



## **USGA NOTICE TO COLLEGIATE GOLFERS REGARDING NAME, IMAGE AND LIKENESS**

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**TO: COLLEGIATE GOLFERS, COACHES AND EVENT ORGANIZERS**  
**FROM: THE USGA**  
**RE: NCAA POLICY AND AMATEUR STATUS**  
**DATE: JULY 6, 2021**

Based on the NCAA's interim policy on Name, Image and Likeness ("NIL"), which became effective on July 1, 2021, the USGA and The R&A will waive most (see below for additional guidance) NIL-related breaches of the Rules of Amateur Status for collegiate golfers through the end of 2021 so long as that golfer retains his or her NCAA playing eligibility.

Golf's governing bodies proposed permanent changes to the Rules of Amateur Status in February of this year that, if adopted, will no longer restrict NIL-related activities for all amateur golfers beginning January 1, 2022. Our plan remains to finalize the modernized Amateur Status rules by late fall, with the goal of ensuring a smooth transition and minimal disruption for all involved.

After learning of the NCAA's recent announcement, the USGA and The R&A have taken this interim step after considering what affect the NCAA's announcement could have on amateur golfers, event organizers, coaches and committees worldwide through this interim period.

Recognizing the immediate impact these decisions may have on a golf administrator's ability to confirm a player's amateur status, we will actively monitor the overall effect of these developments on the entire amateur game and, if necessary, we will update the information provided as appropriate.

This interim policy does not waive the Rules of Amateur Status in general for collegiate golfers, nor does it waive Rule 6 (Use of Golf Skill or Reputation) in its entirety. This interim approach is intended to provide a short-term solution that has the minimum impact possible on the amateur game and administrators until the new Rules of Amateur Status come into effect and we believe that by adopting this interim position for collegiate golfers only, we are minimizing the impact on administrators, while trying to ensure that collegiate golfers attending the same institution can receive the same benefits from use of their name, image and likeness.

Even though the NCAA has now allowed for collegiate golfers to benefit from their NIL, we strongly encourage collegiate golfers to discuss their specific situation with their school's compliance department before entering into any agreement or contract. This will help ensure compliance with NCAA guidelines, which are not under the USGA's nor The R&A's governance structure. For more information as to the NCAA's policy, please visit: [NCAA.org/about/taking-action](https://www.ncaa.org/about/taking-action)

Detailed guidance for golfers and golf administrators can be found below:

## **Collegiate Golfers**

- Collegiate golfers are encouraged to consult their school's compliance department prior to taking any NIL-related actions.
- The waiver in place applies as follows:
  - A collegiate golfer will remain an amateur golfer provided all three of the following apply:
    - The NIL-related actions are allowed under the NCAA's interim policy,
    - He or she remains on a team roster while the NIL-related activities take place, and
    - There are no other breaches of the Rules of Amateur Status in connection with the NIL activities. An example of this would be providing golf instruction, which while ok per the NCAA is not allowed under the Rules of Amateur Status.
- Any collegiate golfer who plans to benefit from his or her NIL should:
  - Be prepared to provide proof of NCAA eligibility (such as a letter from his or her school's compliance department) prior to competing in an amateur golf competition so the competition organizer can confirm eligibility.
  - Become familiar with any policies put into effect by a competition organizer that apply to logos, promotions or advertisements.

## **Non-collegiate amateur golfers**

- For all other amateur golfers, the current Rules of Amateur Status as approved by the USGA and R&A Rules Limited continue to apply.
- Amateur golfers who are not collegiate golfers on an active team roster could be in jeopardy of losing their Amateur Status if they benefit from their name, image or likeness before the new Rules of Amateur Status are adopted in January of 2022.
- If you have questions regarding any activity, you are encouraged to discuss your situation with the USGA Allied Golf Association in your state or with the USGA prior to taking any action.

## **Golf administrators**

- Recognizing the immediate impact these decisions may have on a golf administrator's ability to confirm a player's amateur status, we will actively monitor the overall effect of these developments on the amateur game and will update to the below information as appropriate.
- The interim policy of the USGA and The R&A does not waive the Rules of Amateur Status in general for collegiate golfers, nor does it waive Rule 6 (Use of Golf Skill or Reputation) in its entirety. This limited waiver is intended to provide a flexible approach that accommodates the variance that exists between state laws, and where there is no state law, the policies established by the school the collegiate golfers attends.
- Because of the differences that will invariably be allowed from one college golfer to another, competition organizers may need to inquire as to the amateur status of a player and the following may assist in that process:
  - Consider adding a question to entry forms or canvassing the field in advance of play to see if any collegiate players have taken actions to benefit from their NIL.
    - If any players affirm they have taken action, consider requesting a written letter from their school's compliance department that confirms (i) their ongoing NCAA eligibility and (ii) that they are still on the active team roster.
    - If a player meets these two requirements, that player's amateur status should not be affected by the NIL related activities.

- The current Rules of Amateur Status restrict an amateur golfer's use of logos and promotional activities. However, those specific Rules are waived for collegiate golfers who decide to benefit from their NIL, those collegiate golfers would need to follow their state law (or, where no state laws exist, their school regulation) regarding name, image and likeness.
  - We are aware that many laws and school-specific regulations governing collegiate golfers' ability to benefit from their NIL have included language related to the types of advertising and promotions that are allowed but few have regulated logo placement, size, number, etc.
  - As a result, competitions organizers may wish to consider adopting their own comprehensive policy on logos, promotions, or advertisements in connection with a particular competition.
  - If organizers wish to adopt a new policy, all affected golfers in the competition should be notified well in advance of the competition to minimize confusion and disruption.