

WOMEN'S NINE HOLE GOLF ASSOCIATION

MARKERS

(Section 7 of the WNHGA Manual)

Non-playing markers are used during three separate WNHGA events – Team Play Championships, Tournament of Champions, and the Corena Green Classic for Junior Girls – as well as all division Team Play competitions. Clubs hosting the Tournament of Champions and the Team Play Championships are responsible for obtaining markers for those events. Markers for the Corena Green Classic for Junior Girls are recruited by the WNHGA director in charge of the tournament.

The Women's Nine Hole Golf Association trains, recruits and coordinates volunteer markers from its entire membership. A marker from a member club must be an active participant in any of the golfing groups within their club, such as WNHGA, WGAN, PWGA, or the NCGA.

Each foursome will have a minimum of one marker and each marker is provided with a copy of the instruction sheet for markers, marking sheets, and USGA rules information. Markers are NOT rules officials but should provide a copy of the rules to the players when they are in doubt as to how to proceed. It is the responsibility of the individual players to know the USGA rules and to notify the marker if they observe an infraction committed either by themselves, their partner or their fellow competitors. The marker must record any rules infraction that she observes or that the players report. A marker may, if asked, describe the conditions or unseen hazards on the course, but may not instruct or coach a player on how to play the course.

A marker is responsible for recording the hole-by-hole gross score for each player. In addition, she should total each player's score but is not responsible for addition errors. **When play ends, the marker must go over the hole-by-hole score with all of the players to be sure they are in agreement.** The marker and all players must return to the checking area before signing the scorecards and marker sheets.

Note: when marking for the Tournament of Champions, all players must putt out. It is only in four-ball stroke play (Team Play format) that one of the partners may pick up.

If a player picks up during singles play, she may be disqualified. See *USGA Rule 3-2*.

Pops are used for four-ball stroke play (Team Play) and not for the Tournament of Champions.

WNHGA Marker Information

In case of emergency, markers should carry a cell phone. It must be on *silent* and the marker should never use her phone for personal calls. The players count on their marker to be alert and paying attention to the game.

Either During Breakfast or at the Cart:

- Greet your team and introduce yourself.
- Ask participants to count and verify that their **handicap** and **pops** (if cards are popped) are correct before leaving the staging area.
- Point out the local rules sheet and mention any unusual rules that apply.
- Explain the new policy regarding measuring devices: During a WNHGA event, a player may obtain distance information by use of a USGA-approved distance-measuring device. If a player uses a distance-measuring device for anything other than measuring distance, the penalty will be **Two Strokes**. For subsequent offense – **Disqualification**. All devices must be in silent mode.
- Point out directions to the lunchroom and closest bathrooms.
- Tell players they should play ready golf and which tees will be used.
- Water should be located in the golf carts.

- Tell the players you will meet them at their carts 15 minutes before play begins to go over further instructions.
- Fill out marker's sheet with visual ID for each player for identification.

Before Play Begins (either at cart or before teeing off at first hole):

- Lead your players to the appropriate hole when all are ready.
- You are in charge of **pace of play** for the group. Check with the director-in-charge to see what the recommended pace of play is for the course and advise your players.
- Be sure that the players understand that this is a game and that we should all be having fun. Smile a lot! They are nervous.
- Request that your foursome not hit any strokes unless they know that they are being observed by you. Holding up their hand, looking you in the eye, and waiting for your hand in reply is a good way to handle this.
- If they are hitting out of a hazard or a bunker, ask them to wait until you are close enough to observe their stroke (You need to be sure they do not ground their club).
- Set the tee-off rotation for the first hole, but after that it should be "grab a club and tee off" - Ready golf!
- Ask players to check with you in the middle of the hole regarding strokes accumulated if they are "blowing up" on the hole. It is easier to recreate a high score part-way through play rather than at the green.
- Ask the players when they want to know that you have recorded a penalty stroke. Most players want to know right away so they don't make the same mistake again, but others prefer to know when they reach the green because it makes them too nervous. It should be their choice.
- Remind players that during team play one member of the team **may** pick up if they feel they are out of the hole. They should confer with their partner before doing so and check their pops. You only need one score per hole.

The Basics:

- In a very friendly way, remind your players before play begins that you really, really do not want to have to record any penalties so...would they please remember the basics:
- Remind players to mark their ball whenever they lift it with the intent to replace it. This includes lifting it for identification, lifting it because it interferes with another player's ball, or to verify it is still fit for play. Under these circumstances, the ball may be lifted but may not be cleaned.
- It is helpful if you have marking pens of different colors that you can give the players in case they have not made an identifying mark on their balls.
- For the sake of pace of play, suggest to players that they always take a provisional ball if they think their ball may be out of bounds or lost outside of a hazard.
- Remind them not to ground their club in a hazard. 😊
- Remind them to keep an eye on the tee box markers and be sure to stay behind them.
- Players should tend the flag for one another after everyone is on the green. Markers may not tend the flag.
- Players may and should ask each other about a rule if they are in doubt.
- You are not a rules official. Remind the players that it is their responsibility to both know the rules and to report any rules infraction to you. Report it on themselves, their partner, and their competitors. Golf is a game of integrity.
- Markers are to record every stroke and penalty they observe plus penalties that the players indicate. But do not fixate on the rules. Fixate on keeping the stroke count accurate, pace of play, and smiling.
- At any point you may also hand a player your rule book or clip-on rule sheet and ask if they would like to check a rule. This is a gentle way to help before they get in trouble but without telling them a rule.

During Play:

- If you still do not agree be sure player understands that she is not to sign her card and you will take it to the committee. Be **absolutely** sure that she understands you will not be offended because you, too, can make an error.
- If there is a question regarding a regulation on how to play a ball that cannot be reconciled by the players, the player should use *Rule 3-3, Doubt as to Procedure*, found in the USGA rule book. Carry

a rule book with you but the players should also have one. They **must not** sign their card if there is any doubt as to the hole-by-hole score.

- Markers **may** describe the course or any hazards that are not visible *if asked* but they may not give advice such as “Play the hole to the right because it slopes right to left,” etc.
- When you are at the green, before putting begins, ask each player to tell you her score and be sure that your score and hers agree. After putting, repeat the procedure in order to guarantee that you agree on the total score for that hole.
- If you and the player do not agree on the number of strokes taken, enlist the help of the other players to recreate the hole.
- If a player has picked up on a hole, record the player’s *most likely* score. Ask the player what that score should be and indicate that it is a “pick-up” with either an “x” or a PU. *Note: this is **not** the player’s maximum allowable score (ESC), but **her most likely score**.*
- A marker is only the scorekeeper – not the coach, not the caddy, not the rules official. You are not to interpret any rule but may simply give your players the rule book.
- It is great if the marker is familiar with the rules of golf, but it is not necessary.
- If a player is disqualified, she may ride in the cart but she may no longer play. She may not get out of the cart to advise her partner.

Players May:

- Confer with one another regarding the rules of golf – partner and fellow competitors. It is wise to engage your fellow competitors with rules.
- Partners may advise one another as to how to play a hole but **may not** advise fellow competitors.

At Conclusion of Play:

Markers and players must not leave the checking area until the marker and players have checked the hole-by-hole scores. If they are in agreement, they must sign the scorecards and marker sheets. If they do not agree, they must not sign either the scorecard or the marker’s sheet and all players in the group and the marker must take it to the committee.

If you have any questions, please contact the WNHGA Rules Director (contact information can be found at WNHGA.com or in the WNHGA Yearbook)