

THE U.S. HICKORY OPEN



Policies & Procedures
2026

U.S. Hickory Open Policies and Procedures

Revised December 2025

Information in this booklet have been collected based upon 17 years of USHO experience. With few exceptions, the recommendations herein are designed as guidelines for U.S. Hickory Open organizers, rather than rules set in stone. Each USHO Host Organizing Committee has contributed to this booklet and it is expected that it will be regularly revised as improved policies and procedures come to light.

Meanwhile, we wish the best for your committee as you prepare to host the world's premier hickory golf tournament.

The SoHG's USHO Committee, chaired by Dr. David Brown, is always available for advice and counsel as you move forward.

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2011 U.S. Hickory Open
French Lick, Indiana

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Statement of Purpose

The U.S. Hickory Open (USHO) is the premier event/tournament sponsored by the Society of Hickory Golfers (SoHG). It is to be held annually at locations around the country so that SoHG members in all regions may be able to attend at a reasonably convenient location. The USHO is designed as an opportunity for SoHG members to both enjoy tournament golf and to savor the communal social aspects of this unique annual gathering.

It is important to understand that the USHO is a fixture/tournament that is wholly owned/sponsored by the Society of Hickory Golfers. Regional playing groups or clubs with an SoHG liaison are hosts for the event. They serve the interests of the SoHG. Monies raised through raffle, ad sales in the program, or silent auction are designated for the SoHG to offset event costs. If a profit is generated, 70% of those funds are designated for the USHO Patrons Fund which directly supports the USHO. The remainder of any profit, 30%, is to be offered directly to the local organizing committee.

The USHO Patrons Fund is designed to support each year's USHO, to cover shortfalls, or to enhance the event as may be needed or requested. It is important to keep this fund healthy for future USHOs.



Site Selection

Select and announce, at least one year in advance, the date and location of the U.S. Hickory Open.

The SoHG U.S. Hickory Open will generally rotate on a four-year basis around four defined geographical regions of the U.S. This rotation began in 2018 with the East region.

- East (East Coast to the Appalachian Mountains)
- Midwest (East of the Mississippi River to the Appalachian Mountains)
- Heartland (West of the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains)
- West (West of the Rockies)

The above geographical descriptions are guidelines for the committee to follow. Proposals that go outside the rota must be recommended by the USHO Committee and approved by a majority of the Board.

Timeline for site selection

- Oct. 1 – The USHO Committee issues a call for proposals from the target region.
- March 1 – Deadline for proposals to be received. Send to any/all members of the USHO Committee.
- March/June – Sometime during this period, members of the Site Selection Committee, or its delegated representatives, will visit the proposed host course(s) to determine viability as a host USHO course.
- June 1 – The Committee delivers final recommendations to the SoHG board for vote.
- July 1 – Target date for Board to have voted on final location.

If, in a given year, the Committee does not receive a proposal by March 1 from the targeted region, the application process will be opened to groups from all regions. In such an event, final recommendations will be delivered to the board as soon as possible.

Regional Proposals

Proposals to host a USHO may come from local play groups, or from private clubs that have an SoHG liaison or representative and are interested in acting as USHO host or the specified year. Any proposal must show that it can meet the following requirements. First and foremost, the proposal must verify the strength and commitment of the group to host and carry out the assignments, duties, and responsibilities necessary to produce a successful USHO.

The proposal should be created with the possibility of hosting up to 100 golfers (work with the golf course on a reasonable expectation) and shall consist of the following:

- Location
- Course(s) to be played, with historical background.
- Courses should be walkable.
- Format of play. Shotgun v. tee times, time of day
- Dates – Mid to late September is the goal. Depending on local weather, play in early October is acceptable. The goal is to avoid overlap/conflict with strong regional events.
- Costs – Ideally, in the range of \$375-500 per player.
- Provide a Profit and Loss estimate.
- Agenda – Including practice round dates, event dates, meals and other social activities associated with the event (eg. Welcome reception and trade show, day one dinner, day two awards luncheon)
- Roster of committee make-up including Tournament Chair and Co-Chair, Golf Chair, Raffle Chair, Communications/Marketing Chair, Finance Chair (to coordinate with current SoHG Treasurer)
- Accommodations and costs – choice and location of host hotel, nearby alternatives
- Travel options
- Local activities available in the area for guests.
- Other golf opportunities for players including a possible charity golf event preceding the USHO or additional local golf course mini-events.
- A sample agenda or schedule.



2021 USHO – Gearhart Golf Links, Gearhart, Oregon



2024 USHO – Kenosha CC, Kenosha, Wisconsin



2025 USHO – Hot Springs CC, Hot Springs, Arkansas

Committees

TOURNAMENT CHAIR AND CO-CHAIR

Names and contact info

The tournament chair and co-chair will supervise all aspects of the host committee's work. They will also:

- Serve as liaisons between the host committee and the SoHG's USHO Committee.
- Be available for such SoHG board meetings as may request a report on the current standing of the tournament's progress.
- Serve as first-contact liaisons with the host club or course.
- Work with the SoHG Treasurer on any questions about registrants and report back to Treasurer.
- Track down and add any missing information regarding applications.

It is desirable that, if possible, a member or two from the previous year's USHO Host Committee be available for advice.

GOLF COMMITTEE

Perhaps the most important committee in terms of workload, this one must be adequately staffed with volunteers. It will report directly to the Tournament Chair.

SoHG members *only* are eligible to play in the USHO.

Items Provided by the SoHG

The Society provides several support items to each USHO.

- Tee Markers (arrange to have shipped from previous year's USHO person designated to this task)
- Banners/Signage (arrange to have shipped from previous year's USHO person designated to this task)
- USHO Open Division Trophies (men's and women's); John Fischer Low Amateur Award (see AWARDS)
- Plaque for the host club from the Society. SoHG to work with Host Committee to prepare the plaque, design/text, etc.

Size of field

An ideal field is 72-84 players. As currently conducted, the USHO is a social/competitive event for Society members *only* and host committees naturally wish to accommodate as many SoHG members as possible. However, at some point, larger fields reduce enjoyment when rounds push five hours or more. Attempts at shotgun starts have not proven helpful, in many cases even lengthening the rounds. Plan your field size in close collaboration with the USHO Committee and your club's host professional. Rounds should not last more than 4½ hours.

Equipment

Equipment guidelines are on the USHO page of the SoHG website and should be followed. Original and SoHG-approved replica clubs are allowed for play in the USHO as currently conducted.

No electronic devices of any kind are allowed – GPS, distance, watches or voice caddies.

Attire

Appropriate attire is mandatory for the USHO. Shorts and modern baseball-type caps are not allowed. Attire typical of the 1900-1935 is essential. Acceptable are long pants, plus-4s or plus-2s for men, skirts for women. Dress shirt and tie are strongly encouraged. Accommodation may be allowed for inclement or very hot weather.

Handicaps

- Players must be SoHG members in good standing.
- Work with SoHG Competition/Handicap co-chairs Bill Geisler or Marci Likens, to verify handicaps of all participants by cut-off date on application/registration form.
- Overall handicap from SoHG website or player will be listed at scratch if no hickory handicap.

Bill Geisler – SoHG Competitions and Handicaps co-chair
hickorybill1@gmail.com 407-227-8035

Marci Likens – SoHG Competitions and Handicaps co-chair
marci4947@earthlink.net 407-399-0352

Course Set-up

This should be done well in advance during a pre-tournament visit with course/club officials and in collaboration with SoHG Competition chairs. (Geisler and Likens).

Yardage guidelines are listed on the Tournament Guidelines page of the SoHG website. Courses should be walkable!

Open and Open Net – no longer than 6,200 yards / 5,700 meters

Senior – 5,200-5,600 yards / 4,750-5,100 meters

Super Senior – 5,000-5,400 yards / 4,575-5,000 meters

Women – 4,200-4,800 yards / 3,850-4,400 meters

- Work with course/club host professional or other official to determine proper tee placements for both days of tournament. There will be consistent placement of markers for the duration of the tournament.
- The SoHG will supply tee markers to be placed according to flight and corresponding yardages. Do not vary tee positions between rounds.
- Use the “6-6-6 Rule” for hole placements – six moderate, six medium, and six difficult hole placements.
- Green speeds should generally not exceed 10 on the stimp scale.
- Hole-in-one and closest-to-the-hole contests are not allowed.
- Yardage information for each day should be supplied in the official Player’s Welcome Packet and on scorecards.
- Work with SoHG Competition Chairs and course officials or host pro to determine hole locations and prepare placement sheets for players. These are sometimes posted on a sheet in each cart.
- Include the golf course Slope and Rating. Announce to players in advance and place on scorecards and rule sheets.

Registration First Day – All Day

Ensure you have enough committee members or volunteers to staff this desk throughout the first day, usually the practice day.

- Work with club/course to select an appropriate registration site, whether in the lobby of the club or the Pro Shop.
- Work with the SoHG Treasurer and Tournament Chairperson to ensure registration volunteers.

- Have an updated list of players; the very latest list from the SoHG Treasurer. All players must be verified SoHG members.
- Assemble welcome packet to be handed out at registration to each participant. (See: Hospitality – Player Gifts.)
- Check in golfers as they arrive and hand out welcome packets (often called ‘swag’ bags or gift bags). Total worth of the items in these bags is suggested to be no more than \$75 and should be considered part of the overall tournament fee. Additional items that would increase the cost of the gift bag, and thus the tournament fee, must be approved by the SoHG USHO Committee.
- Assign a club expert to check and verify that clubs pass SoHG guidelines for play.
- Once registration appears to be over for the day, notify the Host Tournament Chairperson of any absentees or other changes, for example, changes in the guest list, etc.
- Place SoHG banners near the registration desk and near the entrance of each activity for the weekend.

Tournament Conduct

The following assumes a tournament schedule of three days – practice round, first round the next day, and final round on the third day. These often go Sunday through Tuesday, but may change with each USHO. Tee times are preferred over shotgun starts for tournament rounds. (See Size of Field, page 10.)

- Practice Round – Post on the application form a pro shop number to arrange tee times along with a deadline by which this must be done. Practice rounds may be included on an “a la carte” basis, but must be available to those who desire it. Alternately, practice tee times may be coordinated by the golf committee chair.
- Draw pairings and assign tee times after verifying handicaps. Practice round pairings and times should be communicated at least several days in advance of the event.
- Courses should be walkable. Communicate in advance whether pushcarts are available.

- If caddies are available, be sure to clearly communicate in advance the costs, whether available for single or foursome, and whether for walking or as forecaddie.
- Print score cards for each player.
- Provide each player with a set of rules along with any local rules.
- Post tee times / pairings for the first round. In general, pairings are within each division.
- Balance the pairings and tee times based on number of players.
- Arrange scoring and posting of scores with the Pro shop and post on big board.
- After first round, assign and post tee times for the final round based on order of finish. Be sure to have one or two people ready to assume this role. It needs to be done quickly after the first round. Ideally, a pairings and scoresheet should be made available as soon as possible following the first round and posted online for reference.
- Incidentals – Note on welcome packet whether a range is available; note whether locker room is accessible and available.

Awards and Tournament Banquet

Ideally, the tournament banquet and awards should be held following the completion of play on the second day.

Appoint one or two people to handle awards.

The SoHG provides three traveling trophies – Open Division trophies for the men and women champions as well as the John Fischer Low Amateur award. An SoHG USHO Committee member will contact the past year's winners of these awards and arrange to have these three trophies shipped to an address supplied by the Host Committee. This should be done well in advance of the tournament to ensure these are cleaned and presentable.

Check with previous host committees and the SoHG's USHO Committee to determine whether you wish to offer medals (Kirkwood, for example) or trophies. It is recommended to offer awards for first and second place only. These trophies or medals are part of the Host Committee's USHO budget.

All medals and trophies must be at the awards dinner/banquet following the final round for presentation.*

Ideally, the current SoHG president will be on hand to present the awards assisted by the chairperson of the local host committee. Both should be dressed appropriately as befits representatives of the Society.

Awards, 19 in all, are as follows:

- Championship trophies – one men's and one women's
- Gross and Net trophies/medals for each Division (Open, Senior, Super Senior, Ladies) in First and Second Place (total of 16)
- John Fischer Low Amateur Award

*Note that the Society recommends the tournament banquet and awards be held after play on the final day.

MIKE BROWN AWARD

The annual Mike Brown Award honors the memory of the late Mike Brown (shown at right) and his many contributions to hickory golf. It shall be announced and presented at an appropriate time during the current USHO awards banquet.



The Mike Brown Award medal will be supplied by the SoHG and the current award recipient announced by the current SoHG president, or highest SoHG board member present.

It is the responsibility of the current SoHG president to order the medal well in advance for the presentation.



COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Committee touches on a variety of points of the USHO, from the up-front application, to the thank-you note sent to all participants after the event is over. Presented here are some main points. Be sure to have an adequate number of people to cover the bases.

Schedule/Agenda

Work with Golf Committee and Hospitality Committee to prepare a tournament schedule/agenda that takes into account the timing of the golf rounds with lunches, raffle, first round banquet and final round awards luncheon or banquet. Schedules are always subject to change, but it should be well enough along to place on the USHO application and on the SoHG website. The website schedule may be updated as changes occur.

USHO Application

This follows a predictable format that includes all pertinent information for applicants, including:

- Schedule, deadlines, etc.

**Sample schedule from
the 2022 USHO.**

Sunday, Sept. 11

Check-in day, in the hotel lobby. Play a practice round, check out the Resort. Dinner on your own. Restaurants at resort or local restaurants in Tavares or Mount Dora.

Monday, Sept. 12

6 a.m.

Breakfast opens in La Hacienda Restaurant.

7:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

Event registration and club check, Vista Room.

7:30 a.m.-throughout the day

Practice rounds.

5-7 p.m.

Hickory club swap in the La Paloma Room.

5-9 p.m.

USHO Raffle/Silent Auction.

6-7 p.m.

Opening Reception / cash bar. Plaza de la Fontana.

7-9 p.m.

Tournament Dinner La Hacienda Restaurant.

Tuesday, Sept. 13 Opening Round

6 a.m.

Breakfast opens La Hacienda Restaurant.

8 a.m.

Shotgun Start – El Campeón Course

Dinner on your own.

Wednesday, Sept. 14 Final Round

6 a.m.

Breakfast opens La Hacienda Restaurant.

8 a.m.

Shotgun Start – El Campeón Course

1:30 p.m.

Closing Awards and Lunch
Legends Grill

- Fees and when due.
- Pro shop number and deadline for practice round tee times.
- Travel/hotel/restaurants in local area, with emphasis on featured event hotel with negotiated room rates if possible.
- Map of area, how to get to course. If necessary, map of course/club with parking, etc.
- Tournament guidelines and rules.
- Relevant information to each specific year's USHO.
- Information on cancellations / refunds.
- A note to all participants stating that the SoHG has the right to use their image from the USHO for promotional purposes.

A person shall be designated to create the document and circulate it to the Committee for approval. Once this document is approved, it will be posted at a designated date and time to the SoHG's website on the USHO page. The timing of that post will be communicated at least a month in advance to the SoHG membership via e-newsletter and website.

Player applications will be sent to the current SoHG treasurer who will collect fees and compile an appropriate spreadsheet with all relevant player data. This spreadsheet will be available to the Host Organizing Committee for planning and preparation. Notify successful applicants via return email.

All entries will be accepted on a first come basis. Once a pre-determined level of entries is reached, a wait list will be started again on first-come basis. As cancellations or withdrawals do occur, those on the wait list will be notified.

Refunds will not be offered for cancellations after a date to be decided by the Committee.

Reserved Spots in the USHO

The Committee will coordinate the following with the SoHG USHO Committee and the SoHG Treasurer.

- **Past USHO Open Division champions.** A member of the SoHG USHO Committee will contact Open Division champions from the past five years and determine who

among them will wish to attend the current year's USHO. That is 10 possible spots (men and women). These players will be given until the application deadline to respond, or earlier if possible, after which time any unclaimed spots from these 10 will be opened to the waitlist or general membership. The SoHG representative will coordinate this information with the Treasurer and Host Committee.

- **Players from the host club.** The Host Committee must determine whether spots will be held for the host golf club and how many. Be sure the host club understands our general rule that only SoHG members are allowed to play in the USHO, which is a yearly gathering for SoHG members. We cannot dictate that host club members join the SoHG, although this would be a nice gesture on their part. Recommended alternatives are:
 - grant them an honorary one-year SoHG membership;
 - suggest that they play for the honor of a club hickory trophy, such as The XYZ Country Club Hickory Championship trophy.
- **Members of the Host USHO committee and SoHG Board officers.** The Host Committee will coordinate with the USHO Committee to determine whether such spots will be granted and how many.
- **International visitors.** At least 10 spots will be held for international players. Any unclaimed spots at the registration deadline will then be opened to the waitlist. International players must also be SoHG members.
- **Important VIP Sponsors.** The Host Committee will determine how many spots are to be reserved/offered to VIP Sponsors and coordinate this information with the Treasurer. The USHO is essentially a club championship for SoHG members. Thus, it must be ensured and understood that VIP participation will not take spots away from SoHG members. VIPs who are allowed to play in the USHO and who are not SoHG members are not eligible for SoHG awards.

Welcome Note

The Treasurer should send a report of new registrants to a designated person who will send an electronic welcome note to all participants. The welcome note should include event details, such as an event schedule; reminder of any important cut-off dates such as a cancellation deadline; or any other items that the committee deems important to convey. Be sure to keep up-to-date with later registrants and send welcome notes as these come in.

Two Weeks Out From the Event Date

An email to all participants with the latest news and updated schedule. This note is designed to pique interest, to keep the excitement level high. It also communicates that the Committee is on top of things and is prepared to welcome everyone.

Thank-You Notes

A day or so after the conclusion of the tournament, a note should be sent to all players thanking them for their participation, along with any other statements that the Committee may wish to include. Thank-you letters should be written to the general manager or other officers and important VIPs of the course/club.

Players at the 2017
USHO at
Del Monte
Golf Club.



PROMOTIONS/MARKETING/PR

Start early. You are not only promoting to SoHG members but also to local media outlets, even national if possible.

- Prepare a press kit that will for local and national media that will include photos, SoHG information, event information, information on past champions, for example; and event contacts.
- Contact local media – TV, radio, print, etc.
- PR docs to national media
- PR docs to regional hickory golf groups to send to their local media. Include a brief template that can be completed by the local playing group with local contacts for hickory golf information.
- Invite local and/or national media personalities to play practice round
- Feed the SoHG website with news on the USHO to generate interest. This might include articles about local players from the host region.
- Articles with interesting slants for media grabs
- Article in *Wee Nip*/website about the club/course
- Ensure the SoHG display banners are on-hand and given to the registration volunteers to be displayed. These may be found with the appropriate person from the immediate past USHO, and shipment arranged to a designated person.
- Assign someone to prepare a report immediately following the first round that can be immediately posted to the SoHG website. This report will indicate current front-runners, and any interesting developments.
- Assign someone to prepare a post-tournament report that can be immediately posted to the SoHG website. This report will



cover the news of the champions in the various brackets, plus any incidental information about the tournament that this writer can include to make it an informative and interesting report.

Photography

One of the most important aspects of the USHO is photography. Be sure to enlist the help of a photographer or even a videographer if available. These, especially a photographer, are necessary for both news and promotional purposes. If a volunteer from the SoHG ranks is not available, check on prices of local talent. The SoHG's USHO Patrons Fund may be able to pick up this cost.

The SoHG will wish to have photos of:

- Open Division Gross champions (men's and women's) with their trophies, both individually and a photo of the two together. ***These will be needed ASAP after the tournament's conclusion!!***
- Photos of Senior Gross and Net champions; Super Senior Gross and Net champions; and Women's Net champion
- Photos of the Mike Brown Award presentation and an individual photo of the award recipient.
- Photos where possible of golf action from a variety of situations, posed shots, action shots.
- A group shot of all participants with an attractive background, such as the clubhouse, for example, or with the course in the background.
- *If possible*, a posed shot of each player on first tee on first day along with ID of player. (Hard to do but, if possible, a great record of the event.)

HOSPITALITY

Once meal plans are in place, estimate a per player cost and advise Tournament Chair and the Communications Committee so that these can be factored into the overall USHO registration fee. This needs to be done early, as it is an important element of the registration application.

Early committees have found that one of the most important aspects of the USHO is having a convenient place for people to meet and visit after the round of golf. This is one of the keys to the enjoyment of the entire event.

Hotel

This committee will, very early in the process, find and select a hotel for the event and provide a list of other options in the area. It will arrange a room rate with the event hotel and select a cut-off date for room reservations.

It will provide a clear, ***direct line to the hotel*** for reservations through its own service. This is important – reservation phone calls **MUST NOT** go through a third-party reservation service. Booking through third-parties often results in a no-refund booking. Double check this important phone number and be quite clear on the refund policy.

All information will be passed to the Communications Committee for inclusion in the Registration Application.

Food/Meals

Work with club/course on:

- Welcome Reception – First day after practice rounds. Arrange menu and room setup for Welcome Reception and trade show. A trade show often accompanies the welcome reception, but not always. This feature is up to each organizing committee. Regardless, you need tables for sitting and eating and tables if there is to be a trade show.
- After First Round – Players make individual dinner plans.
- Final Round Awards Banquet – Arrange menu and room set up.

Assigned seating for some tables and open seating for the rest.

- For the awards presentation, work with the SoHG president on flow of the awards and the evening's agenda. The SoHG president, or a Board designee, should present the awards with the Host Committee Chairperson assisting. These two may decide a different arrangement between them.
- Select reasonable start times for all activities.
- For all hosted meals and dinners, decide whether there is to be an open bar.

Player Gifts

Source a variety of items to be included in a gift bag given to all players at registration. It is highly recommended that the total costs of such items not exceed \$75, give or take a few dollars. This total is to be considered part of the tournament fee. Past committees have come up with all sorts of ideas from hats and clothing items, to ball markers, flags, vests, sweaters, etc. It is up to your committee to select a few items as a thank-you to the players.

Special VIP sponsors sometimes wish to add an item to a gift bag. All such items must be approved by the SoHG USHO Committee.

Also in this welcome gift bag should be a USHO Program book, golf course booklet/scorecard, a Monday pairings sheet, as well as informational flyers on area activities and sites to visit, or any other additional information the Host Committee would like to share.

Travel

Post on the application form and on the SoHG website:

- Event hotel, name, address, contact info
- Alternative lodgings in the area
- Nearby airports if necessary
- Local attractions, features, sightseeing possibilities, restaurants.

Guest Activities

If you are arranging for special activities for non-playing guests, such as local tours, shopping, sightseeing, etc., be sure to list these along with a contact person and dates, times of when and where to meet.

Place all this on the USHO page of the SoHG website, list in welcome emails, and place a flyer with this information in the player Welcome Gift Bag.

You will also need to designate persons/volunteers to host such activities and imbue them with the responsibility to carry out the program.

RAFFLE

This committee will solicit items for the annual USHO raffle. These may come from any variety of sources: local businesses, SoHG members, vendors and suppliers, etc. Advice and ideas from past USHO host committees will prove useful.

The Raffle Chairperson will work with a designated USHO/ SoHG representative to identify and contact those sources which have long-term relationships with the Society. These sources should be protected and receive preferential treatment.

A person shall be designated to receive and store all items until time for the raffle; or to coordinate same.

Raffle Conduct

Tickets can be sold from the registration and Sunday welcome reception onward until the actual drawing. Ensure there are volunteers to staff the table and sell tickets.

The drawing can be held when and where the committee decides is best for the event. For example, during the First Round banquet, or immediately after the first round and announced at the start of the dinner. If possible, display a list of winners on a sheet of paper at each table.

Raffle items can be displayed with descriptions on a table(s) during a suitable period of time. Up to the drawing, players can

place tickets in a bowl or other holder in front of the items they wish to win.

The actual conduct of the raffle is up to each individual committee. Often, an emcee is appointed (or volunteer) to announce the raffle winners as they are drawn.

The above are guidelines and the current organizing committee will hold and conduct the raffle to suit the timing of the current event.

Proceeds from the raffle will benefit the USHO Patrons Fund and the local organizing committee.

Silent Auction

Silent Auctions are optional, but an important feature that can generate revenue for the USHO. These are usually set aside for donated items of high value. It is important to have someone from the Host Committee designated to handle this feature, both to solicit and accept donations, and to accept payments from auction winners. Donated items are tax deductible minus value of items. A letter of thank-you for the donated items should be sent to each donor noting the gift and the tax-deductible value. Work with the SoHG Treasurer on this aspect.

Bids can be placed on an auction sheet that should be near or in front of each item, along with a description of the item.

The winners of the auction can be announced during the First Round banquet.



USHO PROGRAM BOOK

The Program is designed to be a keepsake for USHO participants and a record of the event for the Society.

Some elements are necessary for each annual program. These include:

- Welcome notes from the SoHG and Host Committee.
- An article or two of historic or other interest about the course.
- Advertisements.
- A list of players.
- A page of past USHO winners.
- A page of thank-you to sponsors both individual and corporate.
- Other such items as deemed important by the Host Committee.

At the time of this Manual's publication, SoHG *Wee Nip* editor and executive director Jim Davis has handled the majority of annual program designs and has arranged for a printer. Occasionally, the Host Organizing Committee may wish to have a designer in its ranks prepare some of the feature elements, or even the entire program. There is no problem with this. Simply coordinate the work with Jim.

Design

All past programs are posted on the USHO page of the SoHG website. Many are very basic, a few take the design a step further. All include photos and logos from the host club. In the main, the book should be kept simple and elegant. Sixteen to 20 pages should suffice. Page count is largely dictated by the number of advertisements sold by the committee.

Articles/Content

As noted above, many program elements are repeated each year:

- Welcome page
- Welcome from a member of the host club/course
- Event Schedule
- List of players (name and home town)
- Page of past USHO champions
- Page of sponsor logos
- An article on the host course or club

Beyond these regular elements, your committee is free to develop other such articles as may occur to them. Perhaps an article on a local player in the event; perhaps there are competitive angles to cover. In the main, look for interesting angles that will be fun to read, that will elevate the nature of the event.

It only takes one or two such articles to suggest a USHO that will be fun and exciting to attend.

Look to past USHO programs for ideas. (The 2021 book, for example, was well designed with a fine feature on the course.)

Make sure your writer coordinates the article with either Jim Davis or the Host Committee's program designer, who will prepare it for the USHO program.

Advertising

Past advertisers, long-term accounts, and regional groups will be contacted by the SoHG, through Dale Hallock, SoHG advertising director, for their ad support. **dhallock@me.com**

It is up to the Host Committee to identify local businesses, sponsors or donors who may be associated with the host golf club. Look to past USHO programs for ideas. Ads may come from many and sometimes unexpected sources. The more ads sold for the book, the greater the income that will offset print costs.

Start early. Work with Dale to ensure that all potential advertisers are sent a list of ad costs and deadlines, or do this by phone. This deadline and a call for ads should also appear in the registration/application packet.

Ads that are sold can be delivered electronically to Jim Davis (or the designated Host Committee's program designer) for placement in the book. These must be high-resolution ads in either JPEG or PDF format. All ads should be approved by Dale Hallock or Jim Davis.

Premium full-page ads are the inside front and back covers, and the back cover. Our long-term accounts and SoHG benefactors often request the same ad placements, so be sure to check with Dale before you offer these spots to local sources.

Keep a checklist of who has been contacted and which ads are in-house.

All advertisers must send their payments directly to the Treasurer who will track payments. Decide whether by check or PayPal or both. Regardless, every payment must carry a note that the payment is for an ad in the USHO program. That will help in tracking.

Suggested Advertising rates

The following rates have been developed to coordinate sponsor packages with the USHO, the *Wee Nip*, and the SoHG website. Check with Dale Hallock if you have questions about what would best suit your sponsor/advertiser.

2026 SoHG Ads & Sponsorship Rates

Wee Nip Ads 2 Issues (Spring/Summer) (Fall/Winter)			
Size	Inches	1 Issue	2 Issues
Full Front Inside	8.5 x 11	\$500	\$850
Full Back Cover	8.5 x 11	\$500	\$850
Full Back Inside	8.5 x 11	\$350	\$600
Full Inside	8.5 x 11	\$300	\$500
Half Inside Horizontal	7.5 x 5	\$200	\$350
Half Inside Vertical	3.75 x 10	\$200	\$350
Quarter Inside	3.75 x 5	\$125	\$225

US Hickory Open (USHO) Program Ads		
Size	Inches	Rate
Full Front Inside	8.5 x 11	\$275
Full Back Cover	8.5 x 11	\$300
Full Back Inside	8.5 x 11	\$275
Full Inside	8.5 x 11	\$225
Half Inside Horizontal	7.5 x 5	\$175
Half Inside Vertical	3.75 x 10	\$175
Quarter Inside	3.75 x 5	\$100

Wee Nip Sponsor Banner / Logo	\$300
Monthly Email Sponsor Banner / Logo	\$300
Web Site Sponsor Banner / Logo	\$300
USHO Program Sponsor Banner / Logo	\$300

Sponsor Package Banner / Logo	\$1,000
Wee Nip, Web Site, Email Letter, USHO Program	

Email Dale Hallock to Place an Ad/Sponsorship dhallowack@me.com
Send PDF or High Resolution Ad to Jim Davis jdavis2364@gmail.com

Ad in return for vendor support

USHO vendors/donors may be offered a program ad in return for a predetermined dollar level of merchandise or grant. Such vendors/donors may also receive placement of their logo on the SoHG e-newsletter and/or website and identified as an SoHG supporter. See the rate sheet on the previous page.

Do ENSURE this is communicated and understood up front by the advertiser. Work with Dale Hallock to create the proper sponsor package for your contacts. Dale will coordinate with Jim Davis (and/or the Host Committee program designer) for ad placement.

Printer

The SoHG uses a long-time printer whose quality and work have proven excellent. There is no problem working with a printer in your area. Just coordinate with Jim Davis.

Deadlines are so arranged that the book may be printed and delivered to the designated Registration Committee volunteer at least 7-10 days before the practice round so that it can be included in the Welcome Gift Bag for each player.

If Jim Davis is preparing the book, he will need a shipping address. An invoice for printing and shipping will be sent to the Treasurer and to the Host Committee's financial chair.

FINANCIAL

Co-Chair with the SoHG Treasurer

Michael Sloan – msloan@msn.com

Work closely with the SoHG Treasurer to set your budget and get your contracts in place so you have every dollar accounted for.

Well before the registration open date:

- Submit the tournament budget to the Treasurer for review.
- Submit the contract with the host club to the Treasurer for review.

The budget should be balanced. USHO Patrons Fund may be used for unexpected or SoHG USHO Committee-approved expenses.

In general:

- Build spreadsheet of participants and distribute to the Committee as requested or needed.
- Verify Budget and all expenses.
- Collect all registrations and provide list of players to Committee. Every two weeks send a list of the latest entries so that welcome notes can be sent out.
- Observe registration deadline and maintain a wait list of registrants.
- Work with various committee members for such expenses as trophies/medals, meals, welcome packet gifts, printing and advertising revenue
- Note cancellations by deadline and deduct for any expenses incurred (such as clothing ordered.
- At registration deadline, cut-off date, send final list of players to Committee Chair, Registration Committee Chair, and program designer.
- Prepare final balance sheet, profit-and-loss, expenses/income, etc. for board review.

Municipal Grants – A Potential Income Source

Some host committees have had success with contacting local governmental units in charge of promoting tourism or boosting the local economy. In 2022, the USHO organizers received a grant from a local county entity charged with promoting tourism based on hotel rooms sold. In 2024, the organizers worked with the state of Wisconsin's Division of Tourism.

In either case, it is recommended to begin with the local chamber of commerce to learn of local contacts who may wish to advertise and/or donate prize packages. Through a local chamber, the Wisconsin organizers learned of opportunities for tourism grants through the state. Once contacted, the state tourism representatives helped the USHO organizers through the process of applying through existing grant programs.

GOLF COMMITTEE

Chair _____

Phone _____ Email _____

COMMUNICATIONS

Chair _____

Phone _____ Email _____

PROMOTIONS/MARKETING/PR

Chair _____

Phone _____ Email _____

HOSPITALITY

Chair _____

Phone _____ Email _____

RAFFLE

Chair _____

Phone _____ Email _____

USHO PROGRAM BOOK

Chair _____

Phone _____ Email _____

FINANCIAL

Chair _____

Phone _____ Email _____

NOTES

