

## General Regulations & Terms of the Federal Competitions 2026

### Organisation

Each Federal Competition falls under the responsibility of the RBGF even if the competition is organized by another authority (PGA of Belgium, AFGolf, Golf Vlaanderen or hosting club).

Each Federal Competition will be organized in accordance with the Rules of Golf as established and approved by the R&A Rules Limited.

The following Terms, together with any additions and/or amendments published by the RBGF at the competition venue, will apply to all Competitions and International Matches run by the RBGF.

### I. Terms of the Federal Competitions 2026

#### 1. Eligibility

##### 1.1 General

Federal Competitions are open to all amateur players in possession of a 2026 RBGF federal card, and to Belgian amateurs who are members of a foreign club as well as to professional players, who are members of the PGA of Belgium, in case of a mixed event for amateurs and professionals.

All amateurs must have an WHS Hcp. (Exception for Kids Tour Cat I, II and III)

The RBGF rejects all responsibility in case of illness or an accident sustained by a player during a Federal Competition. It is the player's responsibility to ensure that there is no contraindication to his/her health while playing golf during a competition.

All participants in a Federal Competition are expected to behave according to the Code of Conduct. See III.

Players suspended by any recognized National Anti-Doping Organisation are not allowed to participate.

##### 1.2 Categories with Age & Handicap Limits

Category	Max. Hcp Men/Boys	Max. Hcp Ladies/Girls	Age Limit
Federal Tour	4.4	7.4	Born in 2007 or before
Federal Tour (U18)	6.4	9.4	Born in 2008 or after
Junior U18	10.4	14.4	Born in 2008 or 2009
Junior U16	12.4	18.4	Born in 2010 or 2011
Junior U14	16.4	22.4	Born in 2012 or 2013
Junior U12	24.4	28.4	Born in 2014 or after
Young Adults	10.4	14.4	Born 2002 - 2007
Mid-Amateur	12.4	14.4	Born 1977 - 2001
Senior	12.4	14.4	Born in 1976 or before
Senior 65+	12.4	14.4	Born in 1961 or before
Final Kids Cat I	Hcp>24.4 and/or Theory and Skills badge	Hcp>28.4 and/or Theory and Skills badge	Born in 2014 or 2015
Final Kids Cat II	Theory and Skills badge	Theory and Skills badge	Born in 2016 or 2017
Final Kids Cat III	Theory and Skills badge	Theory and Skills badge	Born in 2018 or before

## 2. Entry requirements

### 2.1 Entry Procedure

The participants must register via the website of the RBGF ([www.golfbelgium.be](http://www.golfbelgium.be)). Entries by telephone will not be accepted. Entries are in general open 6 weeks prior to the first day of the competition.

Each application for entry after the closing date will be put on a "late entry" waiting list, in order of application date and time. Depending on availability, these players will be contacted prior to the competition as soon as a spot becomes available.

In the event of entries exceeding the number of available places, successful entrants will be decided by lowest exact handicap at the time of the closing date. Unsuccessful entrants will be given the opportunity to compete in case of withdrawals.

### 2.2 Draw

The draw will be published on the website of the RBGF ([www.golfbelgium.be](http://www.golfbelgium.be)) between six and three days prior to the first day of the competition.

The Committee reserves the right to modify the draw at all times, if required. Any modification will be published on the above-mentioned website. It is the responsibility of the player to check his/her time of starting, whether or not modified.

### 2.3 Withdrawal of participation

The player must inform the Committee of his/her withdrawal as soon as possible by email: [sport@golfbelgium.be](mailto:sport@golfbelgium.be). If the player does not provide a valid reason for his/her withdrawal, or in case the player does not inform the Committee at all, the penalty for a first offence will be an automatic suspension for the next three federal events for which the player would be eligible. The player, as well as his/her home club, will be informed in writing.

### 2.4 Entry Fee

Category	Entry Fee	Green Fee*
Young Adults-, Mid-Am - or Senior Tour 1 round	€ 50,-	€ 30,-
Young Adults-, Mid-Am - or Senior Tour 2 rounds	€ 75,-	€ 60,-
Young Adults-, Mid-Am - or Senior Tour 3 rounds	€ 90,-	€ 60,-
Federal Tour (amateur) 2 rounds	€ 50,-	€ 60,-/ U18 €30,-
Federal Tour (amateur) 3 rounds	€ 65,-	€ 60,-/ U18 €30,-
Federal Tour (amateur) 4 rounds	€ 80,-	€ 60,-/ U18 €30,-
Junior (U12-U14) 1 round	€ 25,-	€ 15,-
Junior (U12-U14) 2 rounds	€ 40,-	€ 15,-
Junior Open 3 rounds	€ 45,-	€ 30,-
Junior Open 4 rounds	€ 60,-	€ 30,-
Kids 1 round - 9 holes	€ 15,-	€ 10,-

\* A holder of a type A- or B Federal card gets 100% discount on the greenfee.

Note: Players that withdraw (see 2.3) or players not making it into the tournament (reserves) will be refunded the entry fee at the latest during the week following the tournament. No refund for players withdrawn without valid reason once the start list is published. Valid reason: death in the family, illness or injury with medical certificate.

## 2.5 Practice Fee

All Category	Practice Fee
Players born in 2007 or before	€ 35,-
Players born in 2008 or later	€ 18,-

Note: Every eligible player who has registered for a Federal Competition may practice once on the competition course at a preferential Practice Fee rate (see table above). The use of the Gold Card is not allowed.

The player must reserve a Tee time in accordance with the availability of the hosting club and must present his/her Federal Card for 2026.

## 3. Format of Play

Category	Nr. Of Holes	Format of Play
Senior Tour	18, 36 or 54	Single Stroke Play or Match Play
Mid-Amateur Tour	18, 36 or 54	Single Stroke Play or Match Play
Young Adult Tour	18, 36 or 54	Single Stroke Play or Match Play
Federal Tour	36, 54 or 72	Single Stroke Play or Match Play
Federal Tour	36	4BBB or Foursome
Junior Open	54 or 72	Single Stroke Play or Match Play
Junior U12 – U14	18 or 36	Single Stroke Play
Kids Tour	9	Adjusted Score

## 4. Returning a Scorecard

The player must, within 10 minutes after finishing the last hole of the round, verify and return his/her own scorecard in the Recording Area (usually the Tournament Office). A player who fails to do so, may be disqualified by the Tournament Committee.

A player's scorecard is officially returned when he or she has handed it over to an Official in the Recording Area and has left the Recording Area with both feet.

## 5. Decisions of Ties

### 5.1 Match Play:

If a match is tied after the final hole, the match is extended one hole at a time until there is a winner (Rule 3.2a(4)) unless otherwise specified in the specific regulations of the competition.

### 5.2 Stroke Play:

Except in Federal Competitions over 18 holes, in the event of a tie for first place, there will be a "hole-by-hole" Stroke Play play-off to determine the winner. The play-off shall start as soon as practicable after the last players have finished their round. Play will be in groups of no more than 5 players. Groups and order of play will be determined by lot. If the play-off involves more than 2 players, those other than the winner will be deemed to have tied for 2nd place regardless of their scores in the play-off. The Tournament Committee will decide the holes for the play-off.

All other ties will be decided by matching scorecards (last 36 holes, last 18 holes, last 9, last 6, last 3 and last hole). If this method does not produce an outcome, the ties will be decided by lot.

Note: Junior Masters: in the event of a tie for first place, boys or girls, a play-off will be organised as in a competition over 36 holes.

## 6. Results of Competition – Competition Closed

### 6.1 Match Play:

The result of a match is officially announced when it has been recorded in the Tournament Office.

### 6.2 Stroke Play:

The result of the competition is officially announced when the final result sheet is placed on the official noticeboard at the competition venue.

## 7. Tournament Committee

The Tournament Committee is composed of at least three members who are appointed by the RBGF.

The Tournament Committee has the task of:

- a) Supervising and ensuring the proper proceeding of the competition.
- b) Handling all questions for which no specific committee exists.
- c) Applying the appropriate penalties to teams or players who are infringing the General Regulations and Terms of the Federal Competitions.
- d) Making final rulings in case rulings are referred to the Committee.
- e) Deciding the player's score for a hole when a player has played two balls.
- f) Deciding on all other matters not covered by the current regulations.
- g) Informing the RBGF of every reprehensible fact committed by a player during competition.

All decisions taken by the Tournament Committee are final.

The RBGF Rules Workgroup will appoint the Rules Officials. The Rules Officials will accompany the players or will be roving, apply the Rules of Golf and inform the Tournament Committee of the rulings made.

## 8. Miscellaneous

### 8.1. Spectators

#### 8.1.a. General:

During the course of a competition, all spectators (parents, coaches, club officials, supporters etc.) have to remain at a reasonable distance from the players on the course, i.e. a distance from where it is practically impossible to give advice or interfere with play.

Every breach of Rule 10.2 of the Rules of Golf (advice) will be penalised in accordance with this Rule.

#### 8.1.b. Junior Competitions:

Adults are not allowed on the Course except in the indicated areas, e.g. 1st Teeing Area, behind 18th Putting Green. The Tournament Committee will publish a notice to indicate the area(s).

#### 8.1.c. Coaches:

Coaches need to sign a Charter before being allowed on the Course. This charter will explain what is and is not allowed.

### 8.2. Home club

A player's "Home club" is an Affiliated Club of the RBGF of which the player is a member; it is the "Handicapping Authority" for the player.

Note: If the player is a member of more than one Affiliated Club of the RBGF, he shall nominate one as his/her Home club.

A player is free to change Home club at all times. He must notify his/her former Home club and the RBGF of his/her decision, which shall be final for the remainder of the season.

### 8.3. Electric trolley

The use of an electric trolley during a junior competition is not allowed.

**Note:** The Committee in charge of the concerned competition will authorise players presenting a "RBGF Medical Committee Exemption for the Use of an Electric Trolley" to use an electric trolley conforming to the conditions described in the RBGF Electric Trolley Policy.

## 9. Anti-Doping Control

We apply the Anti-Doping policy as foreseen by the NADA.

Every eligible player who has registered for a Federal Competition may be subject to compulsory doping control. In the event of a positive control and/or refusal to submit to a test the player will be withdrawn from the competition and may be sanctioned in accordance with the relevant disciplinary anti-doping regulations.

<https://dopage.be/> - <https://www.dopingvrij.vlaanderen/> - <https://ostbelgiensport.be/desktopdefault.aspx>

## II. LOCAL RULES

The following Local Rules, together with any additions and/or amendments published by the RBGF at the competition venue, will apply to all Competitions and international Matches run by the RBGF.

The Local Rules published by the host club on their scorecard or elsewhere do not apply.

**Unless otherwise noted, the penalty for breach of a Local Rule is the General Penalty (loss of hole in Match Play or two penalty strokes in Stroke Play).**

### 1. Out of Bounds (Rule 18.2)

**1.a** Beyond any boundary wall.

**1.b** Completely on or beyond any public road. This is true even if the ball comes to rest on another part of the course that is in bounds for other holes.

**Notes:**

- When a line on the ground defines the boundary edge, stakes may be used to show where the boundary edge is located, but they are boundary objects.
- Closed gates attached to boundary walls and fences are part of the boundary object. Relief is not allowed from such a gate under Rules 15.2 or 16.1. An open gate is not treated as part of the boundary object and may be closed or moved to a different position.

### 2. Penalty Areas (Rule 17)

**Penalty area no play zone:** defined by yellow or red stakes **with green top**.

**Note:** Dropping zones for penalty areas.

Where dropping zones are marked for a penalty area, they are an additional option for relief under penalty of one stroke. The dropping zone nearest to where the original ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area must be used. The dropping zone is a relief area. A ball must be dropped in and come to rest in the relief area.

### 3. Abnormal Course Conditions (Rule 16.1)

**Abnormal Course Condition no play zone:** defined by blue lines or blue stakes **with green top**.

**Note:** Dropping zones for abnormal course conditions.

Where dropping zones are marked for an abnormal course condition, they are an additional option for the relief options of Rule 16.1. The dropping zone nearest to where the original ball lies in the ACC must be used, if the ball is lost in the ACC, it is the dropping zone nearest to where the ball entered the ACC. The dropping zone is a relief area. A ball must be dropped in and come to rest in the relief area.

#### 3.a Ground Under Repair

- Any area encircled by white lines or blue stakes.
- French drains (gravel-filled drainage ditches), whether or not marked.
- If the ball lies in the general area and lies in or touches a seam of cut turf or a seam interferes with the player's area of intended swing, the player may take relief under Rule 16.1b. But interference does not exist if the seam only interferes with the player's stance.

All seams within the area of cut turf are treated as the same seam in taking relief. This means that if a player has interference from any seam after dropping the ball, the player must proceed as required under Rule 14.3c(2) even when the ball is still within one club-length of the reference point (drop a second time, then place).

### 3.b Protection of trees and plantations

Staked trees and plantations surrounded by a plastic sleeve, plastic tube, wire mesh or the like are no play zones that are to be treated as an abnormal course condition. If the ball lies anywhere on the course other than in a penalty area and it lies on or touches such a tree or plantation or such a tree or plantation interferes with the player's stance or area of intended swing, the player must take relief under Rule 16.1f. If the ball lies in a penalty area, and interference to the player's stance or area of intended swing exists from such a tree or plantation, the player must take relief either with penalty under Rule 17.1e or with free relief under Rule 17.1e(2).

### 3.c Animal holes

Interference does not exist if an animal hole only interferes with the player's stance.

### 3.d Immovable Obstructions

- 1) Federal sponsor boards.
- 2) White lined areas and the immovable obstruction they tie into are treated as a single abnormal course condition.
- 3) Landscaped garden areas (and everything growing in them) that are surrounded by an immovable obstruction are treated as a single abnormal course condition.
- 4) Roads and paths surfaced with woodchips or mulch. Individual pieces of woodchip are loose impediments.

## 4. Integral Objects

Artificial retaining walls and pilings located in penalty areas are integral objects from which free relief is not allowed.

## 5. Clubs and Balls (Rule 4)

**5.a** Any driver the player uses to make a stroke must have a clubhead, identified by model and loft, which is on the current List of Conforming Driver Heads issued by the R&A. This list is regularly updated and is found at RandA.org.

**Penalty for making a Stroke with Club in breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification**

**5.b** Any ball used in making a stroke must be on the current List of Conforming Golf Balls issued by the R&A. This list is regularly updated and is found at RandA.org.

**Penalty for making a stroke with a ball not on Current list in breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification**

## 6. Replacement of Club that is Broken or Significantly Damaged

Rule 4.1a(2) is modified in this way:

1. A club damaged by the player or their caddie during the round or while play is stopped under Rule 5.7a may only be replaced if the damage was not caused by abuse and if the club is broken or the damage is significant.

For the purposes of this Local Rule, examples of when a club is "broken or the damage is significant" include:

#### Shaft:

- The shaft is in pieces, or is bent, dented, kinked or splintered

#### Clubhead (except Club Face):

- The clubhead is visibly cracked or substantially deformed (but not when it is only scratched, chipped or has a minor dent),
- The clubhead is loose or no longer attached to the shaft,
- A part inside the clubhead is loose (such as when it has a chip or minor dent but not when it is only scratched).

#### Club Face:

- The club face is visibly cracked or deformed (including when it has a chip or minor dent but not when it is only scratched).

#### Grip:

- The grip or part of it is loose.

2. To ensure the progression of the set is maintained, the replacement club must fill the gap created when the player took the broken or damaged club out of play.

**Penalty for Breach of Local Rule - See Rule 4.1b.**

## 7. Pace of Play Policy (Rule 5.6)

### 7.a Time Allowed

Each hole has been given a maximum completion time based upon the length and difficulty of the hole as well as upon the walking distance between the holes. The maximum time allowed for the completion of 18 holes will be available prior to play. As an average rule, the RBGF applies the following maximum time on a par-72 course:

- Groups of 2 players: 3h36' (average 12' per hole)
- Groups of 3 players: 4h12' (average 14' per hole)
- Groups of 4 players: 4h30' (average 15' per hole)

### 7.b Definition of Out of Position

The first group and any group after a starter's gap will be considered to be "out of position" if, at any time during the round, the group's cumulative time exceeds the time allowed for the number of holes completed. Any following group will be considered "out of position" if it is more than the starting interval behind the group in front and has exceeded the time allowed for the number of holes played.

### 7.c Procedure when Group is Out of Position

1) Rules Officials will monitor pace of play and decide whether a group that is "out of position" should be timed. An assessment of whether there are any recent mitigating circumstances, e.g. a lengthy ruling, lost ball, unplayable ball, etc. will be made.

If a decision is taken to time the players, **each player** in the group will be subject to individual timing and a Rules Official will advise each player that they are "out of position" and they are being timed.

The maximum time allowed per shot is 40 seconds. 10 extra seconds are allowed for the first player to play:

- a) on a par 3 hole;
- b) their approach shot; and
- c) a chip or putt.

The timing will start (1) when a player has had sufficient time to reach their ball, (2) it is their turn to play and (3) they are able to play without interference or distraction.

On the putting green, timing will start when the player has had a reasonable amount of time to lift, clean and replace their ball, repair damage to the putting green and remove loose impediments on their line of play. Time spent looking at the line of play is taken into account for the allocated time for the stroke.

2) Timing ceases when a group is back in position and players will be advised accordingly.

### 7.d Procedure When Again Out of Position During Same Round:

If a group is "out of position" more than once during a round, the above procedure will apply on each occasion. Bad times and the application of penalties in the same round will be carried forward until the round is completed. A player will not be penalised if they have a second bad time before being advised of their earlier bad time.

### Penalty for breach of Pace of Play Policy:

1 bad time	Player will be warned by a Rules Official and informed that a further bad time will be penalised.
2 bad times	One stroke penalty
3 bad times	Further two strokes penalty or loss of hole in Match Play
4 bad times	Disqualification

### 7.e Excessive Shot Time

At any time, if any player is observed by a referee taking more than 80 seconds to play a shot, they will be notified of the excessive shot time and given an official warning (1<sup>st</sup> Bad Time) to speed up play. The player will also be advised that the Committee may start individual timing at any time, even if the group is not out of position.

## 8. Suspension of Play (Rule 5.7)

When play is stopped by the Committee in case of imminent danger, all players must stop play at once and must not make another stroke until the Committee resumes play. When play is stopped for imminent danger, practice is prohibited on any area in and outside the course.

The following signals will be used to suspend and resume play:

Immediate stop/dangerous situation: one prolonged note of the siren

Normal non-dangerous stop: three consecutive short notes of the siren, repeated

Resume Play: two consecutive short notes of the siren, repeated

### **Penalty for breach of Rule 5.7b: Disqualification**

(Exception: there will be no penalty if the Committee decides that the failure to stop was justified.)

## 9. Practice (Rule 5)

### **9.a Practice areas that are situated within the boundaries of the course.**

Use of these practice areas is allowed before or between rounds.

### **9. b Practice before or between rounds in Stroke Play (Rule 5.2b)**

Rule 5.2b is modified in this way: a player must not practise on the competition course before or between rounds.

### **9.c Restriction on practice strokes between holes in Stroke Play (Rule 5.5b)**

Rule 5.5b is modified in this way: between the play of two holes, a player must not make any practice stroke on or near the putting green of the hole just completed and must not test the surface of that putting green by rubbing the putting green or rolling a ball.

**Penalty for breach of Local Rule:** General Penalty at the next hole.

In the case of a breach at the last hole of the round, the penalty is applied to that hole.

## 10. Distance Measuring Devices

For the Kids Tour-competitions only, Rule 4.3a(1) is modified in this way: during a round, a player must not obtain distance information by using an electronic distance measuring device.

## 11. Transportation Policy

During a round, a player or caddie must not ride on any form of motorized transportation except as authorized or later approved by the Committee. [Example: when a specific situation arises, in order to save time, a Rules Official may allow a player to ride with them, or with another person, in a golf cart, not for actual play of the round, but to and from the place where a previous stroke was made (e.g. lost ball), to go to a spot where a ruling occurred, to seek shelter in case of a thunderstorm, etc. The player or their caddie must not drive the transportation vehicle themselves.]

**Penalty for breach of Local Rule:** General Penalty for each hole during which there is a breach. A breach between holes applies to the next hole.

**Note:** The Committee in charge of the concerned competition will authorise players (not the caddies) presenting an EDGA pass or a "RBGF Medical Committee Exemption for the Use of Transportation" to use a transportation vehicle conforming to the conditions described in the RBGF Transportation Policy.

**Any person may move the transportation vehicle without the player. [Example: when a specific situation arises, in order to save time, any person may move the golf cart when the player is on the green to the back of the green or on the path of the next hole]**

## 12. Restriction on who may serve as a Caddie (Rule 10.3)

Rule 10.3a is modified in this way:

- A player must not have a professional golfer as their caddie during the round.
- In competitions for juniors only (U18 or less) a player must not have a person, older than 18 years on 31/12 of the current year as their caddie during the round.

### Penalty for breach of this Local Rule:

- The player gets the General Penalty for each hole during which they are helped by such a caddie.
- If the breach happens or continues between two holes, the player gets the General Penalty for the next hole.

## 13. Code of Conduct

All players, caddies, advice givers or captains are required to act in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

### III. CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

#### 1. Unacceptable behaviour by player

- Failure to care for the course: the player is responsible for (properly) raking bunkers after playing out of them, for replacing his/her divots and for repairing his/her pitch marks.
- Use of unacceptable language towards other players, spectators, officials, or other people, such as impolite, abusive or aggressive language.
- Being disrespectful to other players, spectators, officials or other people.
- Abuse of clubs or the course, such as intentionally throwing or damaging clubs or causing damage to the course or other property.
- Entering Zones defined as "No entry zones".

#### Penalty for breach

First breach:	One penalty stroke.
Second breach:	General Penalty.
Third breach:	Disqualification (Committee decision). Additionally, other sanctions, such as a suspension for the next competition or competitions, may be imposed. The facts will be reported to the RBGF.

The Tournament Committee may decide to disqualify immediately in case of a serious breach.

#### 2. Respect for code of conduct hosting Club(s)

All participants in a Federal Competition are requested to adhere to the code of conduct of the hosting club (dress code, smoke policy, access to facilities and use of infrastructure).

Any participant not adhering to the dress code of the club will not be allowed to start. If during a round a player changes his/her clothes and is not conform the dress code anymore, he/she has to change back to the conforming clothes.

#### Penalty for breach

First breach:	One penalty stroke.
Second breach:	General Penalty.
Third breach:	Disqualification (Committee decision). Additionally, other sanctions, such as a suspension for the next competition or competitions, may be imposed. The facts will be reported to the RBGF.

The Tournament Committee may decide to disqualify immediately on a serious breach.



### 3. Use of Mobile Phone

Mobile phones should be switched off or in silent mode. Use of a mobile phone by a player or caddie on the course must be limited to cases of emergency (such as for medical reasons) or danger or to call the Tournament Office.

Use of a smartphone to access the R&A Rules app, to enter scores (if requested) or to consult the course guide is not a breach of this Rule in itself.

The use of a mobile phone which is not authorized as above or is unnecessarily distracting other players is a breach of the Code of Conduct.

#### Penalty for breach

First breach: The player is guilty of misconduct and should switch off his/her mobile phone.

Second breach: General Penalty.

Third breach: Disqualification (Committee decision). Additionally, other sanctions, such as a suspension for the next competition or competitions, may be imposed. The facts will be reported to the RBGF.

The Tournament Committee may decide to disqualify immediately in case of a serious breach.

### 4. Smoking Prohibition

No player shall smoke during their round, only players older than 18 years may smoke in the restricted areas if they are present.

#### Penalty for breach

First breach: General Penalty.

Second breach: Disqualification (Committee decision). Additionally, other sanctions, such as a suspension for the next competition or competitions, may be imposed. The facts will be reported to the RBGF.

### 5. Unacceptable behaviour by caddie.

Like the players, caddies must follow the dress code and golf etiquette. This implies, among other things, a positive attitude and kindness and helpfulness, also towards other players. Negative interventions (anger, shouting, swearing, club throwing, etc.) in relation to the own player, other players, parents, spectators and officials are unacceptable. Possible Rule problems are discussed calmly. It is important that the player gets the final decision in terms of club choice, line of play, etc. The caddy also has an important role in maintaining the pace of play.

#### Penalty for breach

First breach: Warning (This warning will be carried forward in all future competitions during the same year).

Second breach: Caddie must leave the course (A caddie who has been told to leave the course will not be allowed to caddie in future events during the same year, unless authorized by the RBGF).