may play on one or both teams. Players who are affiliated with more than one Mass Golf Member Club may play on the teams of any of the clubs they are affiliated with. A player may compete for only one team in only one match on any match day. All players MUST have an active Mass Golf Membership at the club they are playing for.

Each team MUST be willing to offer more than one available date to host one match day at their club or course.

### Regions:

Each region will consist of four teams with three teams hosting one match day at their course and one team in each region is designated as a "travel" team.

### Match Days:

There are three match days: September 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. The four teams in each region will compete against each other over the course of the three match days. Each match day will consist of a team competing against another team in three matches.

### Hospitality:

Host captains are required to coordinate the match day arrangements for golf and lunch with their club staff and should complete and send the "Host Club Information Form" to fellow regional captains at least **two weeks prior to the match day**. If the Host Club Information Form is not sent out two weeks prior, it is up to the other captains to contact the host captain to obtain that information. The form is available on the Fall Cup landing page. The form requests important information on starting times, carts, food and beverage service and other event specifics.

Host captains are suggested to arrange for a modest lunch menu and cost (maximum of \$35

including taxes and/or services charges). Continental breakfast and coffee may also be served at the discretion of the host club, provided it does not exceed the maximum suggested cost of \$35 stated above. All players **MUST** pay for their lunch but are not required to stay. Captains are required to notify the host captain in advance if any of their players cannot stay for lunch. The host club must provide a "to go" option for those players unable to stay for lunch. The host captain and/or host team is encouraged to collect payment for both cart and lunch fees before the matches begin.

### **Matches:**

Each match will be played in a Four-Ball match play format. Players from each team will be paired by Handicap Index (lowest to highest) for each match. Each match consists of 18 holes. Points are awarded for each hole won or tied.

### **3. HANDICAPS**

Playing Handicaps™ are determined by Handicap Index from the USGA® GHIN as of **6 days** before each match (*Golf Genius updates players' Handicap Index the **Friday** prior to each match at ~ 2:00 AM*). All golfers will be playing at a 90% Playing Handicap. A player must have an active Handicap Index of 54.0 or less and will be limited to a 36 Playing Handicap for Fall Cup Matches.

Scorecards will be created through Golf Genius, but each player is responsible for ensuring their Playing Handicap and scorecard is stroked correctly. Handicap strokes will be calculated off the player with the lowest handicap in each group/Four-Ball match, with no more than one stroke per hole given to a player, regardless of Playing Handicap.

Example:

After converting to course handicaps and reducing to 90%: Team A consists of Player A1 with a 12 handicap and Player A2 with an 18 handicap. Team B consists of Player B1 with a 10 handicap and Player B2 with a 16 handicap. All players in this match stroke off the player with the lowest handicap in the group; Player B1 in this example. Player A1 will receive two strokes, Player A2 receives eight strokes and Player B2 receives six strokes. Strokes are given in accordance with the applicable handicap stroke hole allocation.

### **4. SCORING OF MATCHES**

Fall Cup Matches will be scored like Spring Team Matches. One point for winning a hole and ½ point for tying a hole. A maximum of 18 points may be awarded in each match. Players may not arbitrarily split points during a match.

Players are responsible for posting their own scores as either "Home" or "Away" scores and NOT as "Competition" scores. If needed, record the maximum hole score using net double bogey.

### **5. STARTING TIMES**

Matches will need to be played on an unobstructed course in the morning and no matches shall begin before 8:00 AM. It is preferred that shotgun starts are used whenever possible and that matches be played in foursomes. If your club prefers a modified shotgun start, it is requested that no more than two groups be started on any one hole. If tee times or shotgun time change after the Host Club Information Form is sent out two weeks before the match, the host captain must without delay check with all other captains to make sure the change is okay. If the captains do not agree to the change, the change cannot happen.

Host captains are required to advise the region team captains of the starting times as early as

possible. Please see the "Match Rotation Schedule" for which team has the honour to start each match.

## **6. PACE OF PLAY**

Lower handicap groups should be positioned at the front of the field. Matches should be completed in less than four and a half hours (4.5). At the end of 4 hours and 30 minutes (or longer as determined by the host club or host captain and announced prior to the start of the match), all play will conclude. If a hole is started but not completed before the specific time expires, the hole should be played and will conclude the match. Any holes remaining beyond the match time limit will be tied. **The captain of each team MUST enforce the pace of play policy, NOT the club staff.**

## **7. GOLF GENIUS TOURNAMENT MANAGEMENT**

Captains must use Golf Genius to set and manage each match day's team roster and enter match results. For Fall Cup, Golf Genius must be accessed via a dedicated link provided by Mass Golf and cannot be accessed through club accounts. If you have used Golf Genius in the past, you will continue to have access using your existing username/password. Captains are required to create rosters and pairings for each match day. Players and rosters will not be automatically populated each week.

The pairings sheet will be accessible in the portal for each match. The host captain is responsible for downloading and printing the pairings sheet, scorecards, and match pairings for the date they are hosting. Club contacts may provide assistance if requested by the host captain. These reports should be printed prior to each match day, either by the host captain or a member of the host club staff.

## **8. REPORTING OF SCORES**

**Host captains** will be responsible for entering all region match day scores using Golf Genius **by 3:00 PM of the match day**. Host club staff may provide assistance if requested. Results entered will be immediately visible for all to view via the Golf Genius portal. If you have any issues, email Katie Ryan at [kryan@massgolf.org](mailto:kryan@massgolf.org) before 3:00 PM on the match day. We will be contacting all regional captains at 3:00 PM who have not put in their results.

In addition, please leave a copy of the results sheet with the host club golf shop for any inquiries they may receive. The host team captain should announce each team's total points and the region winner at the conclusion of the final match day.

## **9. TEAM ROSTERS & SUBSTITUTES**

Captains must use Golf Genius to set and manage each match day's team roster. Captains **MUST** complete their team roster no later than 48 hours prior to match day.

Rosters may be different for each week, but all regional captains must be notified promptly of any changes.

Notification of any roster changes **MUST** be emailed to the other regional captains and host club contact no later than 5:00 PM the day before a match day. All host captains are responsible for re-downloading and printing reports if changes are made by any team in their region. Host club contacts may do this if requested by the host captain. All substitutes **MUST** have a Mass Golf Membership at the club(s) they are playing for.

Each captain is responsible for verifying their players are correctly positioned for each match pairing (low to high index). If a captain or team places a substitute in the wrong position for match pairings and the match begins, that match is defaulted, and nine points are awarded

to the opposing team.

## 10. DEFAULTS

If a team defaults on three matches over the course of the Fall Cup season, they are disqualified from Fall Cup Matches. In this case, all points earned by the opposing teams in that region from any previous matches will be nullified and each team's aggregate score will be adjusted accordingly. Defaults will occur under the following circumstances:

**Number of Players** - If a team is unable to field a full team, the host captain and host club contact must be notified no later than 5:00 PM the night before the match day. In those situations, see section 11 for how to field a team with less than six players.

If any side (team of two) defaults after 5:00 PM the night before, the vacant position (in which the originally assigned opponent was to play) is defaulted and 9 points awarded to the opponent for the defaulted match. If one player from the side can play, they will represent their side individually. Regardless, all other players shall hold their positions.

Note: If a default is acknowledged by both captains prior to the start of the match, the opponent(s) of the defaulting player(s) need not play or be present on match day to be awarded 9 points for the defaulted match.

**Positioning of Players** - Each captain is responsible for ensuring their players are correctly positioned for each match pairing. If a captain or team places a player in the wrong position for match pairings and the match begins, that match is defaulted, and nine points will be awarded to the opposing team.

If a team is disqualified for defaulting and that team/club is scheduled to host a future match day, the club must honor that commitment to host. Teams that are disqualified from Fall Cup matches for defaulting may continue to play in subsequent match days as markers.

## 11. FIELDING LESS THAN SIX PLAYERS

A club is expected to field a full team of six players playing in three sides (teams of two). If a club cannot field a full team and this is informed to the opposing team and host captain before 5:00 PM, the pairings will be adjusted as follows:

- 5 players The team's lowest handicapped player will play individually as one team against the opponent's team of two and the others will play in teams of two.
- 4 players The two lowest handicap players will each play individually as two separate teams against their opponent's teams of two and the third match will be played as a team of two.
- 3 players Each player will play individually as three separate teams against their opponent's team of two.
- 2 players Each player will play individually as two separate teams against their opponent's teams of two and the third match will be defaulted, and nine points will be awarded to the opposing team for the defaulted match.
- 1 player The player will play individually as one team against the opponent's team of two and the other two matches will be defaulted and 18 points will be awarded to the opposing team for the defaulted matches.
- 0 players All three matches are defaulted, and the defaulting team will be disqualified from the Fall Cup.

## 12. CANCELLATIONS

**Rain Dates:** In the event of a regional match day cancellation due to adverse weather, there will be no makeup or rain date for that match day.

**Rained out match(s) eligibility:** Players that were scheduled to be on the roster to participate on a Fall Cup match day that was rained out are eligible to participate and represent their team in the Fall Cup Championship.

**Early cancellation (prior to 5:00 PM the night before the match day):** If adverse weather has occurred or is forecasted, cancellation is determined by the host captain when advised to do so by the Golf Course Superintendent and/or Golf Course Professional.

**Cancellation on the morning of match day or cancellation on match day at the host club site:** In the case of adverse weather, the matches may be canceled by the host club staff.

**Weather conditions or other circumstances may result in the host club not permitting the use of carts for the match day:** If some or all players require the use of motorized carts to play, cancellation of the match day is an option to be discussed and considered by the four captains and the host club contact. A majority of the captains must vote to cancel a match day and communicate that to the host club contact before 5:00 PM the night before the match. Captains should be sensitive to the possible physical limitations of fellow competitors and should also present to the other captains the name of any team member who has a doctor's note requiring the use of a cart. For any votes taken by Fall Cup captains that result in a tie, the host captain's vote will be withdrawn. Each captain is responsible for notifying the players on their team when a match day has been canceled.

### **13. SUSPENSIONS**

Play may be suspended for adverse weather by the Golf Course Superintendent or Golf Professional. Following suspension, a decision must be made by the club staff and captains to either resume play after a reasonable amount of time or conclude the match day.

The match results are valid and scored if each match completes at least 9 holes. If less than 9 holes have been completed by one or more matches, the match day and partial results are canceled. If 9 or more holes have been completed by all matches, the match results will be scored. In this case, only the least common number of completed holes among the matches will be scored.

### **14. DANGEROUS CONDITIONS**

Thunder/Lightning: Discontinue play if you believe you are in danger from lightning ([Rule 5-7a](#)). Seek shelter immediately if lightning is in the area.

### **15. REGIONAL RESULTS**

Each region will be won by the team with the most cumulative points over the three match days. The winning team in each region will be invited to compete in the Fall Cup Championship. Fall Cup hat clips will be awarded to each winning team member who competes in the Fall Cup Championship. Ties: In the event of any ties within a region, the winning team will be determined by the results of the match between the tied teams and if this does not resolve the tie, both teams will be invited to the Fall Cup Championship.

### **16. FALL CUP CHAMPIONSHIP**

The Championship will consist of each region's winning team sending six players to compete in a Four-Ball stroke play format. All six players on each team must have played in at least one match

for a team to be eligible to play for that team in the Fall Cup Championship. It is REQUIRED that all region winners will field a team for the Fall Cup Championship.

There will be one gross team winner and one net team winner as determined by the aggregate scores of the team. The trophy will be engraved with the names of the winning clubs. If a tie occurs, the name of each winning club will be engraved on the trophy. All other ties will be decided by matching cards in accordance with the USGA recommended method. The GHIN revision for the 2026 Fall Cup Championship is TBD and will be used to calculate the Playing Handicaps for all players in the Championship (85% allowance).

## **17. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

If a team, player, or club violates any local, state, USGA, Mass Golf or Fall Cup policies, procedures, expectations, or guidelines they may be denied entry to Fall Cup Matches the following year. The team or club will be offered to be placed on a waitlist for Fall Cup Matches for the following year if space becomes available.

## **18. WITHDRAWALS**

If a team or club cannot fulfill its commitment once the regions and match day schedule are announced and published, that team or club may be denied entry to Fall Cup. The team or club will be offered to be placed on a waitlist for Fall Cup Matches for the following year if space becomes available.

## **19. FREQUENTLY ASKED RULES QUESTIONS:**

For the purpose of Fall Cup Matches, the Committee for each match day will consist of the four team captains. The club Golf Professional may be consulted as a resource, but the Committee shall make all rulings ([Rule 20.2b](#)).

The *Rules of Golf* as approved by the USGA and R&A Rules Limited govern play. Below we have called out a few helpful Rules of Golf for easier reference.

[Rule 1.3b\(1\)](#) - Applying the Rules and [Rule 1.3c](#) Penalties

[Rule 3.2b](#) - Match Play - Concessions

[Rule 3.2d](#) - Responsibilities of Player and Opponent in Match Play

[Rule 4.3a\(1\)](#) - Allowed and Prohibited Uses of Equipment - Distance and Directional Information

[Rule 5.3a](#) - When to Start Round and Late to Tee

[Rule 6.4a](#) - Order of Play When Playing a Hole - Please note Exception: Playing Out of Turn by Agreement to Save Time

[Rule 9.6](#) - Ball Lifted or Moved by Outside Influence

[Rule 15.3](#) - Ball or Mail-Marker Helping or Interfering with Play

[Rule 20.1b](#) - Rules Issues in Match Play

[Rule 23.4](#) - One or Both Partners May Represent the Side

## **20. CAPTAIN, HOST CAPTAIN, AND HOST CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Captain Responsibilities**

- Verify with club staff available host dates.
- Verify all players have an active Mass Golf Handicap Index at their club.
- In the event of a substitution less than 6 days prior to a match, captains are responsible for notifying the Manager of Women's Events to allow correction to the revision date in Golf Genius.
- Register team with payment.
- Communicate with Mass Golf who their club contact is (name/email) for them to be given

access to Golf Genius.

- If you do not receive the Host Club Information Sheet by two weeks prior to your match date, reach out to the host club captain to receive this information.
- Finalize rosters 48 hours before each Match Day.
- Communicate any roster changes/substitutions after 48 hours before each match day to other region captains and the host club contact.
- Verify all pairings are accurate based on Handicap Index (Low to High).
- Ensure players are maintaining pace of play per the Mass Golf Fall Cup Pamphlet.

### **Host Captain Responsibilities**

- Communicate starting times/shotgun start and additional information in the Host Club Information Form to other captains at least **two weeks** before the match.
- If applicable, communicate changes to starting times/shotgun start to other captains immediately to ensure they agree with the change. If they do not, then the change will not occur.
- If applicable, communicate any cancellations/delays due to weather to the other captains in your region as soon as possible.
- Download and print necessary materials (match pairings (for results), scorecards, pairings sheet) for your host date.
- Post results to the Golf Genius portal **by 3:00 PM** on the host match date.
- **MUST** leave a copy of the results in the golf shop immediately following play.

### **Host Club Responsibilities**

- Provide available dates to host to your club captain(s).
- Assist host captain with completing Host Club Information Form.
- Provide lunch and to-go lunch options to host club captain when hosting match.
- If requested by the host captain, print necessary materials.
- Follow all local, state, USGA, Mass Golf and Fall Cup policies, procedures, expectations, guidelines and communicate anything that would affect the matches to your club captain.
- Communicate with club captain any plans/decisions pertaining to inclement weather.
- If requested by the host captain, assist in entering results.
- Ensure host captain provides pro shop with a copy of the results.