Parent & Spectator Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Parent & Spectator Code of Conduct is to provide a mutual understanding to all parents/guardians about **conduct expectations** during Georgia High School Association sanctioned golf events or high school matches. The Rules of Golf as approved by the USGA and the R&A continue to govern golf play.

SPECTATOR CARTS: While not guaranteed at every event, spectator carts may be rented based on availability. The rental fee is determined by each individual host facility. Please note that requests for spectator carts may be limited or denied in some circumstances (poor weather conditions, lack of available carts at host facility, etc.) and use of a cart is subject to final approval by the host facility. All spectator carts MUST remain on the cart path. When helping players search for a golf ball, please park the cart on the path and proceed to search on foot.

GENERAL: Spectators, both walking and in carts, MUST stay on cart paths and, generally, try to remain one shot ahead of the group they are following to assist with errant shots. In the absence of cart paths, we ask that spectators stay in the rough. Please stay off fairways, tees and greens. The only two exceptions to this are: ▪ To help search for a golf ball ▪ If view of the putting green is obstructed from cart path. In these circumstances, spectators must return to the cart path as soon as the ball is located or the group has putted out, respectively.

DRESS CODE: Spectators are guests of the club and should avoid wearing jeans, t-shirts, short shorts, and similarly casual attire. School spirit wear such as team t-shirts, sweatshirts or pullovers are acceptable during tournaments for parents and spectators. Otherwise, golf attire is preferred and the host club's policies should be followed. Jeans are never a good idea but are especially not allowed for players. When in doubt, please ask the host tournament director or team coach.

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO USE: The use of alcohol or tobacco during competition is prohibited for all players, parents and spectators. Many clubs or golf courses may sell alcohol or tobacco but it cannot be consumed during the tournament. Most schools have specific policies for alcohol and tobacco on school grounds. These policies should carry over to golf tournaments for everyone.

FAMILY MEMBER & SPECTATOR INVOLVEMENT IN CONDUCT & RULINGS: Please refrain from policing any code of conduct issues. If you witness a code of conduct breach or have seen the same breach multiple times by a player, you may notify an official. **DO NOT HANDLE THE SITUATION YOURSELF**. GHSA officials, local club officials or the tournament director will be responsible for addressing all code of conduct issues.

ADVICE: The Rules of Golf (Rule 10.2) define "advice" as any verbal comment or action that is intended to influence a player in choosing a club, making a stroke, or deciding how to play during a hole or round. Any extended conversation between player/spectator will be construed as advice. This includes any extended conversation between player/spectator in their native language.

Penalty for breach of this rule is the following regardless of the format:

First Offense = Verbal Warning.
Second Offense = 2 stroke penalty.
Third Offense = Disqualification (DQ) and expulsion from the course.

This penalty is GHSA-specific and is intended to be applied for each unique instance.

Players are responsible for the actions of their family members and spectators regarding this Rule. Family members and spectators CAN carry food, drinks, medicine, umbrellas, etc. and provide them to players during the round. Parents/spectators are not rules officials and should not provide rules decisions during play, OTHER than simple observations such as ball is out-of-bounds or in a hazard. If a player has a question about a ruling, they may play a 2nd ball under Rule 20.1c(3).

PLEASE NOTE that we occasionally allow players to be shuttled in a cart from green to tee (players must walk while playing the hole). At the same time, parents/spectators should not provide any advice or counsel regarding play during the round; and interactions with players should be limited to providing food and beverages and positive encouragement. While it is natural to 'talk' to your child while on the cart -- spectator COACHING during the round should not take place.

SCORING -- **Spectators have no role in the process of recording or tracking of any official scores during the round or after play is completed**. Any scores kept by a parent/spectator during the round are for his or her information ONLY and are not deemed to be official scores. If there is a discrepancy between a player's Official Scorecard and the parent's own 'scorekeeping', the resolution is between the player and the marker, regardless of the parent's tally.

CELL PHONES -- It is permissible for a spectator to utilize cell phones **silently** for tasks such as sending/reading text messages to/from the tournament staff, check weather alerts, and taking pictures. Players can only use cell phones in emergency situations.