

GOLF COURSE CONDITIONING AND CLOSURE

The USGA and the Host Club share in the common goal of presenting the best possible playing conditions for the U.S. Amateur Championship. The USGA will develop a Course Preparation Memorandum that spells out in detail the Association's expectations for the conditions of the golf course(s). The USGA and the Host Club should review the Course Preparation Memorandum and then develop a golf course conditioning and closure plan to meet the USGA's expectations. The closure plan should take into account the four main factors that greatly affect golf course conditioning below:

- 1) Cart Traffic** – When carts are utilized at a golf course, they add greatly to the wear and tear of the course.
- 2) Excessive Play** – Simply put, course conditions are greatly affected by the amount of rounds played on a golf course. If a course has a high amount of outings, unaccompanied play and/or guest rounds, wear and tear will be significant.
- 3) Normal Wear and Tear** – Even a limited number of rounds on a golf course creates some wear and tear (including divots, walk paths, etc.).
- 4) Unusual Circumstances** – Each year, any number of unforeseen circumstances can arise such as difficult weather patterns, unusual turf diseases and abnormal wear and tear on all areas of the golf course.

In the Host Club Agreement, the USGA sets forth a minimum requirement relating to pre-championship conditioning of the championship course. This minimum requirement also addresses golf course closure and states the Host Club is obligated to close the championship course Friday of advance week to prepare for the start of the official practice rounds (Saturday/Sunday). This contractual requirement does not take into account any of the effects of the four factors listed above that impact your golf course(s).

Generally speaking, the USGA recommends that the golf course conditioning and closure plan build in flexibility to allow the Host Club to react to issues related to any of those four factors above. It may be necessary to completely close the course earlier than the Friday of advance week to stop wear and tear, promote healing and allow for unrestricted final maintenance practices. Other solutions that may need to be considered include roping/netting certain high traffic areas (tees, collection areas, etc.), limiting cart traffic and reducing total number of rounds (possibly limiting outside/guest play). The USGA supports any of these measures, if needed; to give grounds staff the opportunity to better the course condition for the championship.

It is ultimately the Host Club's decision when to close the golf course but the USGA's expertise should be considered when developing a closure plan. The USGA would like to work together with the Host Club to insure that the golf course is being presented to the world's best amateurs in its absolute best condition. We recommend that the Host Club finalize their golf course conditioning and closure plan by April 1 of the championship year at the latest. Please feel free to consult with Robbie Zalzneck or Ben Kimball further on this matter if your club has any questions.

Course closure plan from past U.S. Amateur sites:

Year	U.S. Amateur Site	Cart Policy	Guest Policy	Course Closure	Plan Success; comments
2010	Chambers Bay Golf Course (public)	Walking only venue w/ caddies	n/a	Monday of advance week	Great
2011	Erin Hills (public)	Walking only venue w/caddies	n/a	Monday of advance week	Great
2012	Cherry Hills Country Club (private)	Eliminated cart use July 4 th , one month prior to championship	No change	Friday of advance week	Okay; weather impacted when carts were eliminated
2013	The Country Club (private)	Walking only venue (carts for disabled only)	No guests after July 26	Wednesday of advance week	Great
2014	Atlanta Athletic Club (private)	Restricted carts to cart paths only on July 10 th .	No change	Sunday of advance week (both courses)	Great; needed since match play course fairways suffered major winter damage
2015	Olympia Fields Country Club (private)	Monday, August 3 rd ; last day for carts on match play course. Sunday, August 9 th ; last day for carts on stroke play co-host course	No change	Monday of advance week (both courses)	Good; some Par 3 teeing grounds should have been protected earlier
2016	Oakland Hills Country Club (private)	Took carts off South Course on Aug. 1. Took carts of North Course on Aug. 9	No guests on North Course Aug. 9-11	Monday of advance week for match play course; Thursday for stroke play co-host	Great
2017	The Riviera Country Club (private) The Bel-Air Country Club (private)	Riviera and Bel-Air took carts off their courses 3 weeks prior to the championship.	No Change	Riviera was closed during advance week Bel-Air was closed Wednesday of advance week	Great
2018	Pebble Beach Golf Links (public) Spyglass Hill Golf Course (public)	Cart path only all the time at this resort.	n/a	Pebble Beach and Spyglass had resort play through the Friday before practice rounds.	Okay; not ideal
2019	Pinehurst Resort & Country Club (public); Course No.2 and Course No.4	Cart path only all the time at this resort.	n/a	Pinehurst Resort & Country Club closed both No.2 and No.4 the Tuesday of advance week	Great