

Section 1: What to Expect at a New Jersey PGA Junior Tour Event

The New Jersey PGA Junior Tour offers a competitive tournament environment for junior golfers ages 11-18, designed to challenge players while emphasizing sportsmanship, integrity, and personal development.

Each event is professionally administered by New Jersey PGA staff to ensure consistent standards in course setup, rules enforcement, pace of play, and player conduct. Players and families can expect an experience that reflects the traditions and expectations of tournament golf.

Starting times and pairings will be published on the event's Tournament Information Page and emailed to participants approximately 3-5 days prior to the tournament.

Registration dates are listed on the Junior Tour Schedule Page. Registration opens at 10:00 AM on the published date and is conducted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Players placed on a waitlist should remain prepared, as openings frequently occur. The New Jersey PGA will make every reasonable effort to accommodate additional players when possible.

Section 2: Divisions

- A player's division is determined by their age as of July 31 of the current year. All Junior Tour Members remain eligible to compete through the day they turn 19.
- Players may not "play up" into an older age division. The only exception applies to players with August birthdays, as outlined below.

Divisions & August Birthday Exception

- The New Jersey PGA Junior Tour offers the following divisions:
 - Boys 11-12 / Girls 11-12
 - Boys 13-15 / Girls 13-15
 - Boys 16-18 / Girls 16-18
- Players compete in the division that corresponds to their age as of July 31.
- Players who are born in the month of August and whose birthday places them at the upper age limit of a division may choose to compete in either:
 - the division they are eligible for as of July 31, or
 - the next older division for the duration of the season.
- Once a division is selected, a player may not change divisions during the season.
- Players who do not meet the August birthday criteria may not play up under any circumstances.

Overall Divisions (Multiple-Round Championships Only)

- For multiple-round championships, including Junior Tour Majors, divisions are consolidated into:
 - Boys 13-18
 - Girls 13-18
- These overall divisions apply only to designated multiple-round championships and do not affect division placement for single-day events.

Future Tour Eligibility (Boys & Girls 11-12)

- The NJPGA Junior Tour - Future Tour is open to boys and girls ages 11-12.
- Players who turn 11 during the month of August are eligible to register as Future Tour Members and compete in the 11-12 division.
- Participation in the Future Tour is limited to Future Tour-designated events.
- Future Tour participants are not eligible to compete in Junior Tour Majors or multiple-round championships.

Future Tour Policies

- A separate NJPGA Junior Tour - Future Tour membership is required.
- Events are played using age-appropriate yardages.
- Caddies are not permitted, including advice from parents, guardians, or siblings.
- Players compete without a maximum score per hole.
- Divisions follow a limited event schedule, published on the New Jersey PGA Junior Tour website.
- Boys 11-12 and Girls 11-12 maintain separate Player of the Year standings.
- Players may only register for events listed on their specific division schedule.

Section 3: What You Should Bring to Each Tournament

- Players are responsible for arriving at each event fully prepared to compete. The following items are required or strongly recommended for all New Jersey PGA Junior Tour tournaments:
 - Golf clubs
 - Golf balls and tees
 - Water, sports drinks, and appropriate snacks
 - Sunscreen
 - Divot tool or pitch mark repair tool
 - Coin or ball marker
 - Permanent marker to identify your golf ball
 - Rain jacket and/or umbrella, as weather conditions may change

Player Health, Hydration, and Preparation

- The New Jersey PGA Junior Tour will either supply water or ensure that water is available through the host facility at each event. However, the responsibility for proper hydration and nutrition rests with the player and their family.
- New Jersey PGA Junior Tour staff are not responsible for monitoring or managing a player's hydration or nutrition during competition.
- Proper hydration and nutrition before, during, and after play are essential to player safety, performance, and overall well-being. Events are conducted outdoors, often during the summer months, and conditions may include extreme heat, cold, rain, or rapidly changing weather.
- Players are expected to take personal responsibility for their health, hydration, nutrition, and weather preparedness prior to the start of competition. Failure to do so may impact performance and, in extreme cases, a player's ability to safely continue play.

Section 4: Dress Code

- The dress code applies to players, parents, spectators, and all individuals attending New Jersey PGA Junior Tour events.
- Players are expected to wear appropriate golf attire, including:
 - Golf shirts with collars
 - Shirts tucked in for boys
 - Hats always worn forward
- The following attire is NOT permitted:
 - Denim or jeans
 - Sweatpants
 - Gym shorts
- If a Junior Tour Member arrives wearing attire that does not meet these standards, they may be required to purchase appropriate clothing from the host golf shop or may be asked not to participate in the event that day.

Section 5: Parent & Spectator Guidelines

- Parents and spectators must refrain from offering any form of assistance to players on the golf course. This policy is outlined on every Tournament Information Page and in all tournament communications.
- Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:
 - Club selection
 - Course or hole strategy
 - Reading greens

- Rules guidance
- Any action or communication that could provide a player with a competitive advantage
- This behavior falls under the New Jersey PGA Junior Tour's no-caddie policy. Caddying is defined not only as carrying a player's clubs, but also as offering advice or assistance of any kind.
- Parents and spectators are also expected to adhere to golf course dress codes. Denim or jeans are not permitted on the golf course. As guests of the host facility, all attendees must comply with club policies. When in doubt, wear appropriate golf attire.

Section 6: Caddie Policy

- Caddies are strictly prohibited at all New Jersey PGA Junior Tour events.
- Players may not:
 - Have another individual carry their clubs
 - Receive advice regarding club selection, hole strategy, reading greens, or rules interpretation
- Any player who requests or receives advice or assistance that could result in an unfair advantage will be subject to the following penalties:
 - First offense: Two-stroke penalty
 - Second offense: Disqualification
- Parents and spectators must also refrain from on-course conversation with Junior Tour Members during a stipulated round. This includes rules discussions or general conversation that could be misinterpreted as advice.

Section 7: Tournament Day Procedures

The following outlines how a typical New Jersey PGA Junior Tour tournament day operates, from arrival through the conclusion of play.

Arrival & Registration

- Upon arrival, players must check in at the registration table before doing anything else, including visiting practice areas.
- Players should arrive with sufficient time to prepare for their round. Most players arrive 45 minutes to one hour prior to their scheduled starting time.

Warm-Up & Preparation

- After checking in, players may proceed to designated practice areas. Players are expected to manage their warm-up time appropriately and be ready to play 10 minutes before their assigned starting time.

Scorecards

- For tournaments using scheduled tee times, official scorecards will be distributed on the first tee by the starter.
- For tournaments using a shotgun start, players will receive their official scorecards at the registration table.
- Players are responsible for ensuring they have the correct scorecard prior to the start of play.

Tournament Staff & Rules Administration

- New Jersey PGA staff are responsible for:
 - Setting official course yardages
 - Monitoring and enforcing pace of play
 - Administering the Rules of Golf and any Supplementary Rules of Play
- The Lead Tournament Director has final authority in all situations involving rules decisions or tournament procedures.

Course Yardage

- Yardages are determined by New Jersey PGA staff and may vary based on course conditions, weather, course difficulty, and total par. Yardages listed below are approximate and subject to change.
- Future Tour (Boys 11-12 & Girls 11-12)
 - Boys: approximately 5,500 yards
 - Girls: approximately 4,500 yards
- One-Day Tournaments (Boys 13-18 & Girls 13-18)
 - Boys: approximately 6,000-6,200 yards
 - Girls: approximately 5,200-5,400 yards
- Multiple-Round Championships (36 or 54 holes)
 - Boys: approximately 6,600 yards, where applicable
 - Girls: approximately 5,700 yards, where applicable
- *Yardages may increase for events ranked by the AJGA and Junior Golf Scoreboard (JGS).*

Cell Phones & Mobile Devices

- The use of mobile devices during tournament play is prohibited, except in the case of an emergency.
- Players may not text, make phone calls, or use their phones for any purpose during play, except for approved distance-measuring applications, where permitted.

Scoring & Awards

- At the conclusion of play, players must return their completed and signed scorecards as directed by tournament staff.
- For one-day events, ties for first place are determined using a USGA matching of scorecards. Playoffs are not conducted for one-day tournaments.
- For multiple-round championships and Junior Tour Majors, ties for first place will be decided by a playoff, with details communicated to players prior to the start of the event.
- Awards ceremonies will take place as soon as results are finalized. Players are expected to remain available following play unless otherwise directed by staff.

Distance Measuring Devices

- Distance-measuring devices are permitted during New Jersey PGA Junior Tour events.
- Devices that can measure slope, gradient, or elevation change are not permitted, even if those features are disabled.
- Violation of this policy will result in the following penalties:
 - First offense: Two-stroke penalty
 - Second offense: Disqualification

Section 8: Stopping Play During a Dangerous Situation

- When play is stopped due to a dangerous situation, all play must be discontinued immediately.
- Players must stop play at once and may not resume until the Committee has officially ordered a resumption of play.

Suspension & Resumption Signals

- Suspensions of play will be communicated using sirens or horn signals as follows:
 - One prolonged blast: Suspension of play for a dangerous situation
 - Three intermittent blasts: Suspension of play for any other reason
 - Two intermittent blasts: Resumption of play
- Players are expected to know and respond immediately to these signals.

Penalty for Breach

- The penalty for breach of this condition is disqualification.
- A breach includes, but is not limited to:
 - Continuing to play after a suspension of play has been signaled
 - Practicing after play has been suspended
 - Resuming play before the Committee has signaled resumption

Event Modification Due to Suspension

- The New Jersey PGA Junior Tour reserves the right to shorten an 18-hole stroke play event to 9 holes, or to the minimum number of holes completed by all contestants in a division, if:
 - All players in the division have completed at least 9 holes, and
 - It is not feasible to resume play after suspension.

Section 9: Pace of Play

- The goal of the New Jersey PGA Junior Tour Pace of Play Policy is to help players complete rounds in a timely manner and to ensure an enjoyable experience for all players, parents, and host facilities.
- All players are expected to maintain proper position on the golf course and play at a pace consistent with this policy.

Time Par

- Time par is the amount of time in which the New Jersey PGA Junior Tour expects groups to complete a round. Time par is expressed on both a per-hole and per-round basis and is based on threesomes.
- Per Hole (Threesomes):
 - Par 3 - 13 minutes
 - Par 4 - 15 minutes
 - Par 5 - 17 minutes
- Per Round (Threesomes):
 - Par 70 - 4 hours 26 minutes
 - Par 71 - 4 hours 28 minutes
 - Par 72 - 4 hours 30 minutes
- A group's official time begins when a member of the group plays their first stroke from the starting teeing area.
- The New Jersey PGA Junior Tour reserves the right to adjust time par during or between rounds based on course conditions, weather, or average group times.

Out of Position & Timing Procedures

- A group may be considered out of position under any of the following circumstances:
 - The group exceeds the allotted time to play a hole.
 - A group is 15 minutes behind their time par.
 - They are more than two full shots behind the group in front of them.
- When a group is out of position:
 - A warning may be issued, and the group will be encouraged to regain position.

- If the group remains out of position, all players in the group will be placed on the clock and timed individually.

Timing of Strokes

- Timing begins when it is a player's turn to play and they can do so without interference or distraction.
- Players are allowed 40 seconds to play a stroke.
- If a player exceeds the 40-second limit on two consecutive occasions, a one-stroke penalty can be applied.
- Once a group regains proper position, all timing ceases and any previously recorded bad time is void.

Pace of Play Tips

- Players are encouraged to use the following best practices to maintain pace:
 - If your ball may be lost or out of bounds, play a provisional ball (Rule 18.3).
 - If unsure how to proceed, play a second ball under Rule 20.1c(3) and report the situation to a Rules Official.
 - Place your golf bag on the exit side of the green, toward the next tee.
 - Identify and show your golf ball to fellow competitors.
 - Get yardage, read putts, and plan shots before it is your turn.
 - Be aware of who is away; if unsure, ask.
 - Tend the flag or mark balls promptly when needed.
 - Move efficiently between shots, what you do between shots matters most.
 - Take appropriate clubs with you around the green.
 - Know your group's position relative to the group ahead.
- Parents and spectators are encouraged to assist pace of play by spotting errant shots, staying one shot ahead when appropriate.

General Observations on Pace of Play

- Everyone enjoys golf more when rounds move at an appropriate pace. Players should be mindful of the following:
 - If you cannot see the group ahead, you are likely behind pace.
 - Ready golf is encouraged when appropriate.
 - Long pre-shot routines should be shortened.
 - Walk briskly between shots.
 - If asked by a tournament official to pick up the pace, players are expected to take that instruction seriously and make an immediate effort to comply.

Section 10: Zero Tolerance Cheating Policy

Integrity is the foundation of golf. The NJPGA Junior Tour enforces a zero-tolerance policy toward cheating or any deliberate breach of the Rules of Golf.

All players, parents, guardians, and spectators are expected to uphold the highest standards of honesty, fairness, and sportsmanship. The NJPGA Junior Tour exists to teach the game the right way; cheating disrespects both the game and every competitor who plays by the rules.

Cheating vs. Rules Knowledge

Not knowing a rule and deliberately breaking one are not the same.

- Lack of rules knowledge will be treated as a learning opportunity.
- Intentional or blatant cheating will result in disciplinary action.

All play is governed by the USGA Rules of Golf, except where modified by NJPGA Junior Tour Local Rules and Conditions of Competition.

Definition of Cheating

Cheating includes any intentional act to gain an unfair advantage, including but not limited to:

- Dropping a ball in place of a lost one to gain a severe advantage
- Improving a lie or altering surroundings
- Recording an incorrect score
- Moving a ball marker on putting surface to gain an advantage
- Changing a scorecard after attestation

Every competitor shares responsibility for protecting the integrity of the field. Any suspected cheating must be reported to NJPGA staff before scorecards are signed.

Scoring Integrity

Any player who knowingly attests to an incorrect scorecard will be subject to the same penalties as a player caught cheating.

- A single-hole discrepancy may be treated as a scoring mistake.
- Multiple incorrect holes on the same scorecard may result in disciplinary action for the entire group.

Each competitor is responsible for verifying both their own scorecard and their marker's card before submission.

Penalties for Cheating (Zero Tolerance - Effective 2026)

First Offense

- Disqualification from the event
- Two-week suspension from all NJPGA Junior Tour events.
- Written notification to parents/guardians

Second Offense

- Disqualification from the event
- One-month suspension from all NJPGA Junior Tour events

Third Offense

- Disqualification from the event
- Season-long suspension from all NJPGA Junior Tour events

During a suspension period, players will receive refunds for affected event registrations, minus the applicable administrative fee. Please see the cancellation fee policy for more information.

Parental Cheating Assistance

All players are responsible for the conduct of their parents, guardians, and family members. Any intentional cheating or deliberate violation of Rule 1.2 performed on behalf of a player will be treated as if the player committed the violation.

Parents and spectators must uphold the same standards of honesty, integrity, and respect. Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage for a player may result in disciplinary action for the player involved.

On-Course Behavior

Respect for the game and everyone involved is non-negotiable.

Abusive language, disrespectful conduct, equipment abuse, or damage to the golf course will result in immediate disciplinary review.

Penalties may include, but are not limited to:

- General penalty
- Disqualification
- Suspension from future events

All decisions will be made by the Tournament Committee on a case-by-case basis.

Appeal Process

Appeals will be considered solely in cases involving player suspensions. Appeals must be submitted via email to the Junior Golf Director. Written statements will be collected from witnesses and will be reviewed by the Junior Golf Committee, whose decision will be final and binding. No further appeals will be permitted.

Appeal reviews will take no more than 5 business days.

Rules of Golf - Player Resources & Expectations

- The New Jersey PGA Junior Tour provides several resources to help players better understand and apply the USGA Rules of Golf.
- At every tournament, players receive a Supplementary Rules Sheet. These sheets are course-specific and outline local rules that apply in addition to the USGA Rules of Golf. Players are expected to read and understand these rules before starting their round.
- While Junior Tour members are not expected to be rules experts, players are expected to know how to proceed when common rules situations arise during competition.

Common Rules Situations Players Should Know

- The following situations occur at nearly every tournament. Players should understand the correct procedure before arriving at an event:
 - Lost ball
 - Ball out of bounds
 - Unplayable lie
 - Red vs. yellow penalty areas
 - Proceeding under a rule without virtual certainty (e.g., assuming a ball is in a penalty area)
 - When and where a club may be grounded
 - Playing from outside the teeing area
 - Playing a wrong ball
 - Signing an incorrect scorecard
 - Asking for or offering advice
 - Placing a ball when it should be dropped
 - Proper dropping procedure under the Rules of Golf
 - Relief from an embedded ball
- Relief from obstructions (movable and immovable), including:
 - Ground Under Repair
 - Cart paths
 - Drains

- Sprinkler heads
- Abnormal ground conditions
- Burrowing animal holes
- Playing a second ball when there is doubt as to procedure
- Playing or practicing after a suspension for a dangerous situation
- Agreeing to waive a rule
- Improving conditions affecting the stroke (C.A.T.S.), including lie, stance, and area of intended swing

Learning the Rules

- Players are strongly encouraged to use www.usga.org as a primary reference. The USGA provides:
 - Rules explanations
 - Visual examples
 - Interactive quizzes
- Using online searches or instructional videos to better understand these rules is also encouraged. Any effort made to learn and apply the Rules of Golf will help players not only during tournaments, but in all competitive golf settings.
- Learning the Rules of Golf may feel overwhelming at first, but with time and repetition, it becomes easier and is a key part of becoming a successful tournament golfer.