

THE BRITISH MINIGOLF ASSOCIATION **COMPETITION RULES**

VERSION 4 – 03.05.16

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1. INTRODUCTION

These Competition Rules will provide a detailed explanation about minigolf tournament play for competitors. When followed, all players should gain maximum enjoyment from the sport.

- 1.1.1 The British Minigolf Association is the UK's governing body for the sport of minigolf, which includes both adventure golf and crazy golf. This body will hereafter be referred to as the BMGA or the Association.
- 1.2 These Competition Rules apply to all tournaments that qualify as BMGA Tour ranking tournaments and therefore include club open tournaments.
- 1.3 These Competition Rules also apply to all the different tournament formats, e.g. strokeplay, matchplay (both single and team versions), and all the variations including the crazy crazy round of the World Crazy Golf Championships, and are covered in this document under separate sections.
- 1.4 Minigolf is a sport which is played primarily with a minigolf ball and putter on a minigolf course. The aim is to get the ball from the teeing off area to the hole in as few strokes as possible.

2. FORMAT, EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

2.1 Format

In order for a tournament to qualify as a BMGA ranking tournament, the following criteria must be met:

- It must be played over a minimum of 36 holes for a one day event. For two day tournaments all players are guaranteed a minimum of 90 holes, subject to exceptional weather or circumstances.
- The tournament must be held in the UK.
- The tournament must be an open event, ie. available for entry by all players.
- There must be at least 5 tour pro players taking part.
- A full 21 days notice of the date, time and location of the tournament must be available on the BMGA website.

2.2 Equipment - Putter

2.2.1 Players may use a minigolf putter or a golf putter, or one loaned by the course.

Players may not use any golf club other than a putter.

2.2.2 The putter must have no gadgets for aiming, but notches/lines on the putter head are permitted.

2.3 Equipment - Ball

- 2.3.1 Players may use WMF sanctioned minigolf ball(s) at all tournaments, except at the World Crazy Golf Championship (see Section 4 point 4.2).
- 2.3.2 The BMGA give clubs the option to limit a) the amount of minigolf balls and b) the type of minigolf balls in their club open tournaments.
- 2.3.3 Players who are novices (as defined in their first three tournaments), may use their own golf balls or those loaned by the course, except at the World Crazy Golf Championships (see Section 4 point 4.2).
- 2.3.4 All players who are not novices, may in addition to their own minigolf balls, use only the official golf ball as sanctioned by the World Minigolf Federation (WMF). A list of all permitted minigolf balls is available on the WMF website.

2.4 Safety

- 2.4.1 Players must at all times exercise due care, responsibility and caution so as not to injure themselves or other persons.
- 2.4.2 Many of the courses have holes in close proximity to each other. For safety reasons, and wherever possible, all other players in a group (including the scorer if non playing), should stand at least 1.5 metres (5 feet) away from the player making his or her shot.

3. STROKEPLAY TOURNAMENTS

3.1 Stroke / Ball in Play

- 3.1.1 In preparation for the first stroke on each hole, the ball must be placed inside the playing area only by hand.
- 3.1.2 The first stroke at each hole must be played from within the teeing off area.
- 3.1.3 A ball in play can only be moved by a stroke of the putter. It can only be played from a position of rest, and can only be touched by the putter when the stroke is made.
- 3.1.4 Before every stroke the ball has to be addressed with the putter held in both hands.
- 3.1.5 A player is deemed ready to play when, in addressing the ball, he or she begins their back-swing.
Unintentional contact with the ball in the absence of clear readiness to play does not count as a stroke.
- 3.1.6 When a player is addressing the ball in readiness to play, or in the process of playing a shot, all other players in the group (including the scorer if non playing), and players from other groups in close proximity to the player in question should comply with the following:
- Be stationary until the player has completed his or her stroke.
 - Be quiet until the player has completed his or her stroke.
- 3.1.7 Players have a maximum time of 45 seconds to play each shot.
- 3.1.8 When a hole is being played, the playing area can only be stepped on or touched by the player concerned. The playing area should not be entered when a ball in play is moving as a result of the first stroke, but is permitted thereafter once the ball is stationary for all future strokes.
- 3.1.9 The use of any objects as an aiming device is strictly forbidden. If at all possible, all ball bags and other objects must be left 1 metre (3 feet) from the edge of the hole being played.
- 3.1.10 It is not permitted to take practice strokes or to roll the ball on the playing area to test their pace. The only exception to this is that at the start of each round of a tournament, players are allowed one practice putt at the hole at which they begin their round. This optional practice shot cannot be counted as or towards the player's score for that hole.
- 3.1.11 Players may remove debris, e.g. leaves and sticks from the intended path of their ball before taking a shot.
- 3.1.12 If a player wishes to clean their ball, its position must first be marked either by a coin or by the blade of the putter being laid down on the playing surface. The ball can then be picked up, cleaned and returned to its original position prior to the coin or putter being removed.
- 3.1.13 If a ball is moved again by an outside influence, e.g. strong wind after having come to rest, then it must be repositioned by the player at that point where it first came to rest. To avoid any confusion as to the exact position where the ball first came to rest, it is in the player's interests to mark the ball immediately it ceases to move by lifting the ball off the ground and replacing

the ball in the same position. If the player fails to mark the ball, it has to be played from its final resting position (not the original resting position).

- 3.1.14 If a ball comes to rest alongside or near to the perimeter boundary of the hole, or to an obstacle, plateau, slope or immovable obstruction, it can be repositioned only by hand up to 20 centimetres or 8 inches from it at no penalty. (As a guide, 20 cm is a little less than the width of a standard BMGA tournament score-card holder.) Repositioning is to allow the player a proper back swing and/or follow through. A ball must not be repositioned other than at 90 degrees. A player must not position a ball in order to provide a direct line of sight to the hole if one did not exist from where the ball originally came to rest.
- 3.1.15 If a ball comes to rest outside the playing area it is deemed to be out of bounds, then the player should place the ball inside the playing area at the point of exit, using the relief in Section 3 point 3.1.14, and take their next shot. The initial stroke must be included in the player's score for that hole, but no additional penalty is incurred.
- 3.1.16 Hole specific rules will apply at most courses. In such cases, an announcement will be made before the start of the competition.
- 3.1.17 If a ball comes to rest inside a pipe, such that it is unplayable, it must be repositioned up to 20 centimetres or 8 inches at the exit of the pipe. No penalty shall be incurred.
- 3.1.18 A ball is deemed to have been holed when it comes to rest in the cup. If a ball enters the cup and then bounces out again, it is deemed not to have been successfully holed.
- 3.1.19 A player must finish each hole with the same ball with which he or she started the hole, subject to an exceptional circumstance as stated in Section 3 point 3.1.20.
- 3.1.20 A ball which has become so badly damaged during play that it can no longer be played, or that has been lost during normal play (and not found within 5 minutes), can, subject to the agreement of a referee, be replaced by another ball. The next stroke has to be taken from the last resting position of the damaged ball, or the point of exit of the lost ball.

3.2 Order of Play and Playing of a Hole

- 3.2.1 In a **rolling start** the holes must always be played in the order 1 to 18. However, where a **shotgun start** has been stipulated, players will be starting at any numbered hole, but they must still play the holes in numerical sequence, e.g. players starting at hole 7 would play holes 7-18 and then holes 1-6 in that order.
- 3.2.2 Where a course has less than 18 normal holes eg. hole 18 is a "win a free round hole", then hole 1 will be played twice in each round to make up the 18 holes.
- 3.2.3 A hole can only be played once the last player in the group ahead has played the hole and left the playing area. Every player must be ready to start play on a hole as soon as the hole becomes vacant. Two balls may not be in play at a given hole at the same time.
- 3.2.4 A new hole can only be played when the last player of the group concerned has finished the previous hole.

- 3.2.5 A group of players should move onto the next hole as quickly as possible, but play should not commence at that hole until the group ahead of them have started play at their next hole.
- 3.2.6 It is the responsibility of every individual player to ensure that they do not exceed the 45 second limit for every shot in the round.
- 3.2.7 When playing in groups, the order of play within that group must be maintained throughout the round. After each round, the order of play within that group will be changed.
- 3.2.8 The order of play in the final round of every tournament is determined by the scores of the players in each category in the preliminary rounds. The players with the highest scores start first, thereafter in reverse order until the players with the lowest scores start last.
- 3.2.9 In the final round of the two day tournaments where the qualifiers are limited to 18 players, each group of three players will have a specific scorer designated to them.

3.3 Scoring

- 3.3.1 Each stroke counts. If the ball has not been holed after six strokes, the player must cease to play that hole, and will score a seven.
- 3.3.2 The winner is the player with the lowest aggregate stroke play total.
- 3.3.3 In the event of a tie for 1st, 2nd or 3rd places (also for other places if there is prize money or medals at stake), a sudden death play-off will be held. This begins on hole 1, and continues onto hole 2 and thereafter in numerical order until there is a difference in the scores of the players involved. The playing order on hole 1 of a sudden death play off will be decided by the toss of a coin, and the starting player will alternate after hole 1 on a continuous basis until the play off has been concluded.
- 3.3.4 If there are no sudden death play offs required, then in the case of a tie from 4th place downwards, the following criteria apply in determining the order of placing:
 - The smallest difference between the best and worst round scores.
 - If the above is the same, then the smallest difference between the second best and second worst round scores.
 - If both the above result in a tie then both players will be given the same placing.
- 3.3.5 A player who is missing without permission to be absent at their appointed tee off time is given seven strokes for every hole on which that player was absent.
- 3.3.6 Players are not allowed to keep their own scores. The last named player on the score-card should keep score for the first, the first for the second, and the second for the third.
- 3.3.7 It is the responsibility of each player to ensure that their scorer records the correct score after

- he or she has played the hole. Only when player three has received the score-card and checked his or her score can the group progress to the next hole.
- 3.3.8 Each individual stroke should be counted and entered in the appropriate space on the card immediately after it is played.
 - 3.3.9 Incorrect entries should be crossed out in such a way that they remain legible, and the correct score should be written next to it and initialled.
 - 3.3.10 At the end of a round, each player should work out their own score for the round and that of the player they are scoring for. Players should sign for their own score, and also as scorer for the other player.
 - 3.3.11 Players must leave the course immediately they have completed their round and submit the completed and signed score-card to the tournament director.
 - 3.3.12 If a player has any doubts about a ruling in a strokeplay event, he or she must refer to the experienced tour pro player in their group, and if still not resolved then refer to a tournament referee.
 - 3.3.13 Any breaches of the rules in this section will not incur penalty shots, but could require the replaying of a specific hole.

3.4 Tournament Interruption and Abandonment

- 3.4.1 In exceptional circumstances, a general interruption of the tournament can be ordered by the tournament director/referee and must be observed. Play can resume only when decided by the tournament director/referee.
- 3.4.2 In the case of rain, play should be continued for as long as the holes can be kept playable. However in the case of thunderstorms in close proximity, the tournament director/referee will interrupt the tournament immediately regardless of rain.
- 3.4.3 Players must be ready to continue the tournament at any time, unless a specific time has been set for the resumption of play.
- 3.4.4 A tournament can be abandoned by the tournament director/referee when external circumstances require it.

3.5 General

- 3.5.1 Smoking / vaping is not allowed on the course.
- 3.5.2 The consumption of alcohol, hot food and hot drinks is not allowed on the course.
- 3.5.3 Mobile phones must be switched to silent mode at all times on the course.
- 3.5.4 The only persons permitted on the course during play are the players actually competing at the time, referees, other officials, non playing scorers, and registered coaches. The exception to this rule would be the final round of the club championships and the match play final.

4. WORLD CRAZY GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

The Competition Rules for the World Crazy Golf Championship are identical to the rules stated above in Section 3 with the exception of the following:

4.1 Format

The World Crazy Golf Championship (WCGC) is played over a minimum number of 5 rounds comprising 90 holes. All players take part in rounds 1 to the specified penultimate round. The top 18 players qualify for the crazy crazy round. In the event of a tie for 18th place, players will take part in a sudden death play off in accordance with the rules set out in Section 3 point 3.3.3. In addition to the above, there may be a parallel event/final round for novice players.

4.2 Equipment – Ball

Players may only use the Official WCGC ball for that year's event. The decision on which type of ball is to be used will be specified on the entry form. The ball is supplied by the tournament director and is always available for the players at the start of practice on the Friday morning prior to the weekend that the tournament is taking place.

4.3 Order of Play and Playing of a Hole

- 4.3.1 The playing rules in Section 4 points 4.3.2 to 4.3.5 apply only to the final crazy crazy round.
- 4.3.2 Each of the three players within each group will be provided with a different coloured ball.
- 4.3.3 The order of play between the three players rotates on every hole. This is to enable every player to have six holes playing first, six holes playing second and six holes playing third.
- 4.3.4 All players tee off in turn so that all balls are in play at the same time. After all first shots have been played, **the player furthest away from the hole** then plays their next shot. The next player who is furthest away from the hole then plays their next shot, and so on. This continues until all the players have holed out (or failed to hole out in 6 strokes).
- 4.3.5 During the course of this final round, there will occasions when the route of a player's ball to the hole is blocked by another player's ball. In these circumstances, the player whose turn it is to play has the option of hitting his or her opponent's ball or trying to find another route to the hole.

5. ORDER OF MERIT RANKINGS AND BMGA SHIELD

5.1 Order of Merit Rankings

5.1.1 All strokeplay ranking tournaments on the BMGA tour are to be treated equally.
No special treatment for the Majors, National Opens or British Masters.

5.1.2 Every player who finishes a tournament scores a minimum of 50 points.

5.1.3 The maximum number of points available for each event is decided by the number of current top 16 players competing and their respective position in the rankings. The higher a player is ranked, the more points that a player carries into the tournament:

Number 1 ranked player =	200
Number 2 ranked player =	190
Number 3 ranked player =	180
Number 4 ranked player =	170
Number 5 ranked player =	160
Number 6 ranked player =	150
Number 7 ranked player =	140
Number 8 ranked player =	130
Number 9 ranked player =	120
Number 10 ranked player =	110
Number 11 ranked player =	100
Number 12 ranked player =	90
Number 13 ranked player =	80
Number 14 ranked player =	70
Number 15 ranked player =	60
Number 16 ranked player =	50

Maximum number of points available if all the top 16 compete = **2000**

5.1.4 The winner of the tournament/leader after the qualifying rounds receives the maximum number of points available in an event. The number of points scored by all other players is dependent on the exact number of shots they finish behind the champion:

2 round tournament: =	-50 points per shot behind the champion (100 divided by 2)
3 round tournament: =	-33.3 points per shot behind the champion (100 divided by 3)
4 round tournament =	-25 points per shot behind the champion (100 divide by 4)
5 round tournament =	-20 points per shot behind the champion (100 divided by 5)
6 round tournament =	-16.6 points per shot behind the champion (100 divided by 6)
7 round tournament =	-14.3 points per shot behind the champion (100 divided by 7)
8 round tournament =	-12.5 points per shot behind the champion (100 divided by 8)
9 round tournament =	-11.1 points per shot behind the champion (100 divided by 9)

In other words, a player loses 100 points for every shot that their average is behind the champion's average. If the champion averages 33.0 shots per round (or scores 99 total shots in a 3 round tournament), then a player who scores a 34.0 average (102 total shots in a 3 round tournament) will score 100 points fewer than the champion.

5.1.5 All decimal points are rounded up to the next total number. So if a player scored 427.1 points in a tournament, it would be counted as 428 points.

5.1.6 Only 10 tournaments over a 2 year period count towards a player's total number of ranking points. The points scored from their 5 best tournaments from Year 1 are halved then rounded up to the nearest full number, and added to their best 5 tournaments from Year 2 to create their total number of ranking points over a 2 year period.

5.2 BMGA Shield

Running season long, the BMGA Shield (originally known as the SOR - Seasonal Only Rankings) were first introduced in 2009 with the aim of giving all players a more immediate and season specific breakdown of where they stand in relation to all the players that participate in tournaments each year. The Shield does not replace the Official Order of Merit rankings (which are still the ultimate benchmark for players) but runs in tandem with the official rankings.

The BMGA Shield will have prizes for the overall leader and category leaders at the season end. Category 4 contains novice players taking part in their first 3 events before moving into Category 3 for their fourth event onwards. Category 3 & 4 will be combined for the BMGA Shield.

The focus of the Shield is to reward players for their results across the year, with particular emphasis on personal Best performances, improvements round to round within any given tournament along with specific points for aces. The breakdown of how the points are made up is listed below:

- **Relative result in a tournament – 10pts for the last + 10pts per position**
- **Personal best round at that course – 50 points**

The following points are multiplied based on Category Status i.e. Category 2 sees the points x 2, Category 3 x 3 and Category 4 x 4 (for the first 3 events they participate in .)

- **Aces - 10 points each**
- **Hatrick of aces - 50 points**
- **Consecutive improvement round by round - 25 points per round**

Category 1 Players (current Top 16 in the official Order of Merit / International players / tour winners from previous five years)

Category 2 Players (current places 17 - 32 inclusive in the official Order of Merit / not won on tour in previous five years)

Category 4 Players (any player in their first three events on the tour - unless achieving category 2 status outright)

Category 3 Players (all other players)

6. DISCIPLINE – OFFENCES, PENALTIES AND PROCEDURES

This section only covers incidents arising during tournaments. All other disciplinary issues are covered under Section 8 of the Constitution Rules. The primary reason for this section is to ensure the safety of all the competitors during play.

6.1 Discipline - Offences and Penalties Introduction

Discipline and Penalties are all governed by the points set out in the **WMF International rule book, Folder 2.3 - Worldwide international sport rules, section 18. (www.minigolfsport.com)**

On those occasions where offences take place it is the responsibility of the team of referees, who in most cases will be members of the Executive Committee, to meet and deal with these matters. They must quickly decide upon the nature of the offence, and impose an appropriate penalty before the next round of the tournament.

All BMGA Tour ranking events are covered by WMF 2.3., Section 18.

6.2 In the incidence of **a) slow play** and **b) excessively loud and/or contrived ace celebrations** occurring from time to time. Whilst it is essential for all competitors to enjoy their sport, it is also important that (a) and (b) above are kept to a minimum in order to show respect to fellow competitors.

6.3 Discipline - Procedures

6.3.1 Any player receiving a cumulative total of two yellow cards in tournaments during the same calendar year for the offences will automatically receive a red card, and the head referee will inform the player in writing of their suspension from the next major BMGA tournament.

6.3.2 Although a record of all the penalties handed out to players during the calendar year will be maintained by the Executive Committee, there will be no carry forward of these penalties into the following year. This means all players will start the next calendar year with a clean slate.

6.3.3 The BMGA accepts no liability for damage to minigolf courses, equipment or property that may be caused by individual players participating in a tournament. A player who causes damage to a minigolf course, equipment or property when participating in a tournament may be held responsible by the course owner for the damage caused.

6.3.4 The BMGA accepts no liability for injuries sustained or accidents occurring at, or during, a BMGA tournament.

6.3.5 The BMGA currently does not have the resources available to finance independent non playing referees at their ranking tournaments.

- 6.3.6 Referees are appointed for all ranking tournaments by the tournament director. In the vast majority of cases, these referees will also be members of the Executive Committee. It is the responsibility of the referees to monitor play.
- 6.3.7 The occurrence of any of the offence can be reported at the time of the offence to a referee or at the end of the round in which it took place, to the head referee or Tournament. The head referee must then call a meeting of all the referees to discuss the incident, and ascertain all the relevant details from both the offender and the player reporting the offence.
- 6.3.8 Once a decision has been reached by the team of referees, the player who has committed the offence will be given the relevant penalty that relates to his or her offence if it is deemed necessary. The decision of the referees is final.
- 6.3.9 All serious offences will result in a written warning, and this notice will be displayed on the board of the tournament director's office. In addition, the offence will be recorded on the bangolf scoring system.

6.4 Discipline – Conclusion

All players should conduct themselves in a disciplined manner, demonstrating courtesy and sportsmanship at all times, irrespective of how competitive they may be.

7 Doping and others

- 7.1** Every kind of doping is strictly forbidden. Further details are defined in the WMF anti-doping regulations and the rules of the "World Anti Doping Agency" (WADA-Code), which are in force for all national and international tournaments.
- 7.2** Playing under the influence of alcoholic beverages/food is forbidden.
- 7.3** Consumption of alcoholic beverages/food is forbidden during official practice and competition hours for all participants of a tournament.
- 7.4** Carrying of alcoholic beverages/food as well as smoking are forbidden during official practice and competition hours on the course for all participants of a tournament.
- 7.5** Definitions of terms for Section 7:
"during competition hours" means:
The time period from the first player's start to the last player's finishing of the last lane per day. A possible sudden death is also defined to be "during the competition". Victory ceremonies after the competition are not "during the competition". Only players that are still in the competition and not dropped out or missed the cut are affected by this rule.
"on the course" means:
Inside the area where the 18 lanes are located. If there is clearly restricted area for spectators, this is not "on the course".

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