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GOLF AUSTRALIA GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF EVENTS UNDER AMATEUR STATUS RULE 4-2g – Sponsored Handicap Competitions

As a general rule, an amateur golfer cannot accept expenses to compete in a golf competition. A number of exceptions apply and these are set out in Amateur Status Rule 4-2. They include family support, junior events, team events, and support from national and state golf associations.

Each year Golf Australia (GA) is asked to approve a small number of sponsored handicap competitions under Rule 4-2g of the Rules of Amateur Status, thereby allowing the organisers or sponsors of such events to pay expenses (ie travel and accommodation costs) on behalf of competitors. Events that are approved receive a reference code that should be included on all advertising material and entry forms (eg *Approved for the payment of expenses Rule 4-2g GA/05/2010*).

In order for an event to qualify for approval under Rule 4-2g, GA, which adopts the guidelines set out by the international governing authority, R&A Rules Limited, requires that the following criteria must be met:

- 1. Approval for the payment of expenses must be sought each year from GA.**
2. The payment of expenses under Rule 4-2g must not be referred to, or implied, as "prizes" in any event statement.
3. The event must be a handicap individual or handicap team event where the handicaps are applied. Events designed primarily for low handicap players where gross scores count do not qualify. Competitions other than normal rounds of golf, eg putting or long driving, also do not qualify.

Approval will not normally be given for payment of expenses for subsequent stages that are not primarily a part of the original competition.

4. The event must have a sponsor that financially supports it for charitable or promotional reasons.
5. All prizes must conform with Rule 3 (Prizes) of the Rules of Amateur Status. GA Regulations on prizes are available from the following webpage – www.golf.org.au/site/_content/document/00012060-source.pdf.
6. For a domestic stage of an event, a participant may only have expenses covered in connection with the event for a maximum of eight days (seven nights). This includes travelling, practice, and competitive days, and also includes any 'free' days incorporated within the expenses paid trip. The payment of expenses of a parent or chaperone of a junior competitor may be considered. The payment of partners' or caddies' expenses would be considered to be a prize and would be permissible only if it can be absorbed within the \$1200 prize limit for the previous stage of the event.
7. For a domestic stage of an event, the level of expenses covered per individual must not exceed \$3000. The relevant expenses are limited to travel and accommodation costs only. Other costs, such as green fees

and meal costs are not included in the expenses total. This is not a "retail value" figure and if organisers can, for example, arrange a reduced-cost block booking, it is the reduced cost that is used in determining the level of expenses. However, GA reserves the right to apply special provisions in this regard to sponsors of events who can arrange travel and accommodation at unusually low prices, (eg airline or hotel groups), and who may thereby be able to circumvent this level of expenses.

8. There are no geographical restrictions on the venues of finals. However, GA approval is contingent upon it being able to obtain the approval of the Governing Body in the country in which the final will be held.
9. Each stage of the event must have at least six competitors.

Related applications to GA must include the following:

- A listing of the official event title.
- The name of the event's major sponsor/s.
- The competition format (including a copy of the event conditions).
- The proposed number of players to be involved in each stage of the event for which expenses are to be paid.
- The maximum period for which a player's expenses will be covered (to be supplied for each stage of the event).
- The maximum cost of expenses (ie travel and accommodation) to be provided for a player (to be supplied for each stage of the event).
- Assurance the event will comply with each of the above listed conditions.

We hope this resource is useful to all interested parties. Please contact the GA office with any queries.

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