

The Red-tail Rattler

CHMGA Bi-Monthly Newsletter

November/December 2025



Steve's Snippets

*Steve Shortt
President*

Happy New Year!!! I hope everyone had a great Christmas holiday with your families and/or friends and enjoyed ringing in the New Year last week.

As we enter 2026, I want to extend my sincere thanks to the entire membership for your support and involvement throughout 2025. Your participation, camaraderie, and commitment played a huge role in making this past year such a success. It was truly a great year for our club.

I'd also like to encourage all of us to continue building on what makes this club special—strong sportsmanship, respect for the game, and a welcoming social atmosphere. Increased socialization, both on and off the course, strengthens our sense of community and makes our events more enjoyable for everyone. Equally important is our shared responsibility to follow the rules of golf during tournaments, ensuring fair play, integrity, and a positive experience for all participants.

Looking forward, I wish everyone continued success, great golf, and good health in 2026. I'm excited about what's ahead and confident that, together, we can make the upcoming year even better.

As always, I am open to new ideas, suggestions, and improvements that can help strengthen and enhance our club. Please don't hesitate to share your thoughts.

Thank you again and I look forward to seeing everyone on the course in the new year.



Board Business

*Jeff Fell
Secretary*

2026 Board Elections

I'm excited to introduce your newly elected Board of Directors for 2026. Thank you to everyone who took the time to vote. Your active participation is key to helping the association shape its future direction.

- **Re-Elected**
 - President: Steve Shortt
 - Secretary: Jeff Fell
 - Treasurer: Nicholas Egan
- **Newly Elected**
 - Tournament Director: Drew Himes
 - Operations Chairman: Gordon Madej
 - Membership Chairman: Todd Manley
- **Not up for Election this Year**
 - Handicap Chairman: Justin Smith
 - Rules Chairman: Paul Vieth

The new board's term will begin on January 1st, 2026.

Recent Board Decisions

Summarized below are some of the key decisions from the Board's November/December meetings.

- **Minimum number of players/teams in a flight.** Set the minimum number of players or teams in a flight to 3. Flights with less than 3 players or teams will be combined with another flight (typically the Mixed Tee flight).
- **Filling Open Tee Slots.** The Board agreed we should only allow members to fill last minute tee slots with a friend, if the friend is considering joining CHMGA.
- **Pace of Play Penalty.** The Board clarified how the 2-stroke pace of play penalty will apply: 1) in individual events, each player in the group receiving the pace of play penalty will receive a 2-stroke penalty and 2) in team events, each team in the group receiving the pace of play penalty will receive a 2-stroke penalty.

The Red-tail Rattler

CHMGA Bi-Monthly Newsletter

November/December 2025

- **Cinnabar Cup Point Ties.** To allocate Cinnabar Cup Points for a tournament, the Board agreed we should follow the FedEx cup policy and retain ties instead of the USGA (9,6,3,1) method.



2026 CHMGA Tournament Green Fees

Most of you should have seen the message from Cinnabar Hills announcing their 2026 green fees and Hawk/Hawk Plus membership pricing. The new weekend green fee rates in 2026, starting with our January 10th tournament are:

- **Non-Hawk CHMGA Members**
 - \$125 (up from \$120 in 2025; discounted from the \$150 public rate)
- **Hawk CHMGA Members**
 - \$65 (up from \$60 in 2025; discounted from the \$85 public Hawk rate)
- **Hawk Plus CHMGA Members**
 - \$0 (Green fees included in Hawk Plus annual membership fee)
- **CHMGA Officers (President, Tournament Director, Secretary, Treasurer)**
 - \$20 (up from \$0 in 2025)

NOTE: These prices do not include the \$25 tournament fee charged for our tournament purses nor the Hawk/Hawk Plus membership fees.

2026 Membership renewals

If you haven't yet renewed your CHMGA membership, you're running out of time. The last date to renew is January 15th. To renew, simply

click on this link: [CHMGA Renewal](#). The rate for 2026 will remain the same as 2025 at \$200.

Association Finances

Summarized below are the association finances through November.

Item Description	Nov '25
Beginning Balance	\$7,298
Association Business	\$6,311
Tournament Escrow	(\$48)
2025 Season Points Winner Escrow	\$1,035
Sub-Totals	
Association Business	\$1,413
Membership Fees	\$2,034
NCGA Membership Payments	(\$230)
Other Expenses	(\$391)
Monthly Tournament Financials	\$201
Tournament Fees	\$2,200
Tournament Payouts	(\$1,999)
Ending Balance	\$8,912
Association Business	\$7,724
Tournament Escrow	\$153
2025 Season Points Escrow	\$1,035



Tournament Updates
Jeff Fell

Tournament Pairing

Have you ever wondered how we create the pairings for our tournaments (how the sausage gets made)? Below is a brief description for what goes into creating the pairs, the foursomes, and the tee slots for each tournament:

Step 1: Creating Pairs (twosomes)

- We always start by pairing members who have specifically asked to play (or team in 2-Person events) together.
- We pair members who haven't asked to play with a specific person with someone who: 1) will be playing from the same tee boxes, 2)

The Red-tail Rattler

CHMGA Bi-Monthly Newsletter

November/December 2025

has similar playing abilities (ie. TI), and 3) they haven't played with recently.

Step 2: Creating Foursomes

- If the tournament is a 4-person team event, we first put all four players in the same group (except in NCGA events where they are required to be split up).
- Next, we group twosomes who have similar special tee time requests (early or late for example) together in a foursome.
- Finally, we combine twosomes who haven't played together often. **NOTE:** We will group twosomes into a foursome based on specific requests, however we generally discourage this.

Step 3: Assigning Tee Times

- Foursomes that have specific tee time requests (early or late tee times) are slotted first. **NOTE:** while we do our best, we cannot always accommodate specific tee times requests.
- Next, we slot the remaining foursomes based on: 1) rotating members throughout year between early and late tee times, and 2) grouping members who have a history of fast pace of play into the first four tee slots, and those who have a history of slow pace of play into the last four tee slots.

Upcoming Tournaments

Summarized below are the upcoming tournaments for January and February.

- January 10th, 2-Person Chapman Scotch
- January 24th, Individual Stableford
- February 7th, 2-Person Shamble

You can find the complete 2026 tournament schedule on Golf Genius at: [2026 Tournament Schedule](#) (GGID: ch2026).



Rules
Paul Vieth
Rules Chairman

I would like to focus on topics that can help members better understand and apply the rules of golf. Today's topic is a refresher on taking relief, which breaks down into Free Relief (one club length) and Penalty Relief (usually two club lengths). I wish someone had told me this before I asked so many times!

Free Relief

To know if you can take relief from an Abnormal Course Condition (ACC), you must know if you are in one! The definition (yes, you can read them in the USGA rules app on your phone) of what an ACC is, and **ONLY** is, follows:

- *Animal Holes*, including loose material and track leading to the hole
- *Ground under Repair (GUR)* (area marked by the committee with white paint or ropes, a hole made by the committee, or natural material piled up for later removal). Read this definition, it will save you a stroke someday!
- *Immovable Obstructions (IO)* such as artificial (man-made objects), cart paths, sprinkler heads, split rail fences, etc.
- *Temporary Water* which is water that remains visible before or after taking a stance, without pressing down excessively.

If it does not fit into one of these definitions, it is not an ACC and you do not get relief, so it is to your advantage to read the definitions. You get relief if the ACC interferes with your lie, intended stance, or intended swing. The relief area is the same for all 4, the nearest point of complete relief from interference, and one (free = one) club length in any direction no closer to the hole.

Embedded Ball. Players may take Free Relief if their ball is embedded in its own pitch mark, by dropping their ball within one club length, in either direction, of the nearest point of relief (right behind

The Red-tail Rattler

CHMGA Bi-Monthly Newsletter

November/December 2025

the ball), no closer to the hole; anywhere in the general area (not a bunker, green, or penalty area).

Penalty Relief

- **Penalty Areas (red or yellow staked areas).** If any part of a player's ball lies in, touches, or is above the edge of a penalty area, the player may, for a one stroke penalty, take Penalty Relief. **NOTE:** It must be known or virtually certain (95% + sure) the ball **CAME TO REST** in the penalty area, otherwise the ball is considered lost, and you cannot take penalty area relief (and must play it as a lost ball, e.g. a drive right on Lake #3).
- **Unplayable Lie.** A player may, for a one stroke penalty, take penalty relief when they determine their ball is "unplayable", outside the penalty area.
 - A player may take relief out of a bunker, using the back of the line relief (and **ONLY** back of the line relief) for an additional (2 total) penalty stroke.

The options for taking Penalty Relief are

- **Lateral Relief.** The player may drop their ball outside a **red** penalty area within **TWO** club lengths of where the ball crossed into the penalty area, no closer to the hole and stay in same area of the course that the ball first touched when dropped. For an unplayable lie, lateral relief is TWO club lengths in any direction from the original point the ball lies, no closer to the hole.
- **Stroke and distance relief.** The player may drop their ball within one club length, in any direction, from the original spot they hit the previous shot from, no closer to the hole and in the same area of the course. The player may always take this option for a penalty stroke anywhere on the course.
- **Back of the line relief.** The player may drop their ball, as far back as they like, on an imaginary line extending from the flag/hole through:
 - The estimated point where the ball crossed into the penalty area (for penalty area relief)

- The spot where the ball is unplayable (for unplayable relief).

The ball must be dropped on the imaginary line, and come to rest within one club length (in any direction), but not closer to 1) where it crossed into the penalty area (penalty area relief) or 2) the spot where the ball originally lies (unplayable relief); and in the same area of the course it landed in when dropped. **Yes, it can roll forward up to one club length** if it was dropped on the line.

The CHMGA hard card adds local rule penalty relief from drop zones and free relief from other potential conditions at Cinnabar.

For more detailed information regarding the above relief options, refer to the following link at: [USGA Rules of Golf](#).



Membership Info
Richard Lebakos
Membership Operations Chairman

Welcome New Members

Please join me in welcoming new members Louis Chiaramonte, Ken Heinly, and Gary Murphy to the association. Looking forward to having them join us in one of the next tournaments in January.

Course Care & Etiquette (courtesy of M. Garrett)

Golfers share a vital responsibility in maintaining excellent playing conditions by respecting the course and practicing proper etiquette. This includes repairing ball marks on greens, replacing or filling divots on fairways and tee boxes, and raking bunkers after use. By following cart path rules, avoiding unnecessary damage, and being mindful of their impact on the turf, players help preserve the quality and playability of the course for everyone. These small acts of care reflect the spirit of the game and ensure that the course remains in top shape for future rounds.