



LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (March 22, 2023) – In an effort to continuously enhance and evolve the competitor experience, the USGA today announced significant modifications to its amateur championship qualifying model for the first time in more than 20 years. These changes, which will take effect for the organization's four premier amateur championships beginning in 2024, will allow the events to retain their openness while ensuring that high-caliber players are provided ample opportunity to earn a spot in the field and that qualifying can be conducted at the highest level among growing entries and field sizes.

"The openness and aspirational nature of our championships is a defining characteristic of USGA championships," said Brent Paladino, senior director, Championship Administration. "As the number of entries and qualifying sites have continued to increase on a yearly basis, we looked at ways to evolve our structure to ensure the long-term sustainability of qualifying without excessively burdening Allied Golf Associations (AGAs) and host clubs. These revisions will provide players with additional pathways to our championships through traditional qualifying, expanded exemption categories and performance in state, AGA, regional and national amateur championships."

In 2022, the USGA accepted 44,737 total entries and collaborated with AGAs to conduct a combined 678 qualifiers across 15 championships.

The most significant revisions for 2024 are to the U.S. Amateur, which will move from a one-stage, 36-hole qualifying format to a two-stage qualifying format with 45 18-hole local qualifying sites and 19 18-hole final qualifying sites. Other adjustments include:

- Exemptions for state, AGA, regional and national amateur champions based on established criteria and historical WAGR event power rankings;
- Expansion of World Amateur Golf Ranking® (WAGR) exemption category to top 100 ranked players (previously 50);
- Establishment of local exemptions, which include top finishers in USGA championships, state/AGA amateur championships and top 600 WAGR players.

Changes to the other championships' qualifying structures are outlined below:

U.S. Women's Amateur

- Modest reduction in qualifying sites through the establishment of geographic rotations;
- Exemptions for state, AGA, regional and national amateur champions based on established criteria and historical WAGR event power rankings;
- Expansion of WAGR exemption category to top 50 players (previously 25).

U.S. Junior Amateur / U.S. Girls' Junior

- Alignment of qualifying structure to encourage AGAs to conduct joint or concurrent qualifying;

- Exemptions for state, AGA, regional and national junior amateur champions based on established criteria and historical WAGR event power rankings;
- U.S. Junior Am expansion of WAGR age-filtered exemption category to top 100 (previously 85);
- U.S. Girls' Junior expansion of WAGR age-filtered exemption category to top 50 (previously 40).

There will also be a lowering of Handicap Index® limits across all four championships and modifications to the performance policy that will be announced later. Determinations on the individual state, AGA, regional and national championships that will be part of the 2024 exemption criteria will be published prior to the release of entries for each respective championship.

The modifications will result in a net reduction of 94 qualifying sites, while providing more opportunities for players to earn a spot in a USGA championship through expanded exemptions, state/AGA amateur championships and traditional qualifying.

Entries for 2024 USGA amateur championships will open next spring. The 2024 U.S. Amateur will be held at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn.; the 2024 U.S. Women's Amateur will be held at Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa, Okla.; while the 2024 Junior Amateur will be held at Oakland Hills Country Club in Bloomfield Hills, Mich.; and the 2024 Girls' Junior will be played at El Caballero Country Club in Tarzana, Calif.

About the USGA

The USGA is a nonprofit organization that celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf's premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment, handicapping and amateur status rules. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association's Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honor the game by curating the world's most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit usga.org.

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