



81st U.S. Women's Open Championship
USGA Qualifying
May 11, 2026

QUALIFYING MEMORANDUM TO PLAYERS

HOST CLUB

Essex County Country Club

350 Mount Pleasant Avenue

West Orange, NJ 07052

Don McCabe, Head Golf Professional

973-731-1400

<https://www.essexcountycc.com/>

FORMAT/QUALIFYING PLACES: Stroke play competition conducted over 36 holes. The field of contestants will compete for **2** qualifying places and two alternate positions in the 81st U.S. Women's Open Championship to be played June 4-7, 2026, at Riviera Country Club in Pacific Palisades, California. In the event of severe weather, call the Pro Shop or consult www.njgolf.org. **The official rain date is Tuesday, May 12.**

REGISTRATION: Players are requested to check in upon arrival at the course. The registration area will be located near the front entrance to the clubhouse. Players are to report to their assigned starting tees, ready to play, 10 minutes before their starting times.

STARTING TIMES: Starting times are posted here: <https://www.njgolf.org/tee-times-information>.

PLAYOFF: In the event of a tie for the last qualifying places or alternates, there will be a hole-by-hole playoff to determine the final qualifiers and the 1st and 2nd alternate if necessary. All announcements regarding the play-off will be made at the public scoreboard upon completion of the qualifying round.

FOOTWEAR: Rule 4.3 is modified in this way: During a round, a player must not wear shoes with traditionally-designed spikes (regardless of composition, i.e., ceramic, plastic, etc.) or spikes, of any design, comprised either entirely or partially of metal (if such metal may come in contact with the course). Penalty for breach of this Local Rule: See Rule 4.3.

DRIVERS/GOLF BALLS: The Local Rule for Conforming Driver Heads is in effect, See Model Local Rule G-1. The Local Rule requiring that all golf balls used be on the List of Conforming Golf Balls is in effect. See Model Local Rule G-3. Please check the USGA website, www.usga.org, for a list of approved golf balls and drivers. **The "One Ball Rule" is NOT in effect at qualifying.**

GROOVES: The players clubs **must conform** to the grooves and punch mark specifications in The Rules of Golf that are effective from January 1, 2010. See Model Local Rule G-2. **The exception for Ping Eye2 Irons manufactured before March 31, 1990 is not in effect.**

DMDS: The use of distance-measuring devices (DMD) is **PERMITTED** in qualifying, however not in the Championship proper of all USGA open championships. For more information, visit www.usga.org/dmd.

PACE OF PLAY: It is a condition that player must play without undue delay and in accordance with guidelines established by committee. Guidelines will be distributed upon arrival at the course. Pace of Play will be monitored and enforced using traditional "position and timing system" ([refer to attachment](#)).

EVACUATION PLAN: In the event of a discontinuance of play during the qualifier, players must adhere to the evacuation plan designated by the Committee.

PRACTICE ROUND AVAILABILITY: The club has graciously agreed to allow players the ability to play one (1) practice. Practice round dates are as follows: **After 2pm, on Tuesday, April 21; Wednesday, April 22; Tuesday, April 28; Wednesday, April 29; Tuesday, May 5. Players that cannot make one of these times may walk (not play) the golf course after 5:30pm on Sunday, May 10.** Players must call the golf shop 973-731-9764 in advance to schedule their practice round. There is no fee for a walking practice

round, but a mandatory \$60 cart fee (CASH ONLY) would apply to players riding. The practice facilities will be open to players on the date of their practice round for a **brief warmup session** and players must not arrive more than one (1) hour prior to their practice round time. **Pull/push carts are not permitted.** Appropriate conduct is required, players must only play 1 ball and maintain a brisk pace of play. NO guests allowed. Limited local caddies are available (see below).

The approximate yardages from which the qualifier will be conducted are listed below; these will be available for players in the Golf Shop.

Hole	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Par	4	4	4	4	4	3	5	5	3	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	71
Yardage	373	293	375	407	414	162	538	494	137	428	175	380	535	312	216	405	376	420	6440
Time Par	0:16	0:14	0:15	0:15	0:16	0:12	0:18	0:18	0:12	0:16	0:12	0:16	0:18	0:15	0:13	0:15	0:15	0:16	4:32

PRACTICE FACILITIES/RANGE BALLS: Practice facilities are available only on a player's scheduled practice round day for a brief (30 minutes or less) warmup period. On the day of the qualifier, the practice facilities will be available to players for the duration of the day.

CADDIES: A player is not required to employ a caddie, but may bring her own caddie, or carry her own bag. Players and caddies must walk at all times during a round. Club caddies are limited and must be reserved in advance by contacting Ryan Mack at rmack@essexcountycc.com. The caddie rate is \$150 (includes gratuity) per round.

CARTS: **Motorized transportation is prohibited in this competition.** Players must not ride on any form of transportation during a round unless authorized by the Committee. **Pull/Push carts are NOT PERMITTED in this qualifier.**

GOLF SHOP/LOCKER ROOM/PRACTICE AREAS: The Clubhouse, Practice Range, and Pro Shop will open at 6:15 AM.

CODE OF CONDUCT: As set forth in the USGA application, the code of conduct applies to all USGA Qualifying and Championships.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE: Contestants and caddies must be neat in appearance. The following applies to players, caddies, and spectators: Proper attire is required at all times when on Club property. Women may wear pants, slacks, Bermuda-length shorts, skirts, and culottes (no more than three inches above the knee), and appropriate shirts. Men must wear collared dress or golf shirt. Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Golf attire is required in the clubhouse.

CELL PHONE POLICY: Cell phones are permitted, but please be courteous and responsible when using them (i.e. avoid disturbing those around you when on your phone). Player's cooperation with mobile "live scoring" is appreciated and more information will be provided by the starters.

FOOD SERVICE: A light breakfast for players only will be available at 6:30 a.m. Snacks, lunch, and beverages will also be available throughout the day in the clubhouse grillroom on a **cash / credit basis**.

SPECTATORS: Spectators are welcome during the qualifier; however, no spectators are allowed to use carts, and they must adhere to the dress code.

OFFICIAL IN CHARGE:

Brad Bardon – Director, Championships, NJ Golf
 (908) 241-4653
bradb@njgolf.org

If it becomes necessary to withdraw prior to the date of the competition, please contact the Brad Bardon at (908) 241-4653 or bradb@njgolf.org and the USGA at 908-326-1950 or champs@usga.org.