

The Red-tail Rattler

CHMGA Bi-Monthly Newsletter

July/August 2026



Steve's Snippets

*Steve Shortt
President*

Thank you to everyone who participated in last weekend's tournament and attended our Annual Membership Meeting. Attendance at the meeting was outstanding, with more than 90% of the membership staying after the tournament for fellowship and to hear the Board present several important topics. For those of you who missed the meeting, you can find the materials presented on the CHMGA website at the following link: [2027 Annual Membership Meeting](#).

My primary concern as the club looks ahead to 2027 is a decline we've had in tournament participation. We are averaging ~42 players per tournament, down from 48 players per tournament last year. While that may not seem like a lot, reduced participation impacts many areas of the club, from the morning tee times Cinnabar Hills provides us, to the purses we provide top finishers in our events. Additionally, it impacts our ability to hold shotgun tournaments like we did this past weekend since Cinnabar Hills is asking us for a minimum commitment of 56-60 players for us to have a shotgun tournament.

Thus, growing the club is one of the primary areas we need to focus on in the coming months, and I'd like to ask every member to step back and consider what we can do—individually and collectively—to do so. This is a responsibility we all share, and I'd ask you to share any ideas you have with the board by emailing us at: info@chmga.club.

The remainder of the 2026 tournament schedule includes a combination of team events, individual competition, Match Play, and an away event at Poppy Hills on October 3. Away events had never been held in CHMGA's history before this year. I am very proud of the Board and the additional effort required to offer these opportunities, including the Almaden Country Club member-guest outing.

As we begin to wind down the 2026 season, I want to thank all of you for allowing me to serve as your President. The second of my two terms will be ending in October, and per club bylaws, officers may only serve two consecutive terms. While I'm hoping to continue on the board in another capacity, leading such a dedicated team the past two years has truly been a privilege.

Let's finish the 2026 season strongly and work together to build greater participation, fellowship, and momentum for the future.



Board Business

*Jeff Fell
Secretary*

2027 Season Alignment

Just a quick reminder that in 2027 we will be aligning our association activities (tournament schedule, Board of Directors terms, membership dues, association finances, etc) to match our official golf season which runs from November to October of each year. While the tournament season has always been from November to October, the other activities were calendar year based which had caused confusion for everyone.

Board of Directors Elections

With the alignment of the board activities to the tournament season, we will be holding elections for the Board of Directors at the beginning of October so the new Board can be seated and begin their terms on November 1st.

Officer positions (President, Tournament Director, Secretary, and Treasurer) are up for election annually and serve one-year terms. Chairmen positions serve two-year terms and are elected every two years. Chairmen positions up for election this year are the Handicap Chairman and the Rules Chairman. A description of each position can be found in the CHMGA bylaws (Articles 4 & 5) located on our website at: [CHMGA Bylaws](#).

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We encourage all members to serve on the board at least once while they are a member of CHMGA. New blood brings new ideas to the association and ensures the Board stays relevant to the type of association membership wants.

NOTE: Officers pay a max of \$20 in green fees to play in CHMGA tournaments (plus the \$25 tournament fee), while Chairmen get a reduced annual membership fee of \$70

2027 Policy and Tournament Changes

In September the board will be finalizing any policy and/or tournament changes for 2027 based on member feedback during the season as well as member feedback from the annual survey. These changes will be shared during the upcoming season renewal window in October.



Finance
Nicholas Egan
Treasurer

As always, you can find the YTD finances for the association on the CHMGA website at: [2026 Financial Report](#).

While our overall budget is lower than 2025 (due to lower membership numbers in 2026), it has been offset by lower costs due to the removal of club sponsorship of the NCGA Senior Four-Ball as well as other small changes. Thus we currently expect to exit 2026 with the same account balance (~\$5,000) as we entered 2025 with.

NOTE: In 2027, the club will no longer be sponsoring NCGA only memberships, given these memberships don't provide any value to the club and simply add administrative effort.



Tournament Updates

Drew Himes
Tournament Director

Cinnabar Cup Results

Dev Patel shot lights out golf the last third of the season to break open what had been a close race, to take the Cinnabar Cup Season's point title running away. Last year's first and second place winners, showing they weren't going down without a fight, came up short, but still managed to come in second (Gary Berg) and third (Trent Gilfoil).

There were nine lead changes during the year, highlighting the premium the points system put on winning association events. You can find the complete listing of the Cinnabar Cup results at: [Cinnabar Cup Race](#).

I'd like to congratulate Dev, Gary, Trent, and the other top 22 finishers, who will now compete in the Cinnabar Cup "Ryder Cup" style tournament in October, with Dev and Gary acting as team captains. More to come in the coming weeks

Club and NET Championships

The field is now set for both the Club and NET Match Play Championships (based on this past weekend's NET Championship Qualifier). Final pairings for the first round will come out later this week once final TIs and member availability are confirmed. In addition, we'll be opening registration for those who did not qualify for the Club or NET Championship to play in the "Playing for Pride" bracket.

The schedule for the Match Play tournament is as follows:

- Sept 12th: Sweet Sixteen (Round 1)
- Sept 13th: Elite Eight (Round 2)
- Sept 19th: Final Four (Round 3)
- Sept 26th: The Finals (Round 4)

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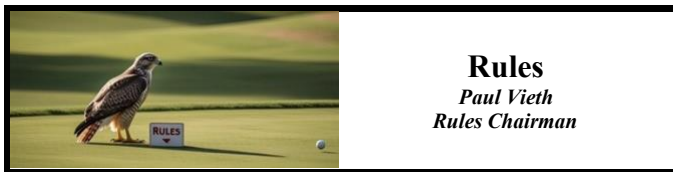
Note: During the Sept 26th Finals, we will be holding an additional tournament for those members not participating in the finals. Registration for this tournament will open soon!

2027 Tournament Schedule

The board is in the process of setting the 2027 tournament schedule with Cinnabar Hills. We expect to have the schedule, along with each tournament format, finalized by the beginning of October. You can find the tentative dates for 2027 at the following link: [2027 Tournament Schedule \(preliminary\)](#).



Several members have asked whether the club plans to continue using Tournament Indexing (TIs) as the method of handicapping our tournaments, or whether we will move to GHIN indexing instead. Over 85% of members responding to the annual survey indicated they favored keeping TIs, in one form or another, so the current plan is not to change to GHIN. We will however be discussing potential adjustments as part of our annual policy review in September, and will share any changes prior to the new season beginning.



The use and abuse of Model local Rule E-5

Golf has a get out of jail card, and it's Rule 18.1, Stroke and Distance relief (S&D). At any time, from any place ON the course, even when another rule requires the player to take relief in a certain way or from a certain place, a player always has this option and MAY take relief by adding one penalty stroke and playing a ball from where the previous stroke was made. If a ball is lost or out of bounds, a player MUST use this rule.

Model Local Rule (MLR) E-5 is an extra relief option local rule on the CHMGA hardcard ([CHMGA-Local-Rules-v2026_01_09.pdf](#)) we add for our net stroke play events to reduce ball searches and help with pace of play, by SOMETIMES not going back to the location of the last stroke. For 2 strokes, the player may drop in an area between where the ball is estimated to be LOST (not found in 3 min) ON the course outside a penalty area or where their ball LAST CROSSED the OB line for a ball at rest out of bounds, and 2 club lengths into the fairway no closer to the hole.

MLR E-5 cannot be used:

- for an unplayable ball (the ball is not Lost)
- for a ball that is Known or Virtually Certain (KVC, 95%+ odds) to be in a penalty area
- For a ball that goes OB, the reference point (where you drop) is where it last crossed the OB line, not where it rests OB, no lateral relief from where it rests OB.

Application to Cinnabar Hills

- **Mountain 8.** A player can't use MLR E-5, or hit a provisional, for relief from a penalty area. If you pull it left off the tee and its KVC to be in the penalty area left of the fence, the player can either re-tee under S+D (18.1) or take lateral penalty area relief where it last crossed into the penalty area. If you go forward and search for it and don't find it and it never crossed the fairway, you have to go back to the tee or take lateral relief just in front of the tee where it last crossed into the penalty area. Cinnabar should consider adding a drop zone since not too many tee shots come up short of where the fence turns.
- **Mountain 8.** You can't use MLR E5 for a ball that you find (not Lost) and is unplayable. If you hit it right of the fence on your second shot, that area is general area, not a penalty area. If its unplayable, for one stroke, you either drop lateral 2 club lengths from the location of the ball or use S+D (18.1) to walk back to where you hit the last shot. Consider using S+D (18.1) before you go forward to look. Cinnabar should consider

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marking the area right of the fence as a red penalty area.

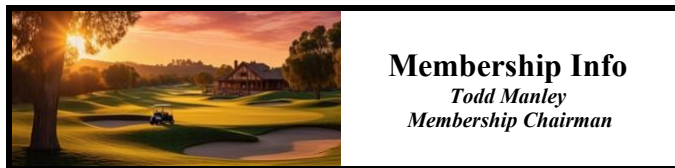
- **Mountain 4.** If a ball off the tee goes right over the fence and comes to rest OB and never crosses fairway/rough, MLR E-5 may be used where it crossed the fence to go OB, not where it lies OB. Use S+D (18.1) and retee. If its lost on the course left of the fairway use MLR E-5. The drop zone is only for the small sliver of penalty area in front of the OB fence. Cinnabar should consider eliminating that penalty area and the drop zone to avoid confusion.

Want to get better at the rules?

The NCGA fall on course class is great for those that want to learn how to apply their knowledge first hand. [On-Course Rules Seminar: Livermore - On-course Rules Seminar Information Page | Northern California](#)

For those who prefer night school, the USGA online Rules 101 class is really good, especially for simplifying relief situations we see at Cinnabar.

rules.usga.org/courses/rules-101/



Thank you to the 39 members who completed this year's membership survey. That's roughly half the association and holds steady with last year's participation, which gives the board a genuinely representative picture to work from. Twenty of you responded in both 2025 and 2026, which lets us measure real change rather than simply a change in who answered. Overall, 74% of members report the club is meeting expectations or better — unchanged from last year — and the share rating the club above “meeting expectations” rose from 29% to 40%.

Several areas you flagged last year improved measurably. Satisfaction with rules education and enforcement climbed from 86% to 95%, board

communication reached 100%, and this newsletter's usefulness rating rose from 86% to 92%. Website complaints fell from eight write-in comments to one. The away tournaments many of you asked for were added, and every member interested in outside events reported satisfaction with the opportunity. Two areas did not improve. Social opportunities remain our lowest-scoring category for the second consecutive year, with 35% of members dissatisfied, and tournament organization and management was the only area to decline.

We especially appreciated the written comments many of you provided in your survey responses. These are extremely helpful to add additional color to areas you'd like to see the board focus on in the coming year and for our upcoming board discussions on policy and tournament changes for 2027. We will be reaching out to some of you in the coming weeks to better understand any comments you made.

You can find the full survey results on the CHMGA website at: [2026 Annual Survey Results.](#)