



# 3Lakes Golf Course

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**Everything You Need To Know** . . . about planning a successful golf tournament to benefit your organization, company or family. We hope that you will use this packet as a guide for how to conduct a successful golf tournament. Save or raise some money and make a memory!

## **What is a golf tournament?**

Golfers come out to play 18 holes of golf with the opportunity to win prizes for best score, worst score, longest drive, etc. They can eat lunch or dinner before or after playing and participating in raffle drawings.

## **How does the event raise money?**

Golfers pay a fee to play, which covers greens fees, cart rental, and lunch or dinner. You can adjust the per person fee to include a donation to your charity organization. However, the most effective way to raise money is through sponsorships, contests and raffles.

**How do I get started?** Read this packet, recruit a few reliable volunteers and you are on your way!

## **Timeline**

### **Six Months before the tournament**

- Choose a location – call golf courses for prices and availability (3 Lakes has the most competitive package!)
- Decide on time of the event
- Decide whether to have lunch and/or dinner
- Recruit volunteers to help on the day of the event
- Recruit volunteers to help solicit sponsorships and prizes
- Begin to develop promotional materials, flyers, brochures, posters (We can help you with this!!)
- Get the word out!!!!

### **Five Months before the tournament**

- Send letters to friends informing them of the tournament and ask for golfers and donations of prizes, cash, and/or hole sponsorships.
- Finalize promotional materials.

### **Four Months before the tournament**

- Send letters to local businesses asking for sponsorships and donations.
- Begin meeting with local businesses face-to-face to solicit donations, etc.

### **Three Months before the tournament**

- Send brochures to local businesses seeking players.

### **Two Months before the tournament**

- Begin picking up prize donations.
- Meet with volunteers and check on progress of donation collection.

### **One Month before the tournament**

- Pick up any remaining prize donations.
- Decide which prizes will be given for which contests.
- Meet with volunteers to stuff goodie bags.
- Finalize all sponsorship signage.
- Confirm all arrangements with golf course.

### **Day of the tournament**

- Arrive early and meet with volunteers to go over what needs to be done and make sure everyone understands their assignment and responsibilities.
- Set up registration table and raffle table.
- Place sign and banners in appropriate locations.
- Confirm all arrangements with golf course staff.
- Take time to celebrate your success at planning a successful golf tournament!

# Registration

Getting players registered for your tournament can sometimes feel like a full-time job. You need designate someone to constantly stay on top of the situation. Be sure to set a deadline for registration of golfers for several weeks before the time the golf course needs a final count. After the deadline, there are no refunds. This may sound harsh, but last minute cancellations can be a nightmare. You will have to honor the number of golfers that you committed to the golf course whether players show up or not.

The registration form should include:

- 1) the information the player will need to get to the golf course
- 2) the date
- 3) the time and
- 4) what to expect once they get there.

The form should also include all the information you will need to contact the player (and his/her foursome if applicable) including phone, address and especially e-mail address. E-mail is a great way to send reminders and let the golfers know you received their registration fees.

# Sponsors

Sponsors are either individuals or businesses that help offset the cost of running a golf tournament by providing money, services or prizes. You will need to solicit sponsorships from the business community. Don't forget friends and business associates!!

## Levels and Types of Sponsorships

Set up different levels of sponsorship and itemize what the sponsor will receive in return for their contribution. For example: A platinum sponsor might be the highest level – making the highest contribution, which may include corporate recognition in the program, two or more foursomes in the tournament, official sponsor sign at the clubhouse and official sponsor sign at tee. Other types of sponsors might include Prize Sponsor, Raffle Sponsor, Hole-in-One Sponsor, Hole Sponsor (have a sign at the tee of golf hole), Food/Beverage Sponsor, or Practice Ball Sponsor. Use your imagination to come up with as many ways as possible to recognize your sponsors. If you treat your sponsors well they will be much more likely to help you next year!! Do not forget to send thank you notes to your sponsors and those who made donations. It is not necessary to send a thank you letter to individual golfers. Be sure to show them your appreciation throughout the day of the event.

# Prizes

## Goodie Bags

This is a “bag” of complimentary gifts given to each player, usually on arrival. It can consist of anything from snacks, a ball marker or a bag of tees to a golf or tee shirt. It could also be promotional items to promote your sponsors' businesses. Encouraging your sponsors to do this helps them and saves you money!

## Individual and Team Prizes

These are prizes given out to tournament contest winners (for example: men's and women's longest drive, closest to the pin, etc.) and to individual scoring winners (for example: low gross or high gross). The golf course can help you with these. Most fun tournaments involve team competition. This allows weaker players to play with stronger players so that everyone has a reasonable chance of winning. Make sure that each member of a prize-winning team gets an appropriate prize. Try to keep prize values relatively equal (i.e. similar value for first, second, third place, etc.) so that as many prizes as possible can be given out. Remember in fun tournaments it's not what you win but winning *something* that counts!!

## Fun Prizes

These are prizes for some of the less prestigious tournament contests like shortest drive or for dubious accomplishments like most balls in the water, most putts, most sand shots, or worst score on one hole. They can also include some miscellaneous humorous ones like best dressed, worst dressed, best swinging style, etc. Remember this is your tournament, use your imagination to make it fun and give it your own style.

## Door Prizes

This is a good way to give out prizes randomly by drawing names out of a hat. These could be smaller prizes that you've accumulated (never turn down a donation) which may not warrant a raffle.

## Raffle Prizes

This is an excellent way to raise more money! And that is your ultimate goal. A raffle usually involves one or more large prizes that players can buy draw tickets for. Sell tickets at the registration table and throughout the day. Do the draw near the end of the day after golf has been completed to encourage as much participation as possible and to encourage players to stay for the festivities. This is for charity; people want to help. They will buy raffle tickets!!

# Starting Options

## Normal Tee Times

This option is good for small groups, up to 40 people. Each group tees off from the first hole at normal tee time intervals (10 minutes). There will be a corresponding lag in finishing times, so you must consider what the early finishers will do while they wait for prize presentations, etc.

## Double Tee

Best for medium-sized groups (30-60). Groups tee off on first hole (play the 18 holes in normal sequence) and tenth hole (play the back nine first, then the front nine) at regular tee time intervals. This actually cuts the time to finish the round in half.

## Full Field Shotgun

Best option for large groups. The ideal number is 144 (two groups of four on each hole), but because of last minute dropouts and additions you may want to guarantee a minimum of 120 players. This will require the whole golf course to be clear so that each hole is available for play. Named "Shotgun" because players all over the course start at the same time, with the signal to start being given by a loud noise (gunshot, siren, etc.). Players play the course in sequence and finish on the hole prior to the one they started on. This allows a large group to finish at approximately the same time.

## Modified Shotgun

Good option for medium to large groups (60-120). Players start simultaneously as in a shotgun start but only occupy the number of holes required to accommodate the number of players playing. For example: 88 players starting at the same time might use holes 1 through 11.

***Be sure to ask the golf course manager which option is best for your group. The staff will be extremely helpful with all of your questions; after all you are giving them a lot of business.***

# Food & Beverages

## Breakfast Tips

If your tournament is going to be in the morning you may want to consider providing a breakfast snack. A buffet-style continental breakfast works well. Again, the golf course restaurant will have ideas and could be willing to provide a breakfast special at a reduced price. Alternatively, you could include an energy bar or similar snack in each goodie bag.

## Lunch and Dinner Tips

Depending on your tournament start time, lunch or dinner can either be served before or after the round of golf. A simple buffet-style meal will work well, as some players will finish before others. A barbecue, on a patio or out on the grass, is a great way to finish off a tournament. The golf course can and should provide you with a lot of ideas.

## Beverages/Beverage Cart

Make sure players have enough to drink during play and after the tournament. You can provide stationary coolers at strategic locations throughout the course or a beverage cart is a great option. This is a golf cart, stocked with coolers and beverages, that drives around the course during play providing beverages to those who want them. The cooler contents can be all or partially "sponsored" if you have the golf course's permission. If you have over 100 players, two or more beverage carts are best. You can also include a tip jar on each cart, another way to raise money for the Foundation!!

# Provide A Rules Sheet

## What is a Rules Sheet?

Each golf course has its own local rules of play. The format you choose for your tournament has its particular set of rules. Players must be informed of tournament contests. All these things should be included in a tournament rules handout that you give each player (in goodie bags or at the registration table). Players can then refer to this sheet when they are confronted by any confusion during or after play.

## SAMPLE RULES SHEET

### Tournament Format: Captain's Choice Scramble

1. Each player in the foursome hits off the tee. The "captain" then decides which is the best ball to play and all four players make their next shot from that spot. This process continues for each shot (including putts) until the ball is in the hole. (Note: Balls not being used are simply picked up.)
2. The team score on each hole is the number of strokes taken to get the ball in the hole using the "best" shots.
3. Each foursome must use one tee shot of each player during the round.
4. Shots must be played from as close to the spot of the shot selected as possible and must be played from the same type of lie (e.g. not moved from rough to fairway, fringe to green).
5. If your group is a threesome, one player will be allowed to hit two shots on each hole. For example, player one will hit two shots on hole one, player two on hole two, player three on hole three, player one on hole four, and so on. Keep the rotation the same.

### Tournament Contests (Mulligans can not be used for contests):

1. Longest Drive (Men's and Women's) – on the 8th hole. Your drive must be in the fairway to count. Put your name on the marker in the fairway and move it to your ball location if you beat the existing longest drive.
2. Shortest Drive – on the 3rd hole. Come on, fess up!!! Your drive must be in the fairway to count. Put your name on the marker in the fairway and move it to your ball location if you beat the existing shortest drive.
3. Closest to the Pin – on the 11th and 15th hole. Your **tee shot** must be on the green to count. Put your name on the marker and move it to your ball location if you beat the existing closest to the pin.
4. Hole in One – on the 2nd hole. Just get a hole in one, pretty simple.

Tees: Men use the white tees. Ladies use the red tees.

Mulligans can be purchased for \$5.00 each. They can be used to "do over" a bad shot, but only by the individual who purchases the mulligan. The entire foursome is not allowed to hit again.

# Contest Ideas

## **Closest to the Pin**

This contest is run on a par three hole. Player with tee shot closest to the pin wins. This can be run on one or more par three holes depending on the number of prizes you have.

## **Fewest Putts**

Depending on your tournament format, you can have players keep track of their individual (or team) putts and give a prize for the fewest putts of the day.

## **Hole-in-One**

A prize is offered (usually by a sponsor) for any player who hits a hole in one on a designated par three hole.

## **Longest Drive**

This contest is run on one or more par four or five holes, usually with a wide, straight fairway. Player with the longest tee shot in the fairway wins. This can involve two prizes if you like, one for men and one for women.

## **Straightest Drive**

This contest is run on one or more par four or par five holes. The drive closest to the middle of the fairway wins. Distance is not important (although a minimum distance is sometimes stipulated).

## **Putting Contest**

This could be held on the putting green before the round or during dinner after the round is finished (usually with an unconventional putter such as a baseball bat or shovel). The participant who makes the longest putt wins.

## **Chipping Contest**

This is run as a sideline event to the tournament. Set up a flag in a practice area or on the putting green and a “tee” area where the chip must be taken from. Player chipping closest to the pin wins. Any of the contests can be used as fundraising events. Players can be charged a fee to participate, and the winner receives half of the money collected for that particular contest.

***Remember, you do not have to incorporate all of these contests into your tournament. These are just some extra ways to make the tournament more enjoyable for your guests. If they have fun this time they are more likely to come back next year!!***

# Special Tournament Contests

You can also add special contest offering prizes and cash awards to help with fundraising and making your event even more unique. Tournament services for GolfUSA by GolfTournament.Com offers special insurance for each of these offerings allowing you to offer a big prize or cash award for minimal cost. You can even get a sponsor to pay for these!

- **Hole-In-One:** Offer a grand prize for a hole-in-one on a selected par 3 hole and offer 3 more secondary prizes for a hole-in-one on other par 3 holes.
- **Putt Fore Cash:** Offer one player an opportunity to putt from either 40 or 50 feet to win a cash prize. Great for raffles and the event can be held after the tournament to keep players on-site until the end.
- **Circle Shot:** Another hole-out contest. Offer a cash prize for getting within 3 or 6 feet of a par 3 hole.
- **Chip and/or Sand Shots:** Hole-out contests. Offer cash prizes for making a chip shot from 50 or 100 feet or a sand shot from 75 feet.

# Sample Letter To Businesses Asking For Donations and/or Sponsorships

To Whom It May Concern::

My name is Your Name, and I will be hosting a golf tournament on April 13, 2003 to benefit the <Your Charity Name Here>.

<Describe your charity and its purpose here.>

I am asking for donations in the form of \_\_\_\_\_ for goody bags or door prizes for participants. You may also sponsor a hole for \$200.00 and your donation will be acknowledged with a sign at the hole. <Your Charity Name Here> is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public corporation, so your donation is tax deductible. Anything that your company can contribute would be greatly appreciated. At this time we hope to have 100 participants and it could grow to as many as 144. Most players will be professional men and women ages 25-45. I realize the many donation requests your organization must get each year so on behalf of people with <Name of what your charity assists>. I would like to thank you in advance for considering our request. I can be reached via e-mail at <E-MAIL> or phone at <PHONE>. Or simply complete and return the attached donation form.

Thank you very much for your time.

Very Truly Yours,

# Sample Registration Form

<Your Event Name> GOLF TOURNAMENT

<Describe what your charity benefits and how it helps people>

All proceeds from the tournament will be donated to <Your Charity Name Here>. Please join us for a **friendly** round of golf to help <Your Charity Name Here>!

Where: 3 Lakes Golf Course, 6700 Saltsburg Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Format: Captain's Choice Scramble (4 man teams)

When: Sunday, April 13, 2003 at 1 p.m.

Donation: \$100.00 per person or \$380.00 per foursome

Includes greens fees, cart rental, hot dog & drink at the turn, dinner, prizes, and refreshments.

## Individual Registrations are Welcome!!

(Teams will be assigned)

Make checks payable to HHT Foundation.

Please contact **Your Name** at (555) 555-5555 for more information.

Complete the form below and return it to:

**Mail: Your Name**

**44 Main Street**

**Your State, AA 55555**

**Email: [yourname@email.com](mailto:yourname@email.com)**

*Want to advertise a business or don't want to play? You can sponsor a hole for \$100!*

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## Registration Form

**All fees are due in full at time of registration.**

Captain (or individual): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Members:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_