



# CHICAGO WOMEN'S DISTRICT GOLF ASSOCIATION

## INSTRUCTIONS GOVERNING FOUR-BALL MATCH PLAY 2025

### POLICIES REGARDING FOUR-BALL MATCH PLAY

**General:** CWDGA conducts Four-Ball Match Play yearly in each of its five sections – Central, Northeast, Northwest, South and West. A member club is entitled to submit teams of eligible players to compete in one of the four divisions of the club's respective section. A lottery may be used for the second or third teams if the section is oversubscribed. A team consists of four players who play as a unit.

The form of play is Four-Ball Match Play (USGA Rule 23) with an eighteen-point system of scoring, which is played on five separate dates. The cumulative team points are available on the CWDGA website.

All team players compete to their current Course Handicap at the host-club. If handicaps are the same, they are placed in a position according to the Handicap Differential. If the Handicap Differential is the same, the players will be positioned alphabetically by last name. Note: If a regular or substitute player's Handicap Index exceeds 28.0, she must play to an index of 28.0.

Handicaps used for Four Ball Match Play will be in accordance with the World Handicap System (WHS). The Revision Date utilized for our matches will be the one in effect as of the 36-hour substitute deadline.

For scoring the match, the host-club Course Handicaps of the four players in the match will be reduced by subtracting the handicap of the player who has the lowest handicap. The player with the lowest handicap competes at **scratch**. The other three players, regular or substitute, will receive 100 percent of the resulting difference. Strokes are taken as they fall on the scorecard.

**Team Selection:** Each member club is responsible for the selection of its team members. An "eligible player" must have golf privileges at a CWDGA member club, have amateur status and must maintain a current, valid USGA Handicap at that club. If a team captain wishes to submit a player for consideration with a Handicap Index higher than 28.0, she must receive the approval of the Team Match Chair. That player, if approved, must play to an index of 28.0.

A player who may be a member of more than one club shall select the club that she shall represent in all CWDGA competitions and shall not be permitted to make any change during the year unless permission is granted by the CWDGA Board of Directors. However, a player who has active CDGA memberships at clubs in different sections may qualify to be a substitute for a club that is not in her section.

Each team should have at least two reliable substitutes. A substitute whose Handicap Index exceeds 28.0 must be approved by the Sectional Handicap Chair and must play to a 28.0 Handicap Index.

**All regular members of a team must play at least three scheduled Four-Ball matches to be eligible for prizes.**

**Permanent Replacements** may be made up until April 8th. After this date, the Team Match Chair must approve all Permanent Player replacements and the original player may not play as a substitute during the current season.

**Substitutes:** Each player is responsible for notifying her Team Captain well in advance if she is unable to play any Four-Ball Match Play dates. Substitute requests must be submitted no later than **36 hours** in advance

of Four-Ball Match Play. Substitutes with a Handicap Index over 28.0 need approval from the Sectional Handicap Chair, and will play to a 28.0 index.

**A substitute may play in any division, however, if a club fields more than one team, and more than one of its teams require substitutes, the player with the lower Handicap Index must substitute in the lower handicap division.** A permanent team member may not substitute or otherwise play on another team of the club without the approval of the Team Match Chair.

In case of emergency, every effort will be made to accommodate substitutes within the **36-hour** period. **No substitute appearing on the day of play without prior notice will be accepted regardless of circumstances.**

**Byes:** In the case of a bye, the team with the bye has the option of playing the course with the field. At least 2 regular players must be in attendance and any substitutes MUST have a Handicap Index of 28.0 or lower. The team players will play as a foursome. This does not count as a scheduled match for these players so they must play two of the other four play dates to be eligible for prizes. Thirty-six points are awarded for a team with a bye since each team in the division will also have one bye.

### POLICIES REGARDING THE DAY OF PLAY:

The Committee is made up of the CWDGA Sectional Team Chair and Sectional Handicap Chair and/or another CWDGA Board Member in attendance.

**This document shall be considered terms of the competition. Violation of any of the terms may result in disqualification under USGA Rule 1.2a.**

**Local Rules Governing Day of Play:** USGA Model Rule I-2, prohibition of practice on or near previous putting green and on or near any practice green between the play of two holes, is in effect for all CWDGA tournaments. The penalty for breach of the Local Rule is the General Penalty.

**Time of Starting:** Players should be prepared to **tee-off** at the time published on the schedule. If only one player of the side fails to report to the tee on schedule, Rule 5.3a applies. If both members of the side fail to report to the tee on schedule, but at least one does arrive, ready to play, within five minutes after the starting time, the **PENALTY** is loss of the first hole. If neither player reports to the tee within five minutes after the starting time, the side is disqualified from the match.

**Communication Devices:** Players may use cell phones and other internet communication devices as well as smart watches **only** as a Rules of Golf source, a distance measuring device, and to access the CWDGA Four-Ball Rules **as long as** there is no function which measures wind speed or gradient. In addition players may use a cell phone to request a ruling from the section team chair or section handicap chair. Players are prohibited from using cell phones for any other phone calls or for texts. If the CWDGA determines that this policy has been violated, the player will receive a warning. A second violation at any CWDGA event will result in disqualification under a code of conduct violation (Rule 1.2b). A third violation will result in disqualification from all CWDGA events for the remainder of the current playing season.



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**Distance-Measuring Devices:** In addition to distance measuring devices that conform to USGA specifications, players may use cell phones and smart watches as distance measuring devices. These devices, however, cannot emit sounds during the round. Range finders that beep must not disturb any other players. If the Committee determines that a violation of this policy has resulted in an opponent or another player being placed at a significant disadvantage, the player will be disqualified under Rule 1.2b.

**Caddies/Carts:** If a host-club has provided caddies, and caddies are available, a contestant must use a caddie or a cart with a caddie. Contestants **may not** provide their own caddies. Reserved caddies must be used. **A player wishing to change her cart/caddie request must have her Team Captain inform the Sectional Handicap Chair of the change before the 36-hour deadline. On the day of play only the Sectional Handicap Chair can authorize changes.**

**Attire:** Players and caddies must be properly attired on both the golf course and the premises of the club. Jeans of any color, T-shirts and tank tops are prohibited. Collared shirts are strongly suggested. Shorts and golf skirts must be mid-thigh in length. Any additional dress code restrictions of the club hosting the event are in effect. It is always advisable to consult the host-club for clarification of policies. If the Committee determines there has been a violation of this policy the player will receive a warning. A second violation at any CWDGA event will result in disqualification for the remainder of the current playing season.

**Returning Scorecards:** A player from one side shall sign and a player from the opposing side shall attest one scorecard, **immediately** upon completion of the match. The scorecard must show a team score, indicating points won by each team totaling 18. The team's score for each hole must be credited to the correct player. The points won by each team should be clearly marked and must total 18. Both players shall return that card to the Sectional Team Chair. **No changes will be made after the players have left the scoring table.** Each week's match results will be posted on the website.

**Weather:** Regardless of weather, players, including substitutes, must appear at the host-club to receive points, unless the course is declared closed and the match officially canceled prior to start of the matches. If a team is not present, it shall be disqualified from Four-Ball Match Play for the current season and all points earned by and against the team for the season shall be null and void. The individual team members involved will forfeit their right to play in all CWDGA events for that current season and in Four-Ball Match Play for the following season.

Play will start as scheduled and continue unless the course is declared unplayable. Play will be resumed unless the course is declared closed. Players are expected to wait at least one hour if the course is declared unplayable to determine if the course will be closed.

If the course is declared closed before Four-Ball Match Play has begun and the matches cannot be rescheduled, the points will be divided equally. If the course is declared closed after play has begun, the points for the holes played stand as earned and the points for any holes not played will be divided equally.

In an electrical storm, players shall discontinue play and take shelter. Balls may be picked up and marked with a tee or left on the course. The Committee (Sectional Team Chair and Sectional Handicap Chair and/or another CWDGA Board Member) will determine when and if play continues or discontinues.

**Stopping Play:** Regarding breach of Rule 5.7a, in addition to disqualification, the individual team members involved will forfeit their right to play in all CWDGA events for that current season and in Four-Ball Match Play for the following season. If an entire team or a side fails to play or discontinues play for any reason, whether a breach of Rule 5.7a or not, all points earned by and against the team for the season shall be null and void. Discontinuance of play is communicated by a CWDGA official only.

**Disqualification of Side:** If a side is disqualified for any USGA Rule OR CWDGA RULE, the penalty of which is disqualification of side, the side which breached the Rule will receive zero points and the opponents will receive 11 points for the day.

**Ties:** If two teams that are tied have previously played each other during regular Four-Ball Match Play, the winner of the original match is the winner. If the tie is for first place, the loser is the second-place winner.

If the two teams that are tied have played each other and the original match was a tie, A scorecard playoff will be determined in the following order:

- The winner of the back nine of the original match
- If tied, the winner of the last six holes on the back
- If tied, the winner of the last three holes on the back
- If tied, the winner of the eighteenth hole

If the two teams that are tied did not play each other during regular Four-Ball Match Play, an eighteen-hole playoff will take place at a neutral club selected by the Sectional Team Chair. If this playoff results in a tie, a scorecard playoff will determine the winner.

**Prompt Pace of Play:** Pursuant to USGA Rule 5.6b the CWDGA has established the following pace of play guidelines. A group of four players is expected to take no more than 15 minutes per hole – **4 hours and 30 minutes per round** to play. Any group that fails to hold its position on the course will be alerted and requested to play at a faster pace. After being warned, the group will be monitored. The time each player takes to play each stroke will be recorded. Any player in a group out of position that takes more than 40 seconds to play a stroke will be assessed a one stroke penalty. The second occurrence will result in the general penalty, and a third breach will result in disqualification, as provided in Rule 5.6a.

**Etiquette:** Players are expected to conduct themselves in a disciplined manner, demonstrating courtesy and sportsmanship at all times. This includes being considerate of other players, caring for the course and treating all opponents, staff, and CWDGA members with respect. The Committee has the power to revoke the playing privileges of any player for etiquette violations under Rule 1.2b.

**Tips:** The CWDGA tips at each play date. Players may use their discretion in handling extraordinary services received.