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## **REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ISSUE OF PRIZES – Under the Rules of Amateur Status**

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*The following is for the information of golf clubs, event organisers, and amateur golfers in general. It applies to regular golf competitions as well as longest drive, nearest the pin, putting, hole-in-one, and other similar events in which golf skill is a factor.*

### **A. THE GOVERNING BODY**

Golf Australia is the governing body for the Rules of Amateur Status in Australia. Golf Australia implements the Rules and Decisions laid down by the international governing authority, R&A Rules Limited. The Rules of Amateur Status are available from Golf Australia and State Associations.

### **B. AMATEUR STATUS**

Amateur Status is a universal condition of eligibility for playing in golf competitions as an Amateur golfer. A person who acts contrary to the Rules may forfeit their status as an Amateur golfer and as a result be ineligible to play in Amateur competitions.

Amateur golf is almost unique in all of sport in that it is heavily reliant on a handicap system which allows any golfer to compete on equal terms with any other golfer. Additionally, in virtually every amateur golf event, competition is reliant upon self-regulation as regards the Rules of play.

It is The R&A's position that uncontrolled sponsorship and financial incentive in the amateur game would provide significant temptation to players to manipulate scores and handicaps and to consequently diminish the competitive experience that is enjoyed by so many millions of players. As a result, The R&A, in consultation with the United States Golf Association, has set standards that limit the degree to which sponsorship and financial incentive may be involved with amateur golfers and amateur golf events. Golf Australia and its Member Associations implement The R&A's position.

The R&A further makes the following general statement: "Through appropriate limits and restrictions, the Rules of Amateur Status are intended to encourage amateur golfers to focus on the game's challenges and inherent rewards, rather than any financial gain."

An Amateur golfer is defined as a person who, whether they play competitively or recreationally, plays golf for the challenge it presents, not as a profession and not for financial gain.

### **C. PRIZE LIMITS**

In Australia, the maximum retail value of a prize or prizes that can be accepted by an amateur golfer for any event or series of events in any one tournament, exhibition, or event is \$1,200. (Exception: See C(vi) regarding conforming hole-in-one competitions.)

Note: Playing for Prize Money . Money prizes of any amount cannot be accepted by amateur golfers (exception: see C(vi) regarding conforming hole-in-one competitions). In fact it is a breach of the Rules to play in a competition where cash or its equivalent is on offer . a breach is not restricted to winning such a prize (although note C.v.4). See also Section E . *Raffles, Lucky Draws, Sweepstakes.*

#### **i) Symbolic Prizes**

Symbolic prizes are exempt from the above prize limits. Symbolic prizes are considered to have value only to the recipient. They may be awarded as prizes even if the value exceeds \$1,200, provided they are permanently and distinctively engraved. Trophies made of gold, silver, ceramic, glass or the like which are not permanently and distinctively engraved are not considered to be symbolic prizes and are subject to the normal prize limits.

Symbolic prizes or awards must not be used as a means to circumvent the Rules.

Prizes for utilitarian purposes such as watches, music systems, luggage, golf bags, clothing or other merchandise, are not symbolic prizes even if they are permanently and distinctively engraved or marked.

**ii) Retail Value**

This is the normal recommended selling price at which merchandise is available to anyone at a retail source over a reasonable period of time. Specially-discounted or short-term offers, or those restricted to certain customers, do not fall within this definition.

**iii) Prize Vouchers**

The guidelines on prize vouchers are as follows:

- The organising committee is strongly encouraged to define accurately the purpose for which the voucher may be used.
- When making payment in respect of the voucher, it is the duty of the organising committee to satisfy itself that the conditions of the voucher have been complied with and that it has been redeemed for the respective goods and/or services.
- If the value of the voucher is, say \$200, the organising committee may, at its discretion, issue two vouchers for \$100, four vouchers for \$50, etc, if it considers that these would be simpler to administer.
- The Rules permit organising committees to offer vouchers (up to a value of \$1,200) for any of the following:
  - Goods & services from a pro shop or clubhouse (including food & beverage, whether packaged or unpackaged).
  - For crediting to a club account (including to pay for items that have been purchased prior to the winning of the voucher). Vouchers may also be redeemed for use of a practice area, competition fees, coaching, golf cart hire, green fees.
  - Membership fees.
  - For any specific item (or for items generally) from a retail outlet (includes for example Myer or David Jones). Gift cards or gift vouchers for redemption at any retail outlet. Goods available from a butchery, bakery, grocery, etc.
  - Electricity accounts, telephone accounts and other utilities, petrol.
  - Note: The Rules do not permit cash prizes of any amount except as described above regarding holes-in-one.
  - Contact your State Association with queries on other items.

**iv) Team Competitions**

In a foursome, four-ball or team competition, each player may individually accept a prize up to the limit of \$1,200, however the players may not jointly accept one prize worth over the limit of \$1,200.

**v) Miscellaneous pertinent R&A Decisions**

1. A prize (irrespective of value) of an expenses paid trip to compete in a golf competition cannot be accepted. (With Golf Australia approval, certain events qualify for the sponsor to pay the expenses of competitors in handicap events . contact Golf Australia for further details.)
2. A prize of a place in a Pro-Am can be accepted provided the Pro-Am's normal entry fee does not exceed the prize limits.
3. The cumulative value of all prizes, other than for a hole-in-one, won by one golfer relating to the overall tournament (eg gross, net, first nine, nearest-the-pin), must not exceed the prize limits.
4. Players competing for cash prizes in closest-to-the-hole, long-drive, putting, or non-conforming hole-in-one contests are not considered to be playing for prize money+. Consequently only a player who accepts such a prize will be considered to have breached the Rules.

**vi) Hole-in-one Prizes**

- There is no limit to the value of a prize (includes cash prizes) that may be offered for achieving a hole-in-one while playing a round of golf.
  - Such a round of golf may comprise 9 holes.
  - Such a round of golf may be played on a pitch and putt course.
- This allowance only applies to prizes for holes-in-one (not longest drive, or nearest-the-hole, or putting competitions), and neither stand alone events nor multiple-entry events qualify.
- For example, it would be fine if an 18-hole event has a car on offer on a par 3 hole if a player holes-in-one as a part of their stipulated round. If however the player has the opportunity to purchase 'extra shots' on the par 3 in question, they would lose their Amateur Status if they won a car as a result of an 'extra' shot. It would also be contrary to the Rules for a player to win cash or an improper prize in a stand-alone hole-in-one competition (eg no 18-hole competition but a hole-in-one competition, or hole-in-one competition which is not a part of a stipulated round).
- Note: Players competing for cash prizes in non-conforming hole-in-one contests are not considered to be playing for prize money+. Consequently only a player who accepts such a prize will be considered to have breached the Rules.

**D. NEAREST-THE-PIN, LONG-DRIVING, PUTTING, NON-CONFORMING HOLE-IN-ONE COMPETITIONS, & SIMILAR EVENTS**

The following information will be of assistance to anyone wishing to conduct a nearest-the-pin, long-driving, putting,

or similar event, or non-conforming hole-in-one competition (see C(vi) for more information regarding hole-in-one competitions) in which golf skill is a factor. It should be read in conjunction with the preceding information on prize limits. The retail value of prizes that can be accepted for such a competition is \$1,200.

(Note: Whilst it is contrary to the Rules for a non-conforming hole-in-one competition (see C(vi) for more information regarding hole-in-one competitions) to offer a prize with a value greater than \$1,200 (or cash of any amount), Golf Australia will not take action against a club which conducts or hosts such a competition. This is PROVIDED players are advised in advance they will forfeit their Amateur Status if such a prize is accepted. Prizes of this type MAY NOT be offered for any other type of competition. This recognises the unusual nature of hole-in-one competitions in that they exhibit an insignificant likelihood of a prize actually being won.)

#### **i) Scope of the Application of the Rules**

The Rules of Amateur Status apply to all competitions where the player is asked to replicate a shot similar to one they would encounter during a round of golf. The Rules do not apply to activities involving golf feats not encountered on a golf course (eg pitching a ball into a bucket or striking a moving target) which take place at a carnival, fun fair, or fund-raising event where the playing of golf is not a major factor in attracting people to the event as a whole.

#### **ii) Donating Excessive Prizes to Charity**

When a club or a promoter has a sponsor wishing to provide a prize in excess of \$1,200 at a golf facility, the only option open is to make the prize available to a recognised charity (however see Note to D above). The conditions of the competition must clearly state that the person achieving the required feat does not win the "illegal" prize but that the charity (nominated by the person or by the sponsor) will receive the prize. The player must not receive any benefit, either directly or indirectly, for such a donation.

#### **iii) Attempts to Circumvent Rules**

In efforts to publicise events, promoters often seek ways of trying to "get around" the Rules. Please be assured that there are no such ways. The following points are made:

- Quiz, Raffle, or Prize Draw . See E below.
- Open Championships . At events in which both professional and amateur golfers are competing, Amateurs cannot be given an option to accept prize money or a non-conforming prize. Conditions of such events must be clearly set out. (However see Note to D above.)

### **E. RAFFLES, LUCKY DRAWS, SWEEPSTAKES**

If a quiz, raffle, or prize draw is limited to competitors who have achieved either a certain standard in a golf competition, or a particular feat (such as a hole-in-one, longest drive, or nearest the pin), the Rules still apply. Note: The Rules do not apply to quizzes, raffles, or prize draws, where the entry requirements are otherwise . so long as they are not conducted in an attempt to circumvent the Rules, for example as would be the case where a prize draw is structured or used to lure elite-level players to compete in an event.

If a raffle or prize draw is limited to players to have achieved a certain standard in a golf event or a specific feat (such as a hole-in-one, longest drive, or nearest-the-pin), golf skill would be an entry requirement and when the retail value of such a raffle or draw prize is added to any other prize won by the same person in the same event, this must not total an amount in excess of \$1,200.

An informal sweepstake, whereby a competitor voluntarily wagers a set amount of money on themselves, is acceptable provided; the cost of an individual ticket does not exceed \$10, the players in general know each other, and the conduct of the sweepstake is incidental to the primary competition/s. The sole source of money won by the players in an acceptable sweepstake will have been advanced by the players themselves, the prizes must not be excessive, and advertising of the sweepstake must not take place. A competition featuring characteristics other than these (and which offers cash prizes) is likely to be considered to be offering prize money.

A Calcutta or auction sweepstake is considered contrary to the purpose and intent of the Rules (see the Appendix to the Rules of Amateur Status).

### **F. BREACHES OF RULES**

Breaches of Amateur Status Rules will be handled by Golf Australia or the appropriate State Association, whether or not the golfer is a member of an affiliated club. If Golf Australia is satisfied that an amateur golfer has knowingly breached the Rules by accepting an illegal prize, the golfer's amateur status will be revoked. A period of up to two years awaiting reinstatement applies for accepting a prize of excessive value.

### **G. AFFILIATED CLUBS**

When a Member Association of Golf Australia receives advice that an improper prize is on offer at an affiliated club (other than for a non-conforming hole-in-one competition), that club will be requested to have the prize withdrawn, irrespective of the time and cost invested by the organiser in promoting the event, or the worthiness of any charity involved.

Where an affiliated club is aware of, but makes no effort to discourage, a competition on its course for an excessive

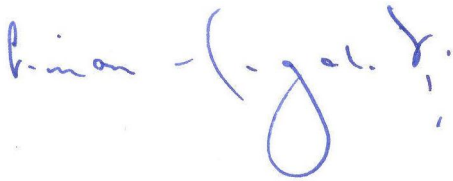
prize (other than for a non-conforming hole-in-one competition), the Member Association of Golf Australia would consider appropriate sanctions on that club, the ultimate being one of disaffiliation.

Clubs are urged to ensure that outside users of their course provide management with copies of entry forms and publicity releases as well as a list and value of all prizes that are proposed to be on offer. A copy of this document should be provided to the organiser.

**If any doubt exists as to the legality of any prize, details should immediately be sent to your State Association for clarification so as to avoid any embarrassment.**

Golf Australia hopes this paper is useful to all interested parties and we strongly urge club officials and event organisers to familiarise themselves with the contents.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Simon - (Golf Australia)". The signature is stylized and includes a large loop at the end.

Simon Magdulski  
**Manager – Rules & Handicapping**

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