

Golf

2021 Season. Updated 5/25/2021





Return to Play 2021

- Practice
- Handicap Information
- Description of Special Olympics Golf Levels
- Leagues
- Tournament



Season Outcomes

- Allow for more opportunities for Special Olympic athletes to enjoy and play the sport of golf
- Host more skills days for athletes of all levels
- Create competition opportunities locally between golf programs



Golf Season Time Line

Starting in 2021 Special Olympics Massachusetts golf season will be expanded and align with the Massachusetts Golf Association season

- Season
 - April - November
- April – June
 - Practice rounds to establish individual handicaps
- May 14th League Rosters are due to SOMA
- June- October
 - Continue to submit scores for handicap purposes
 - League Competition
- August - October
 - Tournaments

Practice





Practice

Teams may gather following Massachusetts guidelines for COVID 19

- Please refer to the [Phase 4 Return to Play Document](#) for the most up-to-date gathering guidelines
 - Gathering allowances will be increased however Training and Competition organizers must work with **each facility operator** to confirm parameters of capacity and still must allow for all sanitizing and social distance guidance within facility.
- Although the Mask order has been relaxed for outdoor sports as of May 18, all SOMA activities **will remain operating with a Mask order at least through June 30, 2021** when athletes cannot social distance and for all indoor activities. Athletes in the water do not need to wear a mask.
- Golf cart usage follow Mass Golf Association protocols
- Social distancing protocols must be followed at all times
- Recommended use same groups for every practice session



Practice

- All players and coaches must wash and sanitize hands upon arrival, frequently during and at conclusion of practice
- Equipment used, that is not the participants personal equipment must be sanitized prior to start of, frequently during and at end of practice
- No sharing of personal equipment
- All individuals attending practice must take a COVID 19 screening prior to start of practice, (*refer to return to play power point in [coaches resource section](#) of SOMA website*)

Handicap Information





Handicap Information

- In order to participate in leagues and tournaments all Unified teams and individual golfers will need to have a GHIN # assigned to them that generates a USGA handicap..
 - Unified teams and individual golfers that do not want to participate in leagues or tournaments and only want to attend weekly practices (*training only*) do not need a GHIN #
 - All handicaps will be based on 18 holes. As of 2020, GHIN system does not offer a 9 hole handicap
 - For Level II & IV hole golfers GHIN will combine 9 hole rounds to give golfer their handicap.
- Those that wish to just play recreational and not play in a league or tournament do not need a GHIN #
- SOMA will input all scores and assign GHIN numbers to golfers
 - Unified teams or individual golfers may enter their own score through the GHIN website or app with their assigned GHIN #. You will need to set up a log in with password
- Handicap's will be used to
 - Division for tournament play
 - Used in league play to enable teams of different abilities to compete against each other in head to head matches

Special Olympics Golf Levels





Golf Levels

Level I - Skills

Purpose of this level is to allow athletes to train and compete in basic golf skills. The development of these key skills is necessary to advancing to Levels II-V.

Updated 2021 -Special Olympics MA requires all new golfers to your team complete a skills test and receive a minimum grade of 70% before they may participate in Levels II-V. Five of seven skills must be tested in order to advance. Athlete must score a minimum 70 out of 100 points. (If program tests on all seven skills then athlete must score 100 out of 140 points.)

Level II – Unified team play 9 Holes

This level is designed to give the S.O. athlete an opportunity to transition from individual skills to individual play and to progress under the guidance of a Unified partner whose ability and knowledge of golf is more advanced than that of the athlete. The Unified partners serves as a coach and mentor so that the S.O. athlete becomes self sufficient on the golf course

Level III – Unified team play 18 holes

Level is designed for more experienced athletes and for athletes and partners that have comparable ability levels and knowledge of the sport. Athlete has skill set to play level IV & V, he/she chooses to play with a Unified partner



Golf Levels

Level IV – Individual Stroke Play 9 holes

Designed to meet the needs of S.O. athlete who wish to play individually in a tournament where the stipulated round is 9 holes. Player should be capable of playing independently. Player must provide their own caddie

Level V - Individual Stroke Play 18 holes

Designed to meet the needs of S.O. athlete who wish to play individually in a tournament where the stipulated round is 18 holes. Level will have few if any course modifications. Player should be capable of playing independently. Player must provide their own caddie



Golf Levels

Unified teams and individual golfer's final level will be determined by Special Olympics Golf rules and score averages

Level II & IV

- Per Special Olympics golf rules: Golfers must maintain a **9 hole average of 70 or lower** for a minimum of 6 reported score cards in 2021 to be eligible for tournament play
- Any golfer with a **9 hole average above 70** will be bumped down a level
 - Level II to Level I, Level IV to level II They may still participate in leagues and team practices

Level III & V

- Per Special Olympics golf rules: Golfers must maintain an **18 hole average of 120 or lower** for a minimum of 6 reported score cards in 2021 to be eligible for tournament play
- Any golfer with an **18 hole average above 120** will be bumped down a level
 - Level III to Level I, Level V to level IV They may still participate in leagues and team practices

League Play





Leagues Set Up

- Special Olympics will place teams, golfers in leagues by level. Level II & IV will be combined and Level's III & V will be combined
- Golfers can play matches vs opposing teams either in person or virtually
 - *Virtual matches – teams play home course and score entered in Golf Genius. Software calculates all variables (slope, rating, handicap) to determine match winner*
- Matches can be played on any course with a certified rating and slope and teams have a handicap in the GHIN system
- Golfers earn points for each match won and half point for tie's
- All members on team will receive award based on final league standings at end of season
- Golf Programs must predetermine who on team will be part of league model. Rest of golfers in program will be training only or recreational golfers
- Matches will be assigned through Golf Genius software. Golfers have assigned window to compete in their assigned match. All golfers submit rounds to SOMA and SOMA will enter round into Golf Genius
- All leagues will have a season ending tournament.



Leagues Level III & V

All eligible level III & V golfers and golf teams will assigned into a 18 hole golf league. # of leagues TBD

Leagues Level II & IV

All eligible level II & IV golfers will be placed into a regional league. # of leagues and format TBD.

of leagues and format by level is TBD as SOMA is asking for programs feedback on how leagues will be structured. Feedback is due by March 31st.

Tournaments





Tournament Standards & Eligibility

Level II & IV

- Per Special Olympics golf rules: Golfers must maintain a **9 hole average of 70 or lower** for a minimum of 6 reported score cards in 2021 to be eligible for tournament play
- Any golfer with a **9 hole average above 70** will be bumped down a level
 - Level II to Level I, Level IV to level II or I. They may still participate in leagues and team practices

Level III & V

- Per Special Olympics golf rules: Golfers must maintain an **18 hole average of 120 or lower** for a minimum of 6 reported score cards in 2021 to be eligible for tournament play.
- Any golfer with an **18 hole average above 120** will be bumped down a level
 - Level III to Level I, Level V to level IV They may still participate in leagues and team practices



Tournaments

Special Olympics Massachusetts will be hosting the following golf tournaments in 2021. All tournaments will be alternate shot format.

League Tournaments

- Each league will have a season ending tournament and awards
- 2021 Tournaments dates are being scheduled for August
 - *In future years an awards banquet will be held at conclusion of league tournament*

State Tournament TBD

- If hosted tournament will be in Fall of 2021



League Tournament

- All golfers and teams that participated in the league are eligible to compete in the League Tournament.
 - *Tournament may have a quota. Quota is dependent on number of slots course has available to Special Olympics MA*
 - *Any open slots will be made available to training only golf teams that did not participate in the league model*
- League tournament will be treated as a stand alone event. All players will be placed into divisions via their official Handicap
- Awards will be given out based on day's results.
- Tournament results will not go towards final league standings and are awarded separately from league standings
- Those that would like to advance to state tournament must play in league tournament and medal.
- Winners in each division to advance to State Tournament



League Tournament Dates

Hillview Country Club

- August 8, 2021 2:00pm

Tekoa Country Club

- August 7, 2021 1:30pm

Indian Meadows

- August 14th 7:00am

Stow Acres

- August 21st
- 18 Hole Level III & V

All events and even information posted to Calendar page of the SOMA website



State Tournament

- Tournament will have a quota based on # of times available to Special Olympics MA
- Golfers qualify for tournament by placing at Regional League Tournament
 - All gold medal winners advance. Any remaining slots filled by silver medal winners. Followed by bronze
- State Tournament is a stand alone event, awards will be awarded based on results from the day. Results from state tournament do not count towards league standings

Questions?

ops @specialolympicsma.org

or

Matt.Ruxton@specialolympicsma.org

