

1. Eligibility

All bona fide golf clubs in England, Scotland and Wales are eligible to submit one team of two players in the men's championship and one team of two players in the women's championship. Each competitor must possess a club handicap. Playing handicaps are restricted to a maximum of 18 for men and 30 for women. Players with a handicap over those are eligible but must play off 18 for men and 30 for women.

All players must have an active handicap. Refer to CONGU for exceptions. Players who are members of more than one Club may attempt to qualify for the Tournament at any of them, but can represent only one Club in the Competition proper. If a competitor ceases to be a member of the Club being represented, the team must withdraw from the Tournament immediately. Employees of the group which publishes the Daily Mail or any company associated with the organisation of the tournament and members of their families may not compete.

Players under 18 on 1st January 2018 will not be eligible to enter the Tournament.

2. Qualifying Competition

Each affiliated Club is invited to stage its own foursomes competition, the winning pair to qualify for the Daily Mail Tournament. The format for this qualifying competition can be decided by the club. Only one men's and one women's pair can represent each club. Where it is not possible to arrange a special qualifying competition, a Club may nominate a pair to represent it in the Tournament. The Secretary must register the club by 31st January 2018 either online at www.mailgolf.co.uk or by submitting the entry sheet to the Tournament Office.

3. Eliminating Rounds

- a) **Knock-out principle:** eliminating rounds in the Tournament will be on a knock-out principle decided over 18 holes foursomes (i.e. alternate strokes) match-play off handicaps current at the time of play (see Rule 1). If the match is tied after 18 holes, play continues until a hole is won on a "sudden death" basis.
- b) **Handicap difference:** half of the difference between competing pairs' combined handicaps will be taken as the basis for play, half a stroke or more counting as one stroke. The partnership entitled to receive strokes will receive them at the appropriate holes. All players should produce their current handicap certificate for their opponents to see, if required. Failing to do so does not mean loss of match. It is the players' responsibility to check their respective handicaps and the shot allowance prior to teeing off in their match.
- c) **Players:** players' names do not need to be confirmed until the team has played its first match in the Tournament. The pair that competes in the first match must play together in all further Tournament matches and after that no player substitutes will be acceptable.
- d) **Matches:** a computerised draw will be made for each round based upon clubs geographical location. Clubs from different counties may be drawn to play each other from round one onwards. Competitors will be notified of their matches either by email or by post.
- e) **Arranging a match:** The home team, to retain home advantage, has the responsibility of contacting their opponents no later than the contact-by date specified in the match notification letter. After this date whichever team makes initial contact may claim home advantage. The club drawn at home should offer the away club several dates including both weekdays and weekends in order to provide the best opportunity of finding a mutually acceptable date for the match. No match extensions will be allowed. If a match is not played by the date specified the Referee will decide, where possible, on the basis of availability which team will advance to the next round, or an unplayed match will then be decided on the toss of a coin.
- f) **Course conditions:** The home team has the responsibility to ensure that the course is fit for play and to inform visiting golfers of the Local Rules prior to match day. If it is essential that Winter Rules be in operation, then these should still allow for the fair and proper playing of the match (please see the tournament website www.mailgolf.co.uk "FAQ" section for acceptable winter conditions). As no match extensions are allowed it is essential that matches are played by the date specified for each round. This means if the home course is closed on the date agreed for the match then the tie should switch to the away course if it is open. If this is not possible then the match should be re-arranged as drawn but must be played by the deadline date.
- g) **Course closure on match day:** As no extensions are allowed it is essential that matches are played by the date specified for each round. This means if the home course is closed on the date agreed for the match then the tie should switch to the away course if it is open. If this is not possible then the match should be re-arranged as drawn but must be played by the deadline date. Alternatively, if neither course complies with the Winter Rules on the first agreed match date either an alternative date should be found to play at the home club, or the home club may elect to play on a neutral course but if so they will be responsible for any green fees.

- h) **Caddies:** caddies, as defined in the Rules of Golf, are permitted.
- i) **GPS:** During matches players may use devices that gauge or measure distance only. Smart phones may be used even if they are fitted with non conforming features provided the player doesn't access these applications. Penalty: first offence - loss of hole / subsequent offence – disqualification. If you suspect an opponent is in breach of R&A Rule 14-3 you must make a valid claim at the time of the match as no subsequent claims will be considered.
- j) **Motorised Buggies:** Players and supporters must walk the courses at all times during a competitive round of golf. Only golfers with authorisation from the Tournament Referee due to medical conditions are allowed the use of golf buggies during a competitive round, however the Organisers have no jurisdiction whatsoever over individual golf clubs when it comes to the use of buggies on their course.
- k) **Speed of Play:** Players must at all times play without undue delay.

4. Greens Fees

There is no entry fee for the Tournament, but courtesy of the course must be extended to visiting competitors when the match is played. It is also hoped that home clubs will endeavour to make a practice round possible for visiting clubs, if requested to do so, or, if that is not possible, at least offer the visiting team a reduced green fee. As this is a match-play competition a practise round can be played on the day of play or beforehand.

5. Notifying Results

It will be the responsibility of the winning pair in each match to notify the result to the Tournament Office either online or by post on the card provided. As there are seven qualifying rounds to organise it is vital that results are notified as soon as possible. For matches played over the last weekend the winning pair should enter the result online, by email to draw@mailgolf.co.uk or by phone as soon as the match is finished. Results will be published in the Daily Mail where possible.

6. Finals

- a) The Last Sixteen pairs will compete in the match-play Finals in October 2018.
- b) Each match will consist of one round of 18 holes played off current handicaps unless circumstances make some other arrangement necessary. In the event of a halved match, competitors must continue to play until a hole is won. The partnership entitled to receive strokes will receive them at the appropriate holes.
- c) Subsidiary competitions will be arranged for those competitors defeated in the Last Sixteen and Quarter Finals.
- d) Green fees for the sixteen pairs at the Finals will be paid by the Daily Mail.
- e) Arrangements will be made for all finalists to receive meals and overnight accommodation from Sunday evening to Tuesday afternoon at the invitation of the Daily Mail.

7. Tournament Suspension of Play at the Finals

If a significant amount of playing time is lost due to the weather, the Tournament Committee may elect to play a Foursomes Stableford competition to decide which teams will advance into the next round.

8. Prizes

The men's and women's winning pairs in the 2018 Finals will each receive one of the Daily Mail Silver Challenge trophies to be held for a year by their Club and all competitors reaching the Last Sixteen will receive individual prizes.

9. Disputes

Any disputes regarding Rules and Conditions must be discussed with the Tournament Referee, whose decision is final.

The Tournament Referee can be contacted at Daily Mail Amateur Foursomes Golf Tournament, PO Box 485, Fleet, GU51 9FF.