



# 2026 GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge

16-19 July 2026 at Royal Birkdale

## Comprehensive Competition Rules – 2026

### 1 Introduction

1. The Tournament owners are the Royal and Ancient Group of Companies, the Title Rights Holders in South Africa are GolfRSA and the Promoters and Project Managers are Golf Notions.
2. Any **GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge** events that include the playing of golf shall be played in accordance with the Rules of Golf as laid down by the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, together with the Local Tournament Handicapping Rules and any Local Rules approved by participating Club Competition Committees.
3. Any disputes at any **Club Qualifiers** shall be settled by the relevant Club Competition Committee whose decision shall be final.
4. The competition is open to all paid-up affiliated golfers aged **eighteen years or older** at the time of the National Final with an official Handicap Index on the Handicaps Network Africa system from an affiliated Golf Club that is registered for the GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge.
5. Any affiliated Golf Club in South Africa that is **paid-up** may register to participate in the GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge.
6. GolfRSA have decided to waive any Club Registration Fee again for the **2026** GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge competition.
7. Golf Clubs must **register** before the **closing date which is 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.** (Clubs should register as soon as possible please for the 2025/6 competition.)

### 2 Handicapping

1. All players must have a current official club Handicap Index on the Handicaps Network Africa (HNA) system.
2. Players shall use their golf club Handicap Index according to the HNA handicapping system in operation and in accordance with the Local Handicapping Rules of the Tournament.
3. There is no maximum Handicap Index and both Men and Ladies may enter.
4. The Handicap Index used to calculate a player's Course Handicap at the National Final shall be that golfers **lowest** Handicap Index **during the period of the Club Qualifiers run between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 OR** their **current Handicap Index** at the time of the National Final if **lower**.
5. At the National Final golfers will receive a **95% allowance of their calculated Course Handicap**.
6. Any competitor shall always use the lower Handicap Index based on the aforementioned conditions at the National Final.

### 3 Qualifying Events

1. Golf Clubs who have registered for the GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge are at liberty to decide on the qualifying process best suited for their golf club and their members.
2. Only Club Members with an official handicap on the Handicap Networks Africa system may qualify for the Regional Final stage Lucky Draw.
3. Entry fees charged at a golf club for Club Qualifying events are at the discretion of the Golf Club and can be used to benefit the members and maintain or improve the golf course and clubhouse facilities.
4. Any prizes allocated at various GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge **Club Qualifying** events are the responsibility of the Golf Club.

5. There are **various formats that can be used within a Club Qualifying process** that can include but are not limited to, the following **examples**:

- Nine-hole competition on a “sundowner” Friday and / or a “brunch” Sunday (or any other day) with the winners or top two or three going into and end-of-season final play-off or draw.
- Nine-hole Leaderboard with points for finishing positions in each 9-hole competition with the best “X number” of players on the Leaderboard contest a club final or going into a draw for two players.
- Every time a Member plays 9-holes their card goes into the box and monthly the best score and / or the most number of rounds played and / or x-number of cards get drawn and all those names go into a series Grand Final where there is a play-off or names are drawn for the two winners.
- A dedicated GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge 9-hole competition with a set number of qualifying events during the club qualifying period with an Order of Merit and a Grand Finale.

*Note: These are some examples of qualification processes used last series with a range of entry fees and local club event prizes that ultimately resulted in two winners in the Regional Final Draw for a place at the National Final.*

6. It is the responsibility of the Golf Club to **complete the Club Qualifier Winners Form** that will be provided nearer the time with the names and contact details of **their two winners and return it to the Project Managers by Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026**. This is to ensure their two winners are included in the Regional Final stage Lucky draw that will take place during the **second week of March**.

7. Two players are eligible to qualify for the Regional Final stage from each registered Golf Club.

8. Winners from the Club Qualifiers will only be officially registered for the Regional Final stage and entered into the Regional Lucky draw once it has been confirmed that all financial dues are up to date and affiliation fees have been paid.

#### **4 Regional Final Stage**

1. The Regional Final stage will comprise a **Lucky Draw format** into which all winners from the Clubs will be entered in each of the fourteen Regions.

2. The reasons for the structure of the Regional Final stage format as a Lucky Draw include:

- i. South Africa’s geography and distances to travel to “golf-playing” Regional Finals in many regions.
- ii. Costs and logistics and timing of running “golf-playing” Regional Finals in 14 Unions.

3. Regional Final stage events will be held as follows:

- i. There will be a **Regional Final stage Lucky Draw held for each of the 14 Golf Unions** specifically for the Winners from the registered Golf Clubs in each respective Union.
- ii. At each Regional Final stage Lucky draw there will be a **minimum of one National Final place** available per Region as long as there are sufficient players to warrant a Regional Final stage draw.
- iii. **A minimum of 12 Players – from 6 golf clubs registered – must be entered into a Regional Final stage Lucky Draw to trigger the available National Final place.**
- iv. Any number of Players in the Regional Final stage Lucky Draw may also win other prizes made available by certain companies who support the competition and amateur club golf in general.
- v. The Organising Committee will determine the Lucky Draw procedure to be followed which is likely to be the same or similar to the 2024/25 competition.

4. Regional Final winners will win places at the National Final.

- i. The number of National Final places available at each Regional Final stage Lucky Draw is based on ratios. For example, if there are 400 winners from all the participating Golf Clubs around the country in the 14 Regional Final stage Lucky Draws in total, and Region “X” has 40 Qualifying Players in that draw then 10% of the places at the National Final will be available for that Region’s Final Draw.
- ii. The Promoters reserve the right to retain up to four National Final reserve places that may be used for incentives in cases where, for example, there has been a significant growth in the number of 9-hole rounds played versus previous years.

## 5 National Final

1. The National Final format is an Individual Stableford competition with a 95% allowance of Course Handicap.
2. The National Final winners will be the two golfers with the highest Individual Stableford point's total over the designated number of competitive 9-hole rounds.
3. If for any reason – such as adverse weather conditions (e.g. bad light) - interfering with the completion of the event itself or any playoff, the winners will be decided by:
  - The leaders after 18 holes; or
  - If there is no play in round 2 or all players are not able to complete a minimum of 18 holes, then the leaders after round 1 will be declared the winners.
  - The Tournament Committee reserve the right to modify the way in which tied scores are separated e.g. count-out or scores of incomplete rounds included e.g. number of holes played by group completing the fewest number of holes; or other method that the prevailing conditions or circumstances determine.

### 5.1 National Final General Notes:

1. The players attending the **GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge National Final** will receive an all-expenses paid trip including reasonable travel outside a designated distance from the venue, accommodation on a bed & breakfast bases, catering of primary meals and golfing costs excluding caddies or carts.
2. There may be further prizes according to the Leaderboard.
3. It is up to the discretion of the Tournament Referee to determine the suitability – or otherwise – for play to be halted or for the total cessation of play.
4. The Tournament Director or other Officials may over-ride any of these rules if the environment or situation at the time requires him or her to do so.
5. If a count out is required for any reason, it will be according to Strokes 1 to 9 inclusive.

## 6 General

1. Should any player make an error with a score submission for handicapping or omit to submit a score from any round during any stage of the competition in which that player is involved, then that player will be required to withdraw from further participation in the event – ***even if such submission or omission was a mistake.***
2. The Official Terms & Conditions of the GolfRSA Race to the R&A 9 Hole Challenge are available on the GolfRSA website on [www.golfrsa.com](http://www.golfrsa.com)
3. Right of admission to the tournament may be reserved.

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