

STABLEFORD SERIES

Complete Rules & Regulations



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1. Overview

The Stableford Series is a season-long golf competition designed to combine competitive play with flexibility and inclusivity. The series is played across multiple events, each consisting of an 18-hole round using the Stableford scoring format.

The competition is structured to reward consistent performance while maintaining a level playing field for all participants. This is achieved through a dynamic handicap system, where players' handicaps are adjusted after each event based on their finishing position. This ensures that strong performances are recognised while also allowing all players to remain competitive throughout the series.

Participation in the Stableford Series is flexible, with players able to enter events as they are scheduled. While players are encouraged to take part in as many events as possible, the overall standings are determined by each player's best seven Stableford scores across the series. This format allows for missed events or off days, while still rewarding sustained performance over time.

Each event contributes to the overall leaderboard, with players accumulating Stableford points that count toward their final total. At the end of the series, the player with the highest combined score from their best seven rounds will be crowned the overall winner.

The Stableford Series is designed not only as a competitive tournament, but also as a social and enjoyable golfing experience. Players are expected to uphold the traditions of the game, including honesty, integrity, and respect for fellow competitors and host venues.

The series is governed by a clear set of rules and overseen by the Tournament Chair, ensuring that all participants compete under consistent and fair conditions.

2. Tournament Format

The Stableford Series is a season-long golf competition consisting of nine individual events, each played as an 18-hole Stableford round. The format is designed to reward consistency while maintaining a competitive balance across all participants through the use of dynamic handicaps.

Each event is scored using the Stableford system, where points are awarded based on a player's net score (gross score adjusted by handicap strokes) on each hole. Players will accumulate Stableford points during each round, which will contribute to both event results and the overall series standings.

At the conclusion of each event, players will be ranked based on their total Stableford points for that round. These finishing positions will be used to adjust each player's handicap for the following event, with higher-performing players receiving reductions to their handicap and lower-performing players receiving increases. This rolling handicap system is intended to level the playing field and ensure that all participants remain competitive throughout the series.

The overall tournament standings will be determined using each player's best four Stableford scores from the nine scheduled events. This "best 4 from *number of events*" format allows for flexibility in attendance and provides a buffer for poor performances, while still rewarding consistent high-level play across the season.

In addition to cumulative Stableford scoring, players may also earn event-based recognition for individual rounds. However, the primary measure for determining the overall champion and prize distribution will be the aggregated total of each player's best seven Stableford scores.

Players are expected to participate in as many events as possible, but failure to attend an event will not result in disqualification. Missed events will simply count as one of the two discardable scores within the best seven calculation.

All rounds must be played in accordance with the agreed tee times, course setup, and applicable rules for the day. Any deviations from the standard format must be approved in advance by the Tournament Chair.

3. Stableford Scoring System

All events within the Stableford Series will be played using the Stableford scoring format, which awards points based on a player's net score on each hole rather than total strokes. This format is designed to encourage positive play and maintain pace by allowing players to pick up once they can no longer score points on a hole.

A player's score on each hole is calculated by applying their playing handicap to determine a net score. Handicap strokes are allocated based on the stroke index of each hole, as per the course scorecard.

Points are awarded as follows:

Net Double Bogey or worse: 0 points

Net Bogey: 1 point

Net Par: 2 points

Net Birdie: 3 points

Net Eagle: 4 points

Net Albatross (Double Eagle): 5 points

For example, if a player receives one handicap stroke on a par 4 hole and records a gross score of 5, their net score is 4 (net par), which earns 2 Stableford points.

Players must record their score on each hole and convert it into Stableford points accordingly. Once a player has reached a score on a hole where no Stableford points can be earned (net double bogey or worse), they are encouraged to pick up to maintain pace of play.

The total Stableford score for the round is the sum of all points scored across the 18 holes. The player with the highest total Stableford points at the end of the round is the winner of that event.

In the event of a tie on total Stableford points, a countback system may be used to determine final positions. This is typically decided by comparing scores over the last 9 holes, then last 6, last 3, and finally the 18th hole. If a tie still remains, the Tournament Chair will determine the final outcome.

All players are responsible for ensuring that their scores are recorded accurately. Any incorrect scoring, whether accidental or deliberate, may result in penalties or disqualification in accordance with the Rules of Golf and tournament regulations.

4. Handicap System

The Stableford Series operates a dynamic handicap system designed to maintain fairness and competitiveness across all participants throughout the nine-event schedule.

Each player will begin the tournament with an agreed starting handicap. This may be based on an official handicap index or, where applicable, a mutually agreed figure reflective of the player's current ability.

Following the completion of each event, handicaps will be adjusted based on finishing position in that round. The purpose of this system is to reward strong performances while providing support to those who finish lower in the standings, ensuring the competition remains balanced.

Handicap adjustments will be applied as follows:

1st Place: Handicap reduced by 2 strokes

2nd Place: Handicap reduced by 1 stroke

3rd Place: Handicap reduced by 1 stroke

Midfield Positions: No change

Lower Positions: Handicap increased by 1 stroke

Last Place: Handicap increased by 2 strokes

These adjustments will be applied cumulatively after each event, meaning a player's handicap will evolve throughout the series based on their ongoing performance.

All handicap changes will take effect in the subsequent event and must be used when calculating net scores for that round.

To ensure the integrity of the competition, handicap limits will be enforced:

Minimum Handicap: 0

Maximum Handicap: 42 (unless otherwise agreed prior to the tournament/round)

In the event of a tie in finishing position within an individual event, any applicable handicap adjustment will be applied equally to all tied players.

All handicap calculations and adjustments will be administered and confirmed by the Tournament Chair. Any disputes regarding handicap changes must be raised promptly, with the final decision resting with the Chair.

The organisers reserve the right to review and adjust any player's handicap outside of the standard adjustment structure if there is clear evidence of manipulation, persistent underperformance relative to ability, or any behaviour deemed to compromise the fairness of the competition.

5. Best 4 Scores Rule

The overall standings for the Stableford Series will be determined using a "best scores" format, designed to reward consistent performance across the season while allowing flexibility in the number of events played.

The total number of events in the series is not fixed and may vary depending on scheduling, availability, and other external factors. However, regardless of the number of events completed, each player's **best 4 Stableford scores** will be used to calculate their final overall total.

Only a player's highest 4 scoring rounds will count toward the final standings. Any additional rounds played beyond these will not be counted for the purposes of the overall leaderboard.

Players are encouraged to participate in as many events as possible to maximise their opportunity to record strong scoring rounds. Playing more than 4 events provides players with the advantage of being able to discard lower scores and improve their overall total.

Players who participate in fewer than 4 events will have all of their recorded scores count toward their total, even if this places them at a competitive disadvantage compared to players who have completed more rounds.

Final standings will be determined by the total Stableford points accumulated from each player's best 4 scoring rounds. The player with the highest combined total will be declared the overall winner of the Stableford Series.

In the event of a tie in the final standings, a countback system will be applied by comparing the highest individual round scores among the counting rounds. If a tie still remains, the Tournament Chair will determine the final outcome.

The organisers reserve the right to review this format only in exceptional circumstances where the number of completed events is significantly lower than anticipated, in order to ensure fairness across all participants.

6. Local & Club Rules

All events within the Stableford Series will be played in accordance with the local rules of the golf club at which the event is being held on the day.

Each host club's local rules—typically displayed on the scorecard, noticeboards, or via the club's official materials—will apply in full. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Out of bounds definitions
- Penalty areas (red/yellow stakes)
- Ground under repair
- Preferred lies (if declared by the club)
- Temporary local rules (e.g. mats, tee restrictions, course conditions)

It is the responsibility of all players to familiarise themselves with the local rules of the course prior to commencing play. Any clarification should be sought before teeing off.

Where a local rule is in place that differs from the general tournament rules (for example, if a club has mandated relief procedures or course-specific conditions), the **club's local rule will take precedence for that event**.

However, unless explicitly stated by the host club, the tournament standard of **summer rules (ball to be played as it lies)** will remain in effect.

Failure to comply with the applicable local rules of the course may result in penalties in accordance with the Rules of Golf and the tournament's disciplinary procedures.

In addition to local rules, all play remains subject to the Rules of Golf as governed by The R&A. The tournament format operates alongside these rules but does not override them.

7. Preferred Lies (Summer Rules)

The Stableford Series will be played under standard **summer rules**, meaning the ball must be played as it lies, in accordance with the Rules of Golf as governed by The R&A.

Preferred lies (also commonly referred to as “winter rules” or “roll-ups”) are **not permitted** unless they are formally introduced by the host golf club as a local rule for that specific round.

Under normal conditions, players are not allowed to lift, clean, and reposition their ball to improve its lie. The ball must be played from its original position except where relief is permitted under the Rules of Golf.

Permitted relief situations include, but are not limited to:

- Relief from abnormal course conditions (e.g. ground under repair, temporary water, immovable obstructions)
- Relief from penalty areas (with penalty)
- Unplayable ball relief (with penalty)

These relief procedures must be taken strictly in accordance with the Rules of Golf, including correct dropping procedures and use of the appropriate relief area.

If a host club introduces **preferred lies** as a local rule (typically during adverse weather conditions), the following standard procedure will apply unless otherwise specified by the club:

- The ball must first be **marked** before being lifted
- The ball may be **cleaned**
- The ball must be **placed within a specified distance** (commonly within 6 inches or the width of a scorecard) from its original position
- The ball must **not be moved nearer to the hole**
- The ball must remain within the **same area of the course** (e.g. general area, not moved from rough to fairway)

Once placed, the ball is in play and must not be repositioned again unless allowed under the Rules of Golf.

Any breach of the preferred lies rule—such as improving the lie without permission, moving the ball beyond the permitted distance, or failing to mark the ball—will be treated as a breach of the Rules of Golf and may result in penalties or disqualification.

Players are responsible for confirming whether preferred lies are in effect prior to the round. If no such local rule has been declared by the host club, it must be assumed that **strict play-as-it-lies applies**.

In situations where there is any doubt regarding whether relief is permitted, how a rule should be applied, or whether preferred lies are in effect, players are strongly encouraged to **consult with their playing partners before taking action**. Agreement within the group should be reached wherever possible prior to proceeding.

In more complex or unclear situations, players should act in good faith and, where necessary, play a provisional second ball in accordance with the Rules of Golf, with the matter referred to the Tournament Chair after the round for a final decision.

The Tournament Chair reserves the right to review any situation where the application of preferred lies or relief procedures is in question, with all decisions being final.

8. Scoring & Apps

The use of third-party scoring applications is permitted and encouraged throughout the Stableford Series, as a means of ensuring accurate, transparent, and accessible scoring for all participants.

A designated scoring app may be used for each event, and all players are expected to input their scores in a timely and accurate manner throughout the round. Scores should be entered **after each hole** wherever possible, rather than retrospectively at the end of the round.

Each player remains fully responsible for the accuracy of their own scores, regardless of whether they are entered by themselves or another member of the playing group. The use of an app does not remove the obligation to maintain correct scoring in accordance with the Rules of Golf.

Players must **confirm and agree scores with their playing partners after each hole** before entering them into the app. This ensures consistency, avoids disputes, and maintains the integrity of the competition.

Where a single player is designated as the scorer for the group within the app, all other players must still verify that their scores have been entered correctly. It is recommended that all players periodically review the app during the round to ensure accuracy.

At the conclusion of the round, all players must ensure that their full 18-hole score has been correctly recorded in the app. Once submitted, scores may be considered final unless a clear and genuine error is identified.

All scores must be **submitted and uploaded to the app at the earliest reasonable opportunity** following completion of the round. Delayed or missing submissions may result in penalties or disqualification at the discretion of the Tournament Chair.

In the event of a technical issue with the app (e.g. loss of signal, app failure), players must continue to keep an accurate manual record of their scores (e.g. on a physical scorecard or notes). These scores must then be entered into the app as soon as practicable after the round.

Any discrepancies between recorded scores, disputes regarding entries, or suspected inaccuracies must be raised immediately. Failure to do so may result in the recorded score being accepted as final.

Deliberate misrepresentation of scores within the app, failure to record scores accurately, or refusal to verify scores with playing partners will be treated as a serious breach of the rules and may result in disqualification and/or removal from the tournament.

The Tournament Chair reserves the right to audit scores submitted via the app and to request verification where necessary. All decisions regarding scoring disputes are final.

9. Conduct & Integrity

All participants in the Stableford Series are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the traditions, etiquette, and integrity of the game of golf. By entering the competition, players agree to uphold the highest standards of honesty, sportsmanship, and respect both on and off the course.

Golf is a self-regulating sport, and as such, all players are responsible for applying the Rules of Golf fairly and honestly at all times. Players must not knowingly breach any rule, ignore a penalty, or gain an unfair advantage. Any form of cheating, deliberate manipulation of scores, or misuse of the handicap system will be treated as a serious offence.

Players are expected to:

- Act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of play
- Show respect to fellow competitors, playing partners, and other course users
- Respect the course, including repairing pitch marks, replacing divots, and raking bunkers
- Maintain an appropriate pace of play and be ready when it is their turn
- Follow all club rules, dress codes, and behavioural standards of the host venue

Unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Abusive, aggressive, or disruptive conduct toward other players or members of the public
- Throwing clubs, damaging equipment, or mistreating the course
- Excessive slow play or deliberate delay of play
- Intimidation, gamesmanship, or attempting to influence another player's score improperly
- Use of inappropriate language or behaviour that may bring the competition into disrepute

Players must also ensure that their behaviour reflects positively on the group or society hosting the competition, particularly when playing at external venues. All participants act as representatives of the Stableford Series and should behave accordingly.

Financial Responsibility & Damage

Players are personally responsible for any damage they cause to golf course property, club facilities, equipment, or third-party property during the course of an event. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Damage to greens, tees, bunkers, or course infrastructure beyond normal play

- Damage to golf buggies, trolleys, or hire equipment
- Damage to clubhouse facilities or surrounding property

Where damage occurs as a result of negligence, misconduct, or inappropriate behaviour, the responsible player will be liable for any repair or replacement costs incurred. This may include costs charged by the host golf club or any third party.

Failure to accept responsibility for damage caused, or refusal to settle associated costs, may result in:

- Immediate removal from the event or tournament
- Suspension or permanent exclusion from future events
- Additional financial penalties as determined by the Tournament Chair

All incidents of damage must be reported promptly to both the host club and the Tournament Chair. Any attempt to conceal damage or avoid responsibility will be treated as a serious breach of conduct.

Any concerns regarding conduct or damage should be raised with the Tournament Chair as soon as possible. The Chair reserves the right to investigate any incident and take appropriate action.

Breaches of conduct and integrity rules may result in:

- Verbal or formal warnings
- Stroke penalties or point deductions
- Disqualification from an event
- Removal from the tournament
- Exclusion from future events

All decisions made by the Tournament Chair in relation to conduct, disciplinary matters, and financial responsibility are final.

10. Penalties

The Stableford Series operates under the principles of fairness, honesty, and respect for the Rules of Golf. Any breach of these rules or the wider tournament regulations will be subject to review and may result in penalties, disqualification, or further disciplinary action.

Breaches are generally categorised into **minor breaches** and **serious breaches**, although the Tournament Chair retains full discretion to determine the severity of any incident.

Minor Breaches

Minor breaches are typically unintentional or administrative in nature and do not materially affect the integrity of the competition when addressed promptly.

Examples of minor breaches may include:

- Accidental scoring errors that are corrected in a timely manner
- Failure to promptly update scores in the third-party app
- Minor misunderstandings of rules where no significant advantage is gained
- Occasional slow play without deliberate intent
- Isolated lapses in etiquette (e.g. not repairing a pitch mark)

Penalties for minor breaches may include:

- Verbal warning
- Formal warning recorded by the Tournament Chair
- Adjustment of Stableford points
- Application of standard penalties in accordance with the Rules of Golf

Where a minor breach is repeated or not corrected after warning, it may be escalated to a more serious offence.

Serious Breaches

Serious breaches are actions that compromise the integrity, fairness, or reputation of the competition, or that demonstrate deliberate disregard for the rules.

Examples of serious breaches include:

- Deliberate misrepresentation or falsification of scores
- Knowingly failing to apply a penalty under the Rules of Golf
- Abuse or manipulation of the handicap system
- Playing from an incorrect handicap intentionally
- Repeated failure to verify scores with playing partners
- Breach of preferred lies rules (e.g. improving lie without permission)
- Unsportsmanlike conduct, including abusive or aggressive behaviour
- Damage to the course or property through misconduct
- Failure to follow local club rules where this results in an unfair advantage
- Refusal to comply with instructions from the Tournament Chair

Penalties for serious breaches may include:

- Disqualification from the event
- Deduction of points from the overall standings
- Forfeiture of prizes or prize eligibility
- Immediate removal from the tournament
- Suspension or permanent exclusion from future events

Deliberate Cheating & Gross Misconduct

Any act deemed to be deliberate cheating or gross misconduct will be treated with zero tolerance. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Intentionally submitting incorrect scores
- Conspiring to manipulate results
- Repeated or systematic rule violations

Such actions will result in immediate disqualification and may lead to permanent exclusion from all future events, at the discretion of the Tournament Chair.

Process & Decision Making

All breaches must be reported as soon as possible after the incident occurs. Players are encouraged to raise concerns in good faith, either during the round (where appropriate) or immediately following completion.

The Tournament Chair will review all reported incidents, which may include:

- Speaking with players involved
- Reviewing score records or app data
- Considering input from other players in the group

The Tournament Chair has full authority to determine:

- Whether a breach has occurred
- The severity of the breach
- The appropriate penalty or disciplinary action

All decisions made by the Tournament Chair are **final and binding**.

11. Score Verification & Live Scoring

All players are required to verify scores with their playing partners after the completion of each hole. Both the player and marker must agree on the score recorded before proceeding to the next hole. Where a third-party scoring app is being used, scores must be entered and updated accurately after each hole.

It remains the responsibility of each player to ensure that their score is correctly recorded throughout the round. Any discrepancies should be addressed immediately. Failure to maintain accurate and agreed scoring may result in penalties or disqualification at the discretion of the Tournament Chair.

12. Prize Pot & Distribution

Participation in the Stableford Series prize pot is operated on an **optional opt-in basis**. Players may choose whether or not they wish to enter the prize pot competition when joining the series or at a later stage during the season.

Players who choose to opt into the prize pot will be required to pay the agreed prize pot contribution from the point they join onward. Any player joining the prize pot after the

season has commenced may also be required to make catch-up contributions for previous events or series payments, as determined by the organisers, in order to maintain fairness and consistency among all participating players.

All prize pot contributions and participation records will be tracked separately by the organisers throughout the season.

Only players who have officially opted into the prize pot competition and are fully up to date with any required contributions will be eligible to receive prize winnings at the conclusion of the series.

The total prize pot will be distributed among the top three eligible players in the final overall standings as follows, unless otherwise agreed prior to the start of the tournament:

- **1st Place:** 50% of the total prize pot
- **2nd Place:** 30% of the total prize pot
- **3rd Place:** 20% of the total prize pot

Final standings will be determined based on each player's best seven Stableford scores recorded during the series.

In the event of a tie for any prize-winning position, the combined payout for the affected positions will be split equally between the tied players unless an alternative method is determined by the Tournament Chair.

The organisers reserve the right to verify that all contributions have been paid in full prior to distributing any winnings.

All prize decisions, including eligibility, contribution requirements, and distribution outcomes, are final and will be administered by the Tournament Chair.

13. Refunds & Cancellations

Refunds apply only to the **event playing cost** (e.g. green fees or event-specific charges). The **administration fee and prize pot contribution are strictly non-refundable under all circumstances**.

If a player withdraws from an event with **14 days' notice or more** prior to the scheduled date, the **event playing cost will be refunded in full**, where possible.

If a player withdraws with **less than 14 days' notice**, no refund will be issued for the event playing cost, except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Tournament Chair.

Where an event is cancelled by the organisers or the host venue, players will be entitled to a refund of the **event playing cost only**, unless the payment has already been irrecoverably committed or transferred to a rescheduled date.

All refund decisions are subject to organiser discretion where necessary, and the decision of the Tournament Chair is final.

14. Governance

The Stableford Series is administered under a central governance structure to ensure the fair, consistent, and transparent operation of the competition. Responsibility for the interpretation and enforcement of all rules rests with the **Tournament Chair**, who acts as the final authority on all matters relating to the tournament.

The role of the Tournament Chair includes, but is not limited to:

- Interpreting and applying the tournament rules and the Rules of Golf
- Overseeing scoring, handicap adjustments, and overall standings
- Reviewing and resolving disputes between players
- Determining appropriate penalties for breaches of rules or conduct
- Making decisions in exceptional or unforeseen circumstances
- Ensuring the integrity and fairness of the competition is maintained at all times

Players are expected to raise any queries, concerns, or disputes as soon as possible, ideally during or immediately after the round in question. Where appropriate, players should first seek clarification within their playing group before escalating the matter.

In situations where a rule is unclear, open to interpretation, or not explicitly covered within the tournament rules, the Tournament Chair will make a decision based on:

- The spirit and intent of the game
- The Rules of Golf as governed by The R&A
- The need to maintain fairness and consistency across the competition

The Tournament Chair may consult with other players or relevant parties when reviewing a matter; however, the final decision will rest solely with the Chair.

All decisions made by the Tournament Chair are **final and binding** and are not subject to appeal. This is to ensure that disputes are resolved efficiently and that the competition can continue without unnecessary disruption.

The organisers reserve the right to amend, clarify, or update tournament rules where necessary to address unforeseen circumstances, provided that any changes are communicated clearly to all participants and are made in the interest of fairness.

Players, by entering the Stableford Series, agree to abide by all rules and to accept the authority of the Tournament Chair in all governance and disciplinary matters.