

1. The Role of the Committee

1 The Role of the Committee

The Rules of Golf define the Committee as the person or group in charge of a competition or the course. The Committee is essential to the proper playing of the game. Committees have the responsibility of running the course on a day-to-day basis or for a specific competition and it should always act in ways that support the Rules of Golf. This part of the Official Guide to the Rules of Golf provides guidance to Committees in fulfilling this role.

While many of the duties of a Committee are specific to running organized competitions, an important part of the Committee's duties relates to its responsibility for the course during general or every day play.

1A General Play

Even when a competition is not being contested, it is still important for the Committee to ensure that the Rules of Golf can be followed by golfers playing casual rounds or playing their own competitions. This type of play is referred to as general play throughout the Committee Procedures.

During general play, the structure of the Committee is often more informal than in competitions, and in many cases the responsibilities of the Committee will be delegated to or undertaken by one or more course representatives, such as the golf professional, course manager or other employee of the course. The duties of this Committee include:

- Ensuring the course is properly marked (Section 2),
- Establishing any Local Rules for general play (Section 3),
- Establishing and enforcing Pace of Play and Code of Conduct guidelines (Section 4A),
- Considering when to suspend play because of weather or other conditions (Section 4B), and
- Providing Rules support for players when they have a question regarding general play (Section 4C).

1B Competitions

When in charge of a competition, the Committee has responsibilities before, during and after play to ensure the smooth running of the competition under the Rules.

The resources available to a Committee will differ depending on the course or the level of competition, and so a Committee may not be able to implement every recommended practice. Where this is the case, the Committee will need to decide its priorities for each competition.

The period before the competition begins is arguably the most important to ensure the smooth running of the competition. The Committee's duties during this period may include:

- Setting the Terms of the Competition (Section 5A),
- Reviewing and adjusting the course marking (Section 5B),
- Reviewing Local Rules and establishing any additional Local Rules (Section 5C),
- Determining eligibility requirements for players with disabilities to use Rule 25 (Section 5D),
- Defining if and where players may practise on the course (Section 5E),
- Determining the teeing areas and hole locations to be used (Section 5F),
- Establishing and publishing the draw for match play or groups for stroke play and the starting times (Section 5G),
- Defining Pace of Play and Code of Conduct policies (Sections 5H and 5I), and
- Preparing materials for players and referees (Section 5J).

Once the competition has started, the Committee is responsible for ensuring that players have the information needed to play under the Rules and to assist them in applying the Rules:

- Providing information to players so they are aware of any applicable Local Rules, Pace of Play or Code of Conduct policies, as well as other important information such as which teeing areas to use and where holes are located (Section 6A),
- Starting matches and groups on time (Section 6A),
- Ensuring that the course is properly set up, marked and maintained (Section 6B),
- Providing Rules assistance for players (Section 6C),
- Enforcing the Pace of Play policy (Section 6D),
- Suspending play because of weather or other conditions and then determining when play should be resumed (Section 6E),
- Providing an area for players to report the results of a match or return scorecards in stroke play (Section 6F),
- Validating all scores from the round in stroke play (Section 6F), and
- Establishing and publishing any groupings and starting times for players if there are additional rounds that have not been previously published (Section 6G).

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Once play has been completed, the Committee's duties include:

- Resolving any ties in stroke play (Section 7A),
- Confirming the final results and closing the competition (Section 7B),
- Awarding any prizes (Section 7C), and
- Dealing with any issues that arise after the competition is closed (Section 7D).



General Play

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Marking the course and refreshing those markings as needed is an ongoing task for which the Committee is responsible.

A well-marked course allows a player to play by the Rules and helps to eliminate confusion for players. For example, a player may not know how to proceed if a pond (penalty area) is not marked.

2A Out of Bounds

It is important for the Committee to mark the boundaries properly and to maintain the markings so that a player who hits a ball near a boundary can determine if their ball is in bounds or out of bounds.

(1) General Guidance for Determining and Marking Boundaries

The Committee can mark the course's boundary in many ways. For example, stakes or painted lines can be placed in position by the Committee, or existing fences or walls can be used to define boundaries, as can the edge of other permanent structures such as roads or buildings.

In determining the boundaries for the course and marking them, there are a number of items for the Committee to consider:

a. Properties Bordering the Course

- Where private properties and public roads border the course, it is strongly recommended that the Committee mark these areas as out of bounds. Often these properties will have walls or fences which can be used as the boundaries for the course. When these exist, there is generally no need to move the boundary inside them by placing stakes. But the Committee may wish to move the boundary inwards (for example, by using stakes) to provide some additional protection to the adjacent properties.
- There is no requirement for a course to have boundaries, but it is advisable to prevent play from property that does not belong to the course. But there may be locations where there are large open areas bordering the actual property lines where there would be no objection to players playing from. In this case there is no need to place stakes or otherwise define the boundary.
- Where an existing structure such as a wall or fence is used to define the boundary, the entire object will be a boundary object from which free relief is not available.

b. Use of Stakes

- Boundary stakes should be white, but another colour may be used.

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- There may be existing stakes already in place that are a different colour, or the Committee may have a reason for using a different colour to distinguish them from some items on the course. When this is the case, the Committee should notify players on the scorecard, on a notice board in the clubhouse, on a Local Rules sheet or by some other means. The Committee should avoid the use of red or yellow stakes for marking a boundary to avoid confusion with penalty areas.
- The distance between stakes may vary, but, ideally, it should be possible to see the base of one stake from the next one to determine if a ball is out of bounds. It is important to check that bushes, trees or the like do not obscure stakes or make it difficult to see from one to the next. In general, stakes should be separated by a distance of no more than 30 paces to allow players to see easily between them.

c. Use of Paint Lines

- Painted lines used to define the boundary should be white, but another colour may be used. The Committee should avoid the use of red or yellow lines for marking a boundary to avoid confusion with penalty areas.
- When the boundary is defined by a line painted on the ground, the Committee can also place stakes to make the boundary visible from a distance. It should be made clear that the painted line defines the boundary while the stakes are placed to show players that the boundary is there. These stakes do not define the boundary, but they are boundary objects from which free relief is not available unless otherwise specified in the Local Rules (see Model Local Rule A-6).
- There may be times where the Committee may not wish to paint a white line on a road or pavement. In this case, the most unobtrusive way of marking the boundary may be to paint a series of white dots on the ground. When this is done, the Local Rules should be used to advise the players as to how the boundary has been marked (see Model Local Rule A-1).

d. Other Ways of Marking Out of Bounds

- Where a boundary is defined by a wall, edge of a road or anything other than stakes, fences or lines, the Committee needs to clarify where the edge of the boundary is. For example, when a wall is used to define the boundary, the Committee should specify if the course-side edge of the wall defines the boundary or if a ball is only out of bounds when it is beyond the wall (see Model Local Rule A-2).
- A boundary may be defined by a trench, with the ball being out of bounds if it is in or beyond the trench. Stakes may be used to draw attention to the boundary trench. These stakes are boundary objects from which free

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relief is not available unless otherwise specified in the Local Rules (see Model Local Rule A-6).

e. Other Considerations

- Certain features such as maintenance areas, clubhouses and practice grounds, may be marked or defined by Local Rule as out of bounds even though they are on the course's property (see Model Local Rule A-1).
- The Rules do not contemplate an area having more than one status during the play of a hole, and so an area must not be marked as out of bounds for certain strokes, or strokes made from certain areas, such as the teeing area.
- Committees are not authorized to establish a Local Rule stating that a ball played over a certain area is out of bounds even if it does not come to rest in that area.

(2) Marking Internal Boundaries

To maintain the character of a hole or to protect players on adjacent holes, the Committee may establish boundaries between two holes.

If the internal boundary is not connected to other boundaries on the course it is important to mark where the boundary starts and finishes. It is recommended that two stakes be placed side-by-side and at an angle that indicates that the boundary extends indefinitely in the direction desired.

The internal boundary may apply for the play of only one hole or to more than one hole. The hole or holes for which the internal out of bounds applies, and the status of the stakes during the play of holes that the boundary does not apply, should be specified by a Local Rule (see Model Local Rule A-4).

2B Teeing Areas

The Committee should always attempt to position the tee-markers far enough forward so that there is sufficient tee height grass behind the tee-markers to enable players to use the entire two club-length teeing area allowed.

There are no restrictions on the width of the teeing area, but it is good practice to place the two tee-markers 5 to 7 paces apart. Placing them farther apart makes it more difficult for a player to determine if the ball has been teed within the teeing area and can result in divot holes covering a much larger area on par-3 holes.

Each set of tee markers should be positioned such that the front edge of the teeing area is pointed at the centre of the landing area.

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For guidance on where tee-markers may be located in order for acceptable scores to be submitted for handicap purposes, consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction.

2C Penalty Areas

Penalty areas are areas of the course from which a player is allowed to take relief for one penalty stroke at a spot outside the penalty area that is potentially a significant distance from where their ball may have come to rest. As provided in the definition of “penalty area”, areas which contain water such as lakes, streams, rivers or ponds are penalty areas and should be marked as such.

The Committee may mark other portions of the course as penalty areas. Among the reasons the Committee may choose to mark other parts or features of the course as penalty areas are:

- To provide an alternative to the stroke-and-distance procedure under Rule 18.1 when the likelihood is that a ball that is in the area will almost always be lost, for example, an area of dense vegetation.
- To provide an alternative to the stroke-and-distance procedure under Rule 19.2 (Unplayable Ball) when the likelihood is that taking relief in relation to the position where the ball lies under the options available in Rules 19.2b and 19.2c will not provide any effective relief, for example, an area of volcanic rock or desert.

(1) Deciding When to Mark Area that Does Not Contain Water as Penalty Area

The Committee should take the following points into consideration before deciding to mark an area that does not contain water as a penalty area:

- The fact that marking a difficult area as a penalty area may improve pace of play does not mean that the Committee should feel compelled to do so. There are many other competing considerations, such as retaining the challenge of the hole, the integrity of the architect’s original design intention and providing reasonably consistent outcomes for balls hit into similar types of areas throughout the course. For example, if a jungle borders the fairway on one hole and it has been marked as a penalty area, the Committee should consider treating similar areas the same way on other holes.
- The Committee should consider that a player who loses their ball outside a penalty area will have a greater penalty than someone whose ball is lost in the penalty area. If there are areas of thick rough close to the edge of

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the penalty area where balls could be lost, the Committee may want to consider including such areas in the penalty area.

- The Committee should remember that a player whose ball lies in a penalty area will not be able to use the unplayable ball options in Rule 19. Requiring the player to return to where the ball crossed the edge of the penalty area to take relief rather than having the option of dropping within two club-lengths of where the ball was found may be a significant disadvantage to the player and could negatively impact pace of play.
- The Committee should not define sandy areas that would normally be bunkers as penalty areas. There may be cases where areas of sand flow naturally into a penalty area such as a beach. In this case the edge of the penalty area and the bunker may be immediately adjacent to each other with a portion of the sand being in the penalty area.
- The Committee should not define properties bordering the course as a penalty area where the properties would normally be marked as out of bounds.
- If a Committee is considering marking an out of bounds area as a penalty area to assist with pace of play, as an alternative the Committee may decide to use the Local Rule giving an alternative to stroke-and-distance relief (see Model Local Rule E-5). While this results in the player getting a two-stroke penalty, it also provides the player the opportunity to move out to the fairway, which might not be an option if the area was marked as a penalty area.
- When penalty areas are added or removed, the Committee should consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction to determine if the change will have an impact on the issued Course Rating™.

(2) How to Mark or Define the Edge of a Penalty Area

In taking relief from a penalty area, a player will usually need to know the point where the ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area and whether the penalty area is marked as red or yellow at that point.

- It is recommended that the Committee marks the edges of penalty areas using paint and/or stakes so that there is no doubt for players.
- Where lines are used to define the edge of a penalty area and stakes are used to identify the penalty area, it is at the Committee's discretion whether the stakes should be placed on the line or just outside the edge of the penalty area. Placing stakes just outside the painted line ensures players are entitled to free relief from the hole made by the stake if the stake was to fall out or be removed and the ball came to rest in the hole.

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- A Committee may define the edge of a penalty area by clearly describing it in writing but should do so only if there will be little or no doubt where the edge is. For example, where there are large areas of lava or desert that are to be treated as penalty areas, and the border between these areas and the intended general area is well defined, the Committee could define the edge of the penalty area as being the edge of the lava bed or desert.

(3) Determining Where to Mark the Edge of a Penalty Area

Marking the edge of a penalty area clearly is important to allow players to take relief. The Committee should consider the following in determining where to mark the edge of a penalty area:

- Lines and stakes defining the edge of a penalty area should be placed as near as possible along the natural limits of the penalty area, for example, where the ground breaks down to form the depression containing the water. This will ensure that players will not be forced to stand with the ball significantly above or below their feet or in the water after taking relief. Consideration should be given for both right-handed and left-handed players.
- When a penalty area is bordered by parts of the general area where a ball could be lost, it may affect the player's ability to establish if it is known or virtually certain that the ball is in the penalty area and the player would, therefore, not be able to take penalty area relief using Rule 17. For this reason, the Committee may decide to extend the edge of the penalty area outside the normal natural boundaries and include other areas where it may be difficult to find a ball.
- The Committee should consider that a player is not allowed to take free relief from an abnormal course condition when their ball lies in a penalty area. For example, if there is an immovable obstruction such as a cart path or sprinkler head close to an area that the Committee is considering marking as a penalty area, the Committee may want to keep the obstruction outside the penalty area in order for a player to be entitled to free relief from it.

(4) Whether to Mark a Penalty Area as Red or Yellow

Most penalty areas should be marked red to give players the additional option of lateral relief (see Rule 17.1d(3)). However, where part of the challenge of the hole is to carry over a penalty area such as a stream that crosses the front of the putting green and there is a good chance that a ball that carries over the stream could fall back into it, the Committee may decide to mark the penalty area as yellow. This ensures that a ball that lands on the far side of the penalty area before rolling back into the penalty area cannot be dropped on the far side under the lateral relief option.

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When a penalty area is marked yellow, the Committee should ensure that a player will always be able to drop back-on-the-line under Rule 17.1d(2) or consider adding a dropping zone for the penalty area so that a player would have an option other than stroke and distance (see Model Local Rule E-1).

A Committee does not have to mark any penalty areas yellow. For simplicity, a Committee may decide to mark all penalty areas red so there is no confusion for players as to what relief options are available.

(5) Change in Status of a Penalty Area Between Red and Yellow

The Committee may wish to mark part of a penalty area as red and another part of the same penalty area as yellow. The Committee should determine the best point to make this transition to ensure that wherever a ball enters a yellow penalty area, a player will always be able to drop back-on-the-line under Rule 17.1d(2).

It should be remembered that the player's relief options are based on where the ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area and not where the ball came to rest in it.

At the point where the edge of the penalty area changes, it is recommended that red and yellow stakes be placed right next to each other to make it clear exactly where the status of the penalty area changes.

a. Status of Penalty Area May Differ Depending on the Teeing Area Used

Where carrying the ball over a penalty area, such as a pond on a par 3, is part of the challenge of a hole from the back tee but not from the forward tee, the Committee may decide to define it with yellow stakes or a yellow line and use a Local Rule to the effect that the area is a red penalty area when played from the forward tee. But this is not recommended when multiple tees are being used for the same competition.

b. Status of Penalty Area May Differ Between Holes

When a penalty area is potentially in play for more than one hole, the Committee may choose to define it as a yellow penalty area during play of one hole and a red penalty area during play of another hole. Where this is the case the penalty area should be marked as yellow and a Local Rule used to clarify that it is to be treated as red when playing the relevant hole (see Model Local Rule B-1).

c. Status of Edge of Penalty Area Must Not Change During Play of Hole

While a penalty area may be played as yellow for players playing from one teeing area and red from another, a penalty area must not be defined so that one specific portion of the edge of the penalty area is red for a stroke

made from one location but is yellow for a stroke made from another location by the same player. For example, it would be inappropriate and confusing to say that the edge of the penalty area on the putting green side of a lake is yellow for a stroke from the fairway side of the penalty area but red for a stroke from the putting green side.

(6) Defining a Penalty Area as a No Play Zone

The Committee may decide to define all or part of a penalty area as a no play zone (see Section 2G).

(7) Body of Water Adjacent to Course

Where a body of water such as a stream, lake, sea, or ocean, borders the course, it is permissible to mark such an area as a penalty area rather than marking it as out of bounds. The phrase “on the course” in the definition of “penalty area” does not mean on property owned by the course; rather it refers to any area not defined as out of bounds by the Committee.

- When it is possible for a ball to finish on the ground on the opposite side of a body of water, but it is impracticable for the Committee to define the opposite edge, the Committee may adopt a Local Rule stating that when marked on just one side, a penalty area is treated as if it extended to infinity. Accordingly, all ground and water beyond the defined edge of the penalty area is in the penalty area (see Model Local Rule B-1).
- When a penalty area is shaped or located such that there would be no reasonable option for a player to drop on one side of the penalty area (for example, when a red penalty area is right next to a course boundary), the Committee may use a Local Rule to allow the player to take relief on the opposite side of the penalty area to where the ball last crossed the edge (see Model Local Rule B-2). Where a penalty area is right next to a boundary, an additional Local Rule may be required so that there is no need to mark that edge of the penalty area (see Model Local Rule B-1).

2D Bunkers

Normally there is no need to mark the edge of bunkers, but there may be times where the edges of the bunkers are difficult to determine. The Committee should either mark the edges with stakes or painted lines or define the edge through wording in Local Rules (see Model Local Rule C-1).

Position of Rakes

There is not a perfect answer for the position of rakes and it is a matter for each Committee to decide whether it has rakes placed in or out of bunkers.

It may be argued that there is more likelihood of a ball being deflected into or kept out of a bunker if the rake is placed outside the bunker. It could also

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be argued that if the rake is in the bunker it is most unlikely that the ball will be deflected out of the bunker.

However, in practice, players who leave rakes in bunkers frequently leave them at the side of the bunker, which tends to stop a ball rolling into the flat part of the bunker resulting in a much more difficult shot than would otherwise have been the case. When the ball comes to rest on or against a rake in the bunker and the player must proceed under Rule 15.2, it may not be possible to replace the ball on the same spot or find a spot in the bunker which is not nearer the hole.

If rakes are left in the middle of the bunker, the only way to position them is to throw them into the bunker and this causes indentations in the sand. Also, if a rake is in the middle of a large bunker, it is either not used or the player is obliged to rake a large area of the bunker when retrieving the rake, resulting in unnecessary delay.

Therefore, after considering all these aspects, and while recognizing that the positioning of rakes is at the Committee's discretion, it is recommended that rakes should be left outside bunkers in areas where they are least likely to affect the movement of the ball.

However, a Committee may decide to position rakes inside bunkers to make it easier for maintenance staff to cut fairways and bunker surrounds.

2E Putting Greens

Normally there is no need to mark the edge of putting greens, but there may be times where it may be difficult to determine the edge of the putting green due to the surrounding areas being cut to a similar height. When this is the case, the Committee may wish to paint lines or dots to define the edge of the putting green. The status of these dots should be clarified by a Local Rule (see Model Local Rule D-1).

2F Abnormal Course Conditions

Immovable obstructions rarely need to be marked in any way, but it is recommended that areas of ground under repair are clearly marked by the Committee.

(1) Deciding What Areas to Mark as Ground Under Repair

In general, when ground conditions are abnormal to the course or it is unreasonable to require a player to play from a specific area, it should be marked as ground under repair.

Before marking any areas as ground under repair, the Committee should review the entire course to assess what types of areas are abnormal to the course in its current condition. Consideration should also be given to the location of any areas which may need to be marked:

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- Areas that are in or near a fairway should normally be marked if the Committee considers the damage to the area to be abnormal.
 - » If the fairways of the course are in generally good condition, it might be appropriate to mark a single area of bare ground in the fairway as ground under repair.
 - » When conditions are such that there are widespread areas of bare ground, it would make sense not to mark or otherwise define them all to be ground under repair, but only mark the areas where a player may have difficulty being able to make a stroke at the ball, such as a heavily damaged or rutted area.
- The farther the area is from the fairway the less appropriate it is that it should be marked as ground under repair. Areas that are well off the fairway or very short of the landing areas should only be marked when the damage is very severe.
- If two or more areas of ground under repair are close together such that a player taking relief from one area may well drop in a position where there would be interference from another one, it would be advisable to mark a single area of ground under repair.

(2) How to Mark or Define the Edge of Ground Under Repair

It is recommended that the Committee identifies ground under repair by using paint, stakes or some other clear way of defining it such that there is no doubt as to where the edge of the area is.

- There is no specific colour of stakes or lines to be used for marking areas of ground under repair, but white or blue stakes or lines are commonly used. Yellow and red stakes or lines should not be used to avoid confusion with penalty areas. The way in which ground under repair is marked should be stated in the Local Rules.
- When an area of ground under repair is close to an immovable obstruction, it is a good practice to tie the two areas together to allow relief to be taken from both conditions in one step. This can be done by using paint lines that connect the ground under repair to the immovable obstruction. It should also be clarified by Local Rule that any lined areas connected to an immovable obstruction are one abnormal course condition (see Model Local Rule F-3).
- A Committee can define the edge of ground under repair by describing it, but only if there will be little or no doubt over what constitutes the area or its edges.
 - » An example where describing the damage is possible and the Committee is justified in defining any areas as ground under repair without marking them is where there has been significant damage from animal hoof marks (see Model Local Rule F-13).

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- » At other times it is not appropriate to make a general statement. For example, defining all wheel marks and ruts made by maintenance vehicles to be ground under repair by Local Rule is not appropriate as some of the disturbance is likely to be minor and free relief is not warranted.

2G No Play Zones

The definition of “no play zone” states that it is part of the course where the Committee wishes to prohibit play. No play zones must be defined as either an abnormal course condition or a penalty area and can encompass the entire area or just a portion of it.

(1) What May Be Marked as a No Play Zone

The Committee can define all or part of an abnormal course condition or a penalty area as a no play zone for any reason. Some common reasons are:

- To protect wildlife, animal habitats, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- To prevent damage to young trees, flower beds, turf nurseries, re-turfed areas or other planted areas.
- To protect players from danger.
- To preserve sites of historical or cultural interest.

When deciding whether to mark a no play zone as an abnormal course condition or a penalty area, the Committee should consider the type of area being marked and whether it would be appropriate for the player to be able to take free relief or penalty relief from the area. For example:

- If the area contains an area of water such as a stream, lake or wetland it should be marked as a penalty area.
- For a small area of rare plants close to a putting green it may be appropriate to mark the area as an abnormal course condition.
- If a large area of sand dunes along the side of a hole is environmentally sensitive, it is too generous to mark the whole area as an abnormal course condition, and so it should be marked as a penalty area.

When a course is next to privately-owned property (such as residential homes or farmlands), the Committee should normally mark those areas that are not part of the course as out of bounds. If it is desired that a player should be prohibited from standing in an area off the course to play a ball that is on the course, the area may be marked as a no play zone (see Model Local Rule E-9).

(2) How to Mark a No Play Zone

The Committee should define the edge of a no play zone with a line or stakes to clarify whether the area is within an abnormal course condition or a penalty area. In addition, the line or stakes (or the tops of those stakes) should also identify that the area is a no play zone.

There is no specific colour of stakes and lines to be used for marking no play zones, but the following are recommended:

- Penalty area no play zone – red or yellow stakes with green tops.
- Abnormal course condition no play zone – white or blue stakes with green tops.

Environmentally sensitive areas may be physically protected to deter players from entering the area (for example, by a fence, warning signs and the like). The Committee could specify in a Code of Conduct what the penalty is for a player who enters such an area to retrieve a ball or for other reasons.

2H Integral Objects

Integral objects are artificial objects from which free relief is not available. Examples of objects that the Committee can choose to designate as integral objects include:

- Objects that are designed to be part of the challenge of playing the course such as roads or paths from which players have traditionally been expected to play.
- Objects that are so close to a boundary or other feature on the course that if free relief is available from the obstruction, it also results in the player being able to drop away from the boundary or other feature when this is not desirable. For example, designating wires that are attached to trees as integral objects ensures that a player does not incidentally get relief from a tree just because they have interference from the wire.
- Objects such as artificial walls or pilings that are inside penalty areas or artificial walls or liners of bunkers. For example, when an artificial wall is close to the edge of the penalty area, a player whose ball is just outside the penalty area could be standing on the wall and get free relief if it was not defined as an integral object while the player whose ball is just inside the penalty area does not.

The Committee should define these objects as integral objects in the Local Rules (see Model Local Rule F-1).

When only a portion of the obstruction is to be considered an integral object, that portion should be distinctively marked and that information communicated to the players. This may be done by marking with

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distinctively coloured stakes at either end of the portion of the object where free relief is not available or using paint to mark the area.

2I Dropping Zones

(1) When to Use Dropping Zones

A dropping zone is a special relief area that may be provided by the Committee. When taking relief in a dropping zone, the player must drop the ball in, and have it come to rest in, the dropping zone. The Committee should add a Local Rule stating under what circumstances the dropping zone may be used (see Model Local Rule E-1).

Dropping zones should be considered when there may be practical problems with players using the normal relief options under a Rule, such as:

- Rule 13.1f – Wrong Green.
- Rule 16.1 – Abnormal Course Conditions (Including Immovable Obstructions).
- Rule 16.2 – Dangerous Animal Condition.
- Rule 17 – Penalty Area.
- Rule 19 – Unplayable Ball.
- Model Local Rule E-5 – Alternative to Stroke and Distance for Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds.
- Model Local Rule F-23 – Temporary Immovable Obstructions.

Dropping zones should normally be used to give the player an extra relief option. But the Committee may also require use of a dropping zone as the player's only relief option under a Rule, other than stroke and distance. When the Committee does make the use of a dropping zone mandatory, the use of the dropping zone replaces any other relief options provided by the relevant Rule and this should be made clear to players.

(2) Where to Position Dropping Zones

The Committee should attempt to place a dropping zone so that the architectural challenge of the hole is maintained, and it is typically not closer to the hole than where the player would be dropping the ball when using one of the options under the relevant Rule. For example, when situating the dropping zone for a penalty area, it should be set in a position where the player would still need to negotiate the penalty area rather than being located on the putting green side of the penalty area.

Dropping zones can be marked in many ways (such as by painted lines on the ground, markers such as tee-markers, or a stake or a sign), and can be

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any shape, such as a circle or a square. The size of the dropping zone may depend on how often it is likely to be used and where it is located, but the size would normally be expected to have about a one club-length radius or smaller. When marked with paint, a sign or painted marking on the ground should be used to let players know its status.

If a dropping zone is likely to be used frequently, the Committee may wish to consider marking the dropping zone by defining the area in the Local Rules. For example, the dropping zone may be defined as being within one club-length of a physical object such as a sign or a stake. This allows for the object to be moved as needed to ensure the dropping zone remains in good condition.

3 Local Rules for General Play

A Local Rule is a modification of a Rule or an additional Rule that the Committee adopts for general play or a particular competition. The Committee is responsible for deciding whether to adopt any Local Rules and for making sure they are consistent with the principles found in Section 8. The Committee needs to make sure that any Local Rules are available for players to see, whether on the scorecard, a separate handout, a notice board or the course's website.

Local Rules that may be adopted for general play fall into the following general categories:

- Defining Course Boundaries and other Areas of the Course (Sections 8A-8D),
- Defining Special Relief Procedures (Section 8E), and
- Defining Abnormal Course Conditions and Integral Objects (Section 8F).

A full listing of Model Local Rules can be found at the start of Section 8.

See Section 5C for other types of Local Rules that are more commonly adopted for competitions than for general play.

4 Additional Considerations for General Play

4A Pace of Play and Code of Conduct

To enhance the enjoyment of players during general play there are many actions that a Committee can take to improve pace of play and to encourage a good standard of player conduct, such as:

- Reducing group sizes, increasing starting intervals and introducing starter's gaps.

4. Additional Considerations for General Play

- Considering fundamental changes to course set up such as widening fairways, reducing the thickness or length of rough and reducing the speed of greens.
- Encouraging players to play from tees that suit their ability.
- Adopting a pace of play policy and a code of conduct.

The following sections give some of the considerations a Committee should take into account when adopting a pace of play policy or a code of conduct.

(1) Starting Intervals

Overcrowding the course is a common cause of rounds taking longer than necessary. The bigger the gap in tee times, the better play will flow. But the Committee will often need to balance this with the desire to allow as many players as possible to have the opportunity to play the course or competition.

When play is in two-balls, an interval of at least 8 minutes is recommended. When play is in three-balls, the interval should be increased to at least 10 minutes. For four-balls, 11 or 12 minute intervals should be considered.

Even with appropriate starting intervals, delays can arise on the course due to a number of factors, such as ball searches or a hole that is playing particularly hard or easy. The impact of such delays can be minimized by having empty starting intervals, sometimes referred to as “starter’s gaps”.

If, for example, the starting intervals are 10 minutes and the Committee has an empty starting time after every 10th group, there will be a 10 minute break in play from the 1st tee every 90 minutes. If a delay has built up on a particular tee early on in the round, the starter’s gap should help to minimize the impact of the delay. Without the empty starting interval, the likelihood is that waiting on that hole will increase as the day goes on.

(2) Pace of Play Policy

- The nature of such a policy will often depend on the available resources of that course.
- For example, a course with limited staff might simply state that each group is expected to keep up with the group in front or that each group is expected to play within a certain amount of time, while another course may be able to have one or more people on the course to monitor the pace of play and, when necessary, speak to groups that are falling behind.
- The enforcement of such a policy is usually best handled through disciplinary measures. Such sanctions are separate from the Rules of Golf and it is a matter for the Committee to write and interpret any such sanctions.

(3) Code of Conduct Policy

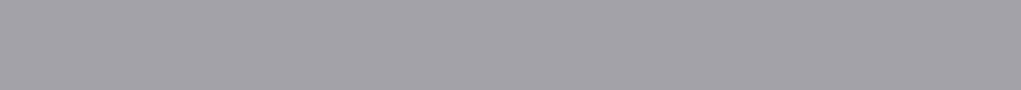
- For general play, a Committee might post a notice in the clubhouse or on the course website stating what types of behaviour or clothing are not acceptable at that course, including in certain areas.
- Enforcement of this policy is usually best handled through disciplinary measures. Such sanctions are separate from the Rules of Golf and it is a matter for the Committee to write and interpret any such sanctions.

4B Suspending Play

Each Committee should consider how it will suspend play if it is determined that weather conditions warrant. A suspension of play can be handled through a variety of methods, depending on the resources available to the course, such as signalling to players through an air horn or by personal notification of the players.

4C Providing Rules Support

Players may have questions on how to resolve Rules issues that have arisen during general play. Each course should identify a person or persons to handle such Rules questions. In many cases that person may be the professional or manager. If that person is unsure of the correct ruling, they may refer the question to the appropriate Rules organization for an answer.





Competitions

5. Before the Competition

5 Before the Competition

The resources available to a Committee will differ depending on the course or the level of competition being run and so a Committee may not be able to implement all of the suggested practices. Where this is the case, the Committee will need to decide its priorities for each competition.

The period before the competition begins is arguably the most important in terms of preparation to ensure the smooth running of the competition. The Committee's duties during this period include:

5A Setting the Terms of the Competition

Terms of the Competition determine the structure of each competition including who may enter, how to enter, what the schedule and format of the competition will be and how ties will be decided. It is the responsibility of the Committee to:

- Set clear and concise terms for each competition.
- Make these terms available to players in advance of the competition.
- Interpret the terms should any questions arise.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, the Committee should avoid altering the Terms of the Competition once the competition has started.

It is the responsibility of each player to know and follow the Terms of the Competition.

Sample wording of Terms of the Competition can be found at RandA.org.

(1) Eligibility

The Committee may make Terms of the Competition that restrict who is eligible to play.

a. Gender Requirements

A competition may be limited to players of a specific gender.

b. Age Limits

A competition may be limited to players within a specific age range. If so, it is important to specify the date on which the players must be of age. Some examples are:

- For a junior competition where players must not be older than 18, the Terms of the Competition might state that a player must be 18 or younger on the first day of the year or another date such as the final scheduled day of the competition.

- For a senior competition where players must be 55 or older, the Terms of the Competition might state that a player must have reached their 55th birthday on or before the first day of the competition.

c. Amateur Status

A competition may be limited to amateur golfers only, professional golfers only or may allow all players to compete against each other. When a competition is open to all players, the Committee should ask players to identify their status (for example, “amateur”) in advance of the competition, such as on an entry form.

d. Handicap Limits

The Committee may set restrictions and/or limits on the handicaps eligible for entry or use in a competition. These may include:

- Setting upper or lower limits on handicaps.
- In team formats, such as Foursomes or Four-Ball:
 - » Limiting the maximum difference between partners’ handicaps. The Committee may also choose to reduce the handicap for the player with the higher handicap to meet the requirement, or
 - » Limiting the maximum total handicaps of partners. The Committee may also choose to reduce the handicap for one or both players to meet the requirement.
- For a multi-round competition played over one day or consecutive days, specifying whether each player will play the entire competition with the handicap as of the first round, or if the player will use their revised handicap for each round. It is recommended that the player’s handicaps remain unchanged between such rounds.

e. Residence and Membership Status

The Committee may limit entry to players who reside in or were born in a specific county, state, country or other geographic area. It may also require that all players are members of a specific club, organization or golf union.

(2) Entry Requirements and Dates

The way to enter the competition and the starting and ending dates for entry should be specified.

Examples include:

- Method of entry, such as completing an online entry form, returning an entry form by mail or entering names on a sheet any time before the player’s start time.
- How and when any entry fee is to be paid.

5. Before the Competition

- When entries must be received. The Committee can stop accepting entries on a specific date or allow players to enter up to the day of the competition.
- The procedure to be used in determining the field when the competition is oversubscribed, such as accepting entries in the order received, through a qualifier or based on lowest handicaps.

(3) Format, Including Handicap Allowance

The following points in relation to the format of the competition should be specified where required:

- Dates of play or, if it is a match play event over a long period of time, the final date by which each match must be completed.
- Form of play (for example, match play, stroke play or stroke play qualifying for match play).
- Number and order of holes in a round.
- Number of rounds, including whether there will be a cut.
- If there is to be a cut, when it will be made, if ties for the final position will be broken and how many players will continue play in later rounds.
- Which teeing areas are to be used. For handicap competitions, the Committee may specify which tees all players must use or that the tees to be used are dependent on the player's handicap, gender and/or age. Alternatively, the Committee may allow each player to choose which tees they wish to play from.
- Stroke index allocation, such as the order of holes at which handicap strokes are to be given or received.
- If there will be multiple flights or draws and how they will be organized, see Section 5G(1).
- What prizes will be awarded (including who is eligible to win those prizes). For competitions involving amateur golfers, the Committee should ensure that prizes for amateurs are allowed under the Rules of Amateur Status.

(4) Terms for Other Forms of Play

a. Alternative Scoring Methods

When the form of play is Stableford, Maximum Score or Par/Bogey, the Terms of the Competition may need to specify certain aspects in relation to how points will be scored, or the maximum number of strokes that a player can score on each hole.

b. Stableford

Stableford is a form of stroke play where points are awarded to a player for each hole by comparing the player's score to the fixed target score for the hole. The fixed target score is par unless the Committee sets a different fixed score (see Rule 21.1b).

If the Committee decides to set a different fixed target score, it may set it in the Terms of the Competition as bogey, birdie, or some other fixed score.

c. Maximum Score

When the form of play is Maximum Score, the Terms of the Competition should specify the maximum number of strokes a player can score on each hole (see Rule 21.2).

The maximum may be set in one of the following ways:

- Relative to par, such as two times par,
- A fixed number, such as 8, 9 or 10, or
- With reference to the player's handicap, for example net double bogey.

When considering what maximum to set for a Maximum Score competition, the Committee should consider the following:

- The maximum par for the holes being played. For example, for a par 3 course it may be appropriate to set the maximum score per hole to be a fixed score of 6; however if there are par 5's on a course then it would not be appropriate to have a fixed score as low as 6.
- The standard of the golfers taking part. For example, for a beginners' competition the maximum score should give the players a reasonable opportunity to complete the holes but be at a level to encourage players to pick up when they have had real difficulty on the hole.
- Whether scores are to be submitted for handicap purposes. Where the Committee wants a competition to count for handicap purposes, the maximum hole score should not be set lower than net double bogey.

d. Par/Bogey

When the form of play is Par/Bogey, the Terms of the Competition should specify the fixed score against which the player's score on a hole is compared to determine whether the player wins or loses a hole. For a Par competition, the fixed score would normally be par, and for a Bogey competition the fixed score would normally be bogey (one over par).

5. Before the Competition

e. Other Forms of Play

There are many other forms of play such as Scrambles and Greensomes. See Section 9 and/or RandA.org for more information on these and other forms of play.

f. Team Competitions

When the form of play involves a team competition, the Committee should consider if additional Terms of the Competition are required. Examples include:

- Any restrictions on coaches or advice givers (see Model Local Rule Section 8H).
- In match play:
 - » The order in which the team members will play, for example, if it must be in handicap order, or if it will be decided by the team captain.
 - » If tied matches will be acceptable or if they must be played until a winner is determined.
 - » The number of points awarded for winning or tying a match.
 - » In competitions with multiple teams, how the winner would be determined if two or more teams are tied at the end of the competition.
 - » If some matches are completed while others cannot be completed on the arranged day due to poor light or weather, the Terms of the Competition should clarify how the completed and incomplete matches will be treated. For example, the Committee could count completed matches to stand as played and incomplete matches to be treated as a tie or replayed on a later date. Or, that all matches are to be replayed, and each team is free to alter its original team.
 - » If any remaining matches will be played to a conclusion once a team has won the match or competition.
- Specify what the result of an individual match will be if one or more players are unable to start or finish a match for any reason (such as illness). For example, the Committee could state that the result of such a match will be a tied match, or a win for the opponent. If holes up and down are taken into consideration for countback purposes, the Committee may also decide to specify a score for the match, for example 6&5.
- In stroke play:
 - » The number of scores to count in each team's total score.

- » If the scores to be counted will be based on 18 holes or on a hole-by-hole basis.
- » How a tie in the overall competition will be decided, for example by a play-off, a method of matching scores (see Section 5A(6)) or considering discarded scores.

(5) When Scorecard Has Been Returned

In stroke play, Rule 3.3b holds players responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their hole scores and promptly returning the scorecard to the Committee at the completion of the round.

The Committee should tell players where the scorecards should be returned, have someone available to resolve any potential issues the players might have with the Rules and validate the scores.

When possible, a quiet, private area should be provided for players to use for checking the scores on their scorecards, speaking with a member of the Committee if needed and returning their scorecards.

a. Specify When Scorecard Is Considered Returned

The Committee should specify when the scorecard is considered returned. Options include:

- Defining the scoring area and allowing a player to make alterations on their scorecard up until they have left that scoring area. This would mean that, even if the player has handed the scorecard to a referee or recorder, changes could still be made while the player is in the area.
- Providing a box for the player to deposit the scorecard, in which case it is considered returned as soon as the player places it in the box. This approach might not give a player as much protection from returning an incorrect scorecard, but it may be the best method when limited resources are available or many players are finishing at the same time (for example, when there is a shotgun start).

b. Requesting Players to Provide Other Information on Scorecards

The Committee may require players to enter their handicap on the scorecard (Model Local Rule L-2).

The Committee may request that players assist the Committee by completing other scorecard related tasks that are the Committee's responsibility. The Committee must not apply a penalty to a player under the Rules of Golf if they fail to comply with these other requests or make a mistake in doing so, but the Committee may provide a disciplinary sanction for a player who fails repeatedly to comply with such a request. For example, the Committee may ask players to:

5. Before the Competition

- Total the scores or, in a Four-Ball competition, determine the score that counts for the side.
- Enter the points scored for each hole on the scorecard in Stableford.
- Enter whether the hole was won, lost or tied in Par/Bogey.
- Enter specific details on the scorecard such as name, date and name of the competition.

Similarly, the Committee may request that players assist the Committee by entering their scores into a computer system at the end of the round, but there is no penalty under the Rules of Golf if the player fails to comply with this request or makes a mistake in doing so. But the Committee may provide a disciplinary sanction, for example in a Code of Conduct, for a player who fails repeatedly to comply with such a request.

(6) How Ties Will Be Decided

In match play and stroke play, the Terms of the Competition can be used to alter the way in which ties are decided.

a. Match Play

If a match is tied after the final hole, the match is extended one hole at a time until there is a winner (see Rule 3.2a(4)), unless the Terms of the Competition state otherwise.

The Terms of the Competition should specify if the match may end in a tie or if the play-off method will differ from that specified in Rule 3.2a(4). Options include the following:

- The match ends in a tie,
- The match will be extended starting at a specific hole other than the first hole, or
- There will be a play-off over a fixed number of holes (for example, 9 or 18 holes).

In a handicap match, the stroke index allocation as set by the Committee should be used to determine where handicap strokes should be given or received in extra holes unless the Terms of the Competition state otherwise.

A tie in a match should not be decided by a stroke-play play-off.

b. Stroke Play

The Terms of the Competition should specify whether a competition may end in a tie, or if there will be a play-off or matching of scorecards to determine the winner and other finishing positions.

A tie in stroke play should not be decided by a match.

c. Play-Off in Stroke Play

If there is to be a play-off in stroke play, the Terms of the Competition should set the following:

- When the play-off will be held, for example if it will start at a specific time, as soon as possible after the last group finishes or on a later date.
- Which holes will be used for the play-off and the order in which they will be played.
- The number of holes over which the play-off will be played, for example, if it will be a hole-by-hole play-off or over a longer period such as 2, 4 or 18 holes, and what to do if there is still a tie
- In the regular form of stroke play, if a play-off for a handicap competition is over fewer than 18 holes, the number of holes played should be used to determine the number of strokes to be deducted. For example, if a play-off is over one hole, one-eighteenth of the handicaps should be deducted from the scores for the play-off hole. Handicap stroke fractions should be applied in accordance with the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction.
- For play-offs for net competitions where the stroke index allocation is used, such as Four-Ball, Par/Bogey or Stableford competitions, handicap strokes should be applied during the play-off holes as they were assigned for the competition, using the stroke index allocation.
- Players are only required to return a scorecard for the play-off if the Committee issues them to the players.

d. Matching Scorecards (Also Known as a Scorecard Count-Back)

If a play-off is not feasible or desired, the Terms of the Competition may specify that any ties will be decided by matching scorecards. Even when the winner of a competition is to be decided by a play-off, other positions in the competition may be decided by matching scorecards. The method of matching scorecards should also provide for what will happen if this procedure does not produce a winner.

One method of matching scorecards is to determine the winner based on the best score for the last round. If the tying players have the same score for the last round or if the competition consisted of a single round, determine the winner based on the score for the last nine holes, last six holes, last three holes and finally the 18th hole. If there is still a tie, then the last six holes, three holes and final hole of the first nine holes will be considered in turn. If the round is less than 18 holes, the number of holes used in matching scores may be adjusted.

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If this process does not result in a winner, the Committee could consider the competition a tie, or alternatively could decide the winner by a random method (such as tossing a coin).

Matching scorecards is also known as a card count-back or a scorecard play-off.

Additional Considerations:

- If this method is used in a competition with a multiple tee start, it is recommended that the “last nine holes, last six holes, etc.” are holes 10-18, 13-18, etc.
- For net competitions where the stroke index allocation as set by the Committee is not used, such as individual stroke play, if the last nine, last six, last three holes scenario is used, one-half, one-third, one-sixth, etc. of the handicaps should be deducted from the score for those holes. Handicap stroke fractions should be applied in accordance with the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body operating in the local jurisdiction.
- In net competitions where the stroke index allocation as set by the Committee is used, such as Four-Ball stroke play, Par/Bogey or Stableford competitions, handicap strokes should be applied consistently with how they were applied for the competition.

(7) When the Result of the Competition Is Final

It is important for the Committee to clarify in the Terms of the Competition when and how the result of the competition is final as this will affect how the Committee will resolve any Rules issues that occur after play is complete in both match play and stroke play (see Rule 20).

a. Match Play

Examples of when the Terms of the Competition may state that the result of a match is final include:

- When the result is recorded on an official scoreboard or other identified place, or
- When the result is reported to a person identified by the Committee.

When a match is determined to be final once the result is recorded on an official scoreboard, the Committee may take responsibility for recording the winner's name on the scoreboard or it may pass that responsibility to the players. In some cases the official scoreboard will be a prominent structure and in other cases it might be a sheet of paper in the golf shop or locker room.

In cases where a referee has been assigned by the Committee to accompany a match, any announcement of the result of the match by the referee on the final putting green is not the official announcement unless it was stated as such in the Terms of the Competition.

b. Stroke Play

Examples of when the Terms of the Competition may state the competition to be closed in stroke play include:

- All results have been posted on the scoreboard or notice board,
- The winners have been announced at a prize giving, or
- The trophy has been awarded.

In stroke-play qualifying followed by match play, Rule 20.2e(2) stipulates that the stroke-play portion of the competition is closed when the player has teed off to start their first match.

(8) *Changing Terms of the Competition After Competition Has Started*

The Terms of the Competition set out the structure of the competition and once a competition has started, the terms may be altered only in very exceptional circumstances.

An example of a situation where the Terms of the Competition should not be altered:

- Since players begin a round with the expectation that a certain number of holes will be played and may base their play on that, the number of holes to be played in a round should not be changed once that round has started. For example, if bad weather results in play being suspended after all the players have completed 9 holes of an 18-hole round, the Committee should not announce the results based on only 9 holes.

Examples of situations where there are exceptional circumstances and the Terms of the Competition may be altered:

- If circumstances such as bad weather affect the number of rounds that can be played in the time available, the number of rounds to be played, or number of holes in any rounds not yet started, may be altered to accommodate the circumstances. Similarly, if those circumstances mean the planned format cannot be accommodated in the time available, the format of the competition may be changed.
- The method for deciding ties should not be altered unless there are exceptional circumstances. For example, if the method of deciding a tie for a stroke-play competition was stated to be a hole-by-hole play-off,

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but bad weather meant such a play-off was not possible, the Committee can change the method of deciding the tie to a scorecard count-back.

(9) Anti-Doping

The Terms of the Competition may require players to comply with an anti-doping policy. It is a matter for the Committee to write and interpret its own anti-doping policy, although guidance in developing such a policy can usually be provided by the national governing body.

5B Marking the Course

When preparing for a competition, the Committee should make sure that the course is properly marked and refresh any markings that might be used for general play, or change them if necessary. While there typically is no one “right” way to mark a course, failing to mark it properly or at all can lead to situations where a player is unable to proceed with any certainty under the Rules or the Committee will be forced to make decisions while play is ongoing that might result in players being treated differently.

Section 2 provides detailed guidance and recommendations on how to mark the course for general play, but it also applies equally to competitions and should be referenced by the Committee when preparing for competitions.

Where changes are made to the course’s marking for a competition, the Committee should ensure these are clearly communicated to any players who regularly play the course so that they are less likely to proceed incorrectly.

In addition to the information in Section 2, the Committee may wish to consider the following items:

(1) Out of Bounds

The Committee is responsible for ensuring that all boundaries are marked properly. It is a good practice to paint a small white circle around the base of any white stake or other boundary object that could get moved during play so that it can be returned to its original location. If lines or paint dots are being used to mark a boundary, they should be refreshed so that they can easily be seen. The Local Rules should clarify any boundaries that are defined in any manner other than stakes or fences (see Model Local Rule A-1).

(2) Penalty Areas

Before a competition, the Committee may wish to reassess the marking of some or all penalty areas.

- Penalty areas that contain bodies of water should not be made a part of the general area, but their edges may be adjusted.
- Other penalty areas may be removed or added, or their edges altered to change the difficulty of a hole, such as where it is considered appropriate to provide a more severe penalty for an errant shot. For example, the Committee may decide to mark areas of dense trees and bushes as penalty areas for general play, but not for competitions. Care should be taken in doing this so that it is clearly communicated to any players who regularly play the course.
- When penalty areas are added or removed, the Committee should consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction to determine if the change will have an impact on the issued Course Rating™.
- The colour of some penalty areas may be changed from red to yellow or the reverse. For example, for certain competitions it may be desirable for a penalty area close to a putting green to be marked yellow where the Committee does not want to allow the option of dropping on the putting green side of the penalty area when the ball has rolled back into it. In some cases, it may also make sense to provide a dropping zone as an additional option, for example, for an island green where players have a long carry over water.
- For general play, the Committee may have used a minimal number of stakes to mark penalty areas or they may have been removed, resulting in portions of some penalty areas being outside the marked area. For competitions, all stakes should be inspected and supplemented if necessary to ensure that the penalty areas are properly marked for the competition.
- When possible, it is good practice to paint red or yellow lines around penalty areas rather than just relying on stakes. A line will ensure the proper areas are included or excluded, the edge will not be altered by the removal of a stake and a player will easily be able to determine where to take relief. Typically, when a line has been painted, fewer stakes are required.

(3) Bunkers

For most courses, the Committee should not need to do anything special to prepare bunkers for the competition. They should be freshly raked on the morning of the competition and the rakes placed where the Committee prefers (see Section 2D). If the edge of a bunker is difficult to determine, the Committee should consider whether it could be more clearly defined

5. Before the Competition

(either through maintenance practices, marking or a Local Rule) to avoid confusion among players and referees.

(4) *Abnormal Course Conditions and Integral Objects*

The Committee should review the entire course to ensure that any areas that should be marked as ground under repair are properly marked. It should also clarify the status of any obstructions or integral objects using Local Rules (see Model Local Rule F-1).

Ideally a Committee should mark any areas of ground under repair before the start of a competition. But a Committee can define an area to be ground under repair during the round in match play or stroke play if it is warranted.

When relief is given from such an unmarked area during the round, the Committee should mark the area as ground under repair as soon as possible to ensure that all other players in the field are aware of the status of the area.

(5) *No Play Zones*

If there are no play zones on the course, the Committee should make sure they are properly identified. The Committee may also consider putting notices in these areas to ensure that players are fully aware that they are not allowed to play from them.

(6) *Temporary Obstructions*

Temporary structures such as tents or grandstands may be constructed for some competitions. The status of these structures will need to be clarified in the Local Rules as either Immovable Obstructions or Temporary Immovable Obstructions (TIOs). If they are to be treated as TIOs, the local Rule regarding Temporary Immovable Obstructions should be used (see Model Local Rule F-23). This Local Rule gives a player additional relief if there is interference on the line of sight so that they will not be required to play around or over the obstruction.

5C Local Rules

The Committee is responsible for deciding whether to adopt any Local Rules and for making sure they are consistent with the principles found in Section 8. A Local Rule is a modification of a Rule or an additional Rule that the Committee adopts for general play or a particular competition. The Committee needs to make sure that any Local Rules are available for players to see, whether on the scorecard, a separate handout, a notice board or the course's website.

When considering adopting a Local Rule, the Committee should keep in mind the following:

- Local Rules have the same status as a Rule of Golf for that competition or course, and
- The use of Local Rules should be limited as much as possible and be used only to deal with the types of situations and policies covered in Section 8.
- It is not recommended to change any Local Rules for a competition once play has begun for a stroke-play round, unless the change is made before any players in the competition could have been affected by the change.

A full list of authorized Model Local Rules can be found at the start of Section 8.

Local Rules that may be adopted for competitions fall into the following general categories:

- Defining Course Boundaries and other Areas of the Course (Sections 8A-8D),
- Defining Special Relief Procedures (Section 8E),
- Defining Abnormal Course Conditions and Integral Objects (Section 8F),
- Use of Specific Equipment (Section 8G),
- Who May Give Advice to Players (Section 8H),
- When and Where Players May Practise (Section 8I),
- Procedures for Suspension of Play (Section 8J),
- Pace of Play Policies (Section 8K),
- Scorecard Responsibilities (Section 8L), and
- Model Local Rules for Players With Disabilities (Section 8M).

5D Eligibility Requirements for Players with Disabilities to Use Rule 25

As provided in Rule 25.1, the modifications for players with disabilities apply to all competitions, and it is a player's category of disability and eligibility that determine whether they can use specific Rules in Rule 25.

It is not necessarily the role of a Committee to make assessments on player eligibility. Determining a player's eligibility to use specific Rules in Rule 25 can be straightforward, but in some cases it is less obvious. Eligibility for Rule 25 is based on the impact that a player's impairments have on their ability to play golf rather than being a determination of whether someone is disabled.

5. Before the Competition

A Committee may ask for evidence of a player's disability in order to confirm the eligibility of a player to use Rule 25. Such evidence could be in the form of a medical certificate, confirmation from a national governing body, a pass issued by an officially accredited medical authority, or something similar.

Alternatively, a Committee may specify that only players who hold a specific pass or certificate are eligible to compete in a competition (with players who are eligible then using the Rules applicable to their category of disability).

Examples of passes that a Committee may choose to require as evidence of a category of disability or may require for players to be eligible for specific competitions are the EDGA WR4GD Player Pass and the EDGA Access Pass. These passes are administered and issued by the EDGA Eligibility Team and the application process for golfers to get an EDGA Pass is free of charge. More information can be found at: www.edgagolf.com/online/pass/pass_info.php

5E Defining Practice Areas

Many courses have specific practice areas, such as a practice range and practice greens for putting, bunker play and chipping. Players are allowed to practise in these areas, whether they are inside or outside the boundaries of the course. It is recommended that practice areas that are located on the course be specified in the Local Rules to clarify whether players may practise on those areas before and after their rounds. The Committee may need to define the edges of these areas to limit where players may practise.

The Committee may also change the permissions in relation to when and where practice is allowed as follows:

- A Local Rule may allow practice on limited and defined parts of the course, for example where there is no permanent practice ground. But, where this applies, it is recommended that players not be allowed to practise on any putting greens or from any bunkers on the course.
- A Local Rule may allow practice on the course in general, for example:
 - » If the competition starts late in the day and the Committee does not want to restrict players from playing the course earlier in the day, or
 - » If there has been a suspension of play and it would be more efficient to allow players to hit a few shots from somewhere on the course as opposed to bringing them back to the practice range.
- Rule 5.2 covers when practice is allowed or prohibited before or between rounds in a competition, but the Committee may adopt a Local Rule to modify those provisions (see Model Local Rule I-1).

- Rule 5.5 gives the Committee the option to adopt a Local Rule to prohibit practice on or around the putting green of the hole just completed (see Model Local Rule I-2).

5F Teeing Areas and Hole Locations

(1) *Selecting Teeing Areas*

In selecting which teeing areas to use for a competition, the Committee should seek to balance the difficulty of the course with the ability of the players in the field. For example, it would not be advisable and could have a significant effect on pace of play to choose a teeing area that requires a forced carry that many of the players in the field are unlikely to be able to make with anything other than their very best stroke.

The Committee may decide to use different teeing areas for competitions than those used for general play. If this is done, the Committee should consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction for guidance on how the issued Course Rating™ might be impacted. Otherwise, the scores may not be acceptable for submission for handicap purposes.

The locations of the teeing areas may be changed between rounds, including when more than one round is played on the same day.

It is a good practice to place a small mark, such as a paint dot, to the side of or under the tee-markers to ensure that if they get moved they can be returned to their original position. When there are multiple rounds, a different number of dots can be used for each round.

If a competition is being played on a course where there are no signs identifying the holes, or where the Committee has decided to play the course in a different order, signs should be installed to identify the holes clearly.

(2) *Selecting Hole Locations*

New holes should ideally be made on the day on which a competition begins and at such other times as the Committee considers necessary, provided all players in a single round play with each hole cut in the same location.

But when a single round is to be played on more than one day (such as when players may choose which day to play in a competition), the Committee may advise players in the Terms of the Competition that the holes and teeing areas will be located differently on each day of the competition. But on any one day, all players must play with each hole and each teeing area in the same location.

5. Before the Competition

The locations of the holes on the putting greens can have a considerable effect on scoring and pace of play during competitions. Many factors go into the selection of hole locations, with emphasis on the following points:

- In selecting the locations, the ability of the players should be considered so that the locations selected are not so difficult as to slow down play significantly or so easy as not to challenge better players.
- The speed of the greens is a significant factor in choosing the location of the hole. While a hole location may work well for a slower green, it may prove to be too severe when the speed of the greens is increased.
- The Committee should avoid placing a hole on a slope where the ball will not come to rest. When the contours of the green allow, holes should be placed where there is an area of two to three feet around the hole that is relatively level so that putts struck at the proper speed will stop around the hole.

Some additional considerations include:

- Setting holes where there is enough putting green surface between the hole and the front and sides of the putting green to accommodate the approach on that particular hole. For example, placing the hole immediately behind a bunker when a long approach is required by the majority of the field is usually not recommended.
- Balancing hole locations for the entire course with respect to left, right, centre, front and back locations.

5G Draw, Groups and Starting Times

(1) *The Draw*

In a match-play competition the draw is used to establish the overall order of matches and which players will make up each first-round match. The draw may be done in a number of ways including:

- Randomly – Players are picked at random and placed in the draw as chosen.
- Qualifying Scores – Players could play one or more qualifying rounds. The players are then placed into the draw based on their scores.
- Handicap – Players could be placed in the draw by handicap so that the player with the lowest handicap plays the one with the highest in the first round, the second lowest against the second highest, and so on.
- Seeding – Certain players, such as a defending champion, could be seeded into the draw in specific locations, while other players are placed either randomly or through qualifying scores.

5. Before the Competition

Where qualifying scores are used to determine the draw, the draw should be arranged so that the two highest seeded players are on opposite sides of the draw and so on down the line as shown in the following table.

UPPER HALF	LOWER HALF	UPPER HALF	LOWER HALF
64 QUALIFIERS		32 QUALIFIERS	
1 vs. 64	2 vs. 63	1 vs. 32	2 vs. 31
32 vs. 33	31 vs. 34	16 vs. 17	15 vs. 18
16 vs. 49	15 vs. 50	8 vs. 25	7 vs. 26
17 vs. 48	18 vs. 47	9 vs. 24	10 vs. 23
8 vs. 57	7 vs. 58	4 vs. 29	3 vs. 30
25 vs. 40	26 vs. 39	13 vs. 20	14 vs. 19
9 vs. 56	10 vs. 55	5 vs. 28	6 vs. 27
24 vs. 41	23 vs. 42	12 vs. 21	11 vs. 22
4 vs. 61	3 vs. 62	16 QUALIFIERS	
29 vs. 36	30 vs. 35	1 vs. 16	2 vs. 15
13 vs. 52	14 vs. 51	8 vs. 9	7 vs. 10
20 vs. 45	19 vs. 46	4 vs. 13	3 vs. 14
5 vs. 60	6 vs. 59	5 vs. 12	6 vs. 11
28 vs. 37	27 vs. 38	8 QUALIFIERS	
12 vs. 53	11 vs. 54	1 vs. 8	2 vs. 7
21 vs. 44	22 vs. 43	4 vs. 5	3 vs. 6

For purposes of determining places in the draw, ties in qualifying rounds other than those for the last qualifying place can be decided by:

- The order in which scores are returned, with the first score to be returned receiving the lowest available number and so forth,
- A scorecard play-off, or
- A random draw among the players who are tied at a specific score.

When there is a tie for the final place in the draw, the Committee may choose to have a play-off or add another round of matches to reduce the field to an even number of players. This should be specified in the Terms of the Competition.

In some events, the Committee may choose to seed the defending champion. When this is done, it is typical to seed the champion as either the first or second seed. The Committee should also decide if it will permit the champion to play in the qualifying event, if so forfeiting their seeding.

5. Before the Competition

Multiple Draws (Also Known as Flights or Divisions)

While many competitions have all players competing against all the other players, there are times when a Committee can choose to divide the competition into multiple draws (sometimes called flights or divisions). This may be in order to have players of similar abilities compete against each other or in order to have multiple winners.

The makeup of these draws may be determined by handicap, through stroke play qualifying or by another method determined by the Committee. The Committee should set out how the draws will be set up in the Terms of the Competition.

While the draws may be set by handicap, there is no requirement that the resulting play within the draw be a handicap competition since all the players should be of relatively equal ability.

In a match-play competition, it is a good idea to make the size of the draws so that it will not be necessary to give players byes and, ideally, a size that means all players will play the same number of matches in a knock-out format, such as 8, 16, 32, 64 or 128 players. If there are not enough players to fill the final draw, players should be given byes into the second round as needed. There is no requirement that all the draws have the same number of players. For example, the first or championship draw might have 32 players while the other draws might have 16.

(2) Starting Times and Playing Groups

The Committee can set the starting times and groups or allow the players to set their own.

When the Committee allows players to set their own starting time, it has the same status as a starting time set by the Committee (see Rule 5.3a).

There are many considerations in determining the number of players in a group and the interval between groups. When setting starting times and groups, pace of play is an important consideration as well as the amount of time available for play. Groups of two will play faster than groups of three or four. Starting intervals can be closer together for smaller groups. When the Committee chooses to start players on multiple holes (such as holes 1 and 10), it is important to ensure that players will not have an excessive wait if they arrive at the other starting tee before the final group has started. See Section 4A(1) for recommendations on starting intervals.

When a match-play competition will be played over an extended period and players in a match are allowed to agree on when to play during that period:

- The Committee should set a date and time by which each match must be completed.

- The Committee should specify how the result of the match will be decided should the players fail to complete the match by the specified date, such as disqualifying both players or putting the player named first or second in the draw into the next round.
- The Committee may also decide to allow the completion date of a tie to be extended if there are good reasons for doing so. If they decide to do so, it is a matter for the Committee to determine the permissions around such an extension and interpret those permissions.

In match play, the Committee sets the draw showing who will play in each match or otherwise specifies how matches are to be determined. It is best for each match to have its own starting time, but there may be times when two singles matches need to be started together.

(3) Markers

In stroke play, a player or side always needs to have someone other than the player or a member of the side to mark the scorecard. The Committee may specify or restrict who may act as the marker for each player by specifying that the marker must be a player in the same competition and group, a player with a handicap, or in some other way.

In a format where two or more partners compete together as a side (for example, in a Foursomes or Four-Ball competition), they are not allowed to act as the side's marker. Where there is not an even number of sides for a partner format, the Committee may need to find a marker for a side playing on its own or choose to have a group containing three sides.

(4) Starting Areas

The Committee may define a specific area at or near the first teeing area where players must be present and ready to play at the starting time (see Rule 5.3a).

This may be defined by painted lines on the ground, by ropes or in some other way.

5H Pace of Play Policy

The Committee can set its own Pace of Play Policy adopted as a Local Rule (see Rule 5.6b). In practice, the nature of such a Policy will be dependent on the number of Committee members available to implement it (see Section 8K).

Pace of Play Policies may contain:

- A maximum time to complete a round, a hole, a series of holes and / or a stroke.

5. Before the Competition

- A definition of when the first group is out of position and when each other group is out of position in relation to the group playing ahead of it.
- When and how a group or individual players may be timed.
- If and when players may be warned that they are being timed or have had a bad time.
- The penalty structure for breaches of the Policy.

The Committee is responsible for making sure that a competition is played at a prompt pace of play. What is considered a prompt pace can be different based on the course, size of the entry and number of players in each group.

To do this:

- The Committee should adopt a Local Rule setting a Pace of Play Policy (see Rule 5.6b).
- Such a Policy should at least set a maximum time for completing the round or parts of the round.
- The Policy should stipulate any penalties for a player's failure to comply with the Policy.
- The Committee should also be aware of other actions that they can take to have a positive impact on pace of play. These include:
 - » Management practices such as reducing group sizes, increasing starting intervals, introducing starter's gaps and using a call-up procedure should there be delays on long par 3's, driveable par 4's or reachable par 5's
 - » Considering fundamental changes to course set up such as widening fairways, reducing the thickness or length of rough, or reducing the speed of greens. When changes such as these are made to the course, the Committee should consult the rules and recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body operating in the local jurisdiction to assess the impact on the issued Course Rating™ and follow the procedures to make any necessary adjustments.

5I Code of Conduct Policy

The Committee may set its own standards of player conduct in a Code of Conduct adopted as a Local Rule (see Rule 1.2b). The purpose of such a Code is to outline the standards of conduct the Committee expects of the players while playing the game of golf and the penalties that may apply for breaches of that Code. But the Rules of Golf determine what actions a player may and may not take while playing the game and a Committee does

not have the authority to change those permissions and restrictions by applying penalties differently through a Code of Conduct.

If a Code of Conduct has not been established, the Committee is limited to penalizing players for inappropriate conduct using Rule 1.2a. The only penalty available for an act that is contrary to the spirit of the game under that Rule is disqualification (see Section 5I(5) for more information).

(1) Establishing a Code of Conduct

In establishing a Code of Conduct, the Committee should consider the following:

- When setting limits or prohibiting a player's actions, the Committee should consider the different cultures of the players. For example, something that may be considered inappropriate behaviour in one culture may be acceptable under another.
- The penalty structure that will apply for a breach of the Code (see Section 5I(4) for an example).
- Who will have the authority to decide penalties and sanctions. For example, it could be the case that only certain Committee members have the authority to apply such penalties, a minimum number of Committee members need to be involved in making such a decision or any member of the Committee has authority to make such a decision.
- Whether there will be an appeals process.

(2) Allowed and Prohibited Uses of a Code of Conduct

a. Allowed

The Committee may include the following within a Code of Conduct:

- Specific details of unacceptable behaviour that a player may be penalized for during a round, for example:
 - » Failure to care for the course, such as not raking bunkers or not replacing or filling divots.
 - » Unacceptable language.
 - » Abuse of clubs or the course.
 - » Failing to show proper consideration for other players, referees or spectators.
- A prohibition on players entering all or specified no play zones.
- Limitations on the use of social media.
- Details on acceptable clothing.

5. Before the Competition

b. Not Allowed

The Committee may not use a Code of Conduct to:

- Change existing penalties in the Rules of Golf, such as by increasing the penalty for a player who fails to mark their ball before lifting it on the putting green, from one stroke to two strokes.
- Introduce new penalties for actions unrelated to player behaviour, for example a Committee may not use a Code of Conduct to introduce an unauthorized Local Rule, such as penalizing a player for hitting a ball over properties located out of bounds, or introducing a penalty for a player who fails to announce to another player that they are going to lift a ball to identify it.
- Apply stroke penalties for inappropriate player behaviour before or between rounds. But the Committee may apply other sanctions, such as withdrawing the player from the competition or refusing to allow the player to enter future competitions.
- Penalize a player under a Code of Conduct for a breach of a spectator code by the player's family or supporters, such as by penalizing a player when a family member walks on the fairway in a junior competition when they are not allowed to do so.

(3) Determining Penalties for Breach of Code

When determining the sanctions and penalty structure that will apply, the Committee should consider:

- If there will be a warning system before any penalty or other sanction is imposed.
- If the sanctions will be of a disciplinary nature or involve stroke penalties or other penalties under the Rules. Disciplinary sanctions that a Committee may impose include refusing to allow the player to enter one or more future competitions run by the Committee or requiring the player to play at a particular time of day. Such sanctions are separate from the Rules of Golf and it is a matter for the Committee to write and interpret any such sanctions.
- If the penalty for each breach will be set as one penalty stroke or the general penalty and if penalties will escalate, such as one penalty stroke for the first breach and the general penalty for the second breach. The Committee should not use any other types of penalties that would apply to a player's score.
- If a penalty will automatically apply whenever a player breaches one of its standards or if such a penalty will be left to the Committee's discretion.

- If breaches of a Code of Conduct will be carried forward to later rounds in multiple round events where there are escalating penalties for multiple breaches. For example, in a 36-hole competition, where a first breach results in a warning and a second breach results in one penalty stroke, the Committee may provide that any breaches from round 1 carry forward to round 2.
- If different penalties will apply for breaching different aspects of the Code.
- If the Code of Conduct is to be applied to a player's caddie. A Code of Conduct automatically applies to a player's caddie through Rule 10.3c, therefore, if the Committee does not want any aspects of a Code of Conduct to apply to a player's caddie, this aspect needs to be stated in the Code of Conduct

(4) Sample Penalty Structure for a Code of Conduct

The following model penalty structures give examples of how the Committee may choose to penalize breaches of a Code of Conduct in the Local Rule.

The Committee may decide to implement such a penalty structure without a warning or sanction for a first breach, or it may provide different penalties for each item within the Code of Conduct. For example, certain breaches may result in one penalty stroke, with other breaches resulting in the general penalty.

Model Penalty Structure 1

- First breach of the Code of Conduct – warning or Committee sanction.
- Second breach – one penalty stroke.
- Third breach – general penalty.
- Fourth breach or any serious misconduct – disqualification.

Model Penalty Structure 2

- First breach of the Code of Conduct – one penalty stroke.
- Second breach – general penalty.
- Third breach or any serious misconduct – disqualification.

If a breach happens between two holes, the penalty applies to the next hole.

5. Before the Competition

(5) *Spirit of the Game and Serious Misconduct*

Under Rule 1.2a, a Committee may disqualify a player for serious misconduct for acting contrary to the spirit of the game. This applies whether or not there is a Code of Conduct in place for a competition.

When deciding whether a player is guilty of serious misconduct, the Committee should consider whether the player's conduct was so far removed from the expected norm in golf that the most severe sanction of removing a player from the competition is justified.

Examples of actions that could warrant disqualification under Rule 1.2a can be found in Clarification 1.2a/1.

5J Information for Players and Referees

(1) *Local Rules*

The Committee should ensure that any Local Rules are posted for players to see, whether on a separate handout on the first tee (sometimes referred to as a "Notice to Players"), the scorecard, a notice board or by digital communication methods.

Many organizations that run multiple competitions create a document which contains all the Local Rules they commonly use in all of their competitions. Historically this document has been printed on card stock and is known as a "Hard Card".

If players are required to play balls on the List of Conforming Balls (see Model Local Rule G-3) or use clubs on the List of Conforming Driver Heads (see Model Local Rule G-1) or that meet the groove and punch mark specifications (see Model Local Rule G-2), the Committee should consider making the lists available for players to view or provide access to the applicable online databases.

(2) *Grouping or Draw Sheets*

Sheets that provide the groupings for the round along with their starting times should be produced and posted in locations where players can check them. While players are frequently sent their starting time and groups electronically or can check them on a website, they should also be available at the course so that players can reconfirm their starting time.

(3) *Hole Location Sheets*

The Committee may wish to provide players with a sheet that shows them the position of the holes on the putting greens. These may be circles with the distance from the front of the green and the nearest side, a piece of

paper with just the numbers, or a more detailed set of drawings of the green and its surrounds with the location indicated.

(4) Scorecards Including Handicap Stroke Index Allocations

The Committee is responsible for publishing on the scorecard or somewhere else that is visible (for example, near the first tee) the order of holes at which handicap strokes are to be given or received. This allocation will be used for handicap matches and in some forms of net-score stroke play such as Four-Ball, Stableford, Maximum Score (when the maximum score is linked to the player's net score) and Par/Bogey competitions.

For guidance on how to determine the order of handicap strokes, consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ Rules of Handicapping or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body operating in the local jurisdiction.

Match Play – In a handicap match, the Committee should clarify the following in the Terms of the Competition:

- If a handicap allowance will apply and what the handicap allowance will be.
- The stroke index allocation to be used to identify the order of holes where players will give or receive handicap strokes.

Where the Committee has authorized a match to begin at a hole other than the 1st, the Committee may alter the stroke index allocation table for such matches.

Stroke Play – In a net-score competition, the Committee should determine the handicap allowances in accordance with the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body operating in the local jurisdiction.

(5) Pace of Play and Code of Conduct Policies

Copies of the Pace of Play and Code of Conduct policies should be available to players before the competition begins. When players are unfamiliar with these policies, the Committee may wish to explain them to the players in advance of the competition.

Referees and others who will be enforcing these policies should be trained and provided with any other additional materials, such as timing sheets or scripts with the specific language they should use to inform players of warnings or possible breaches.

6. During the Competition

(6) Evacuation Plan

Each Committee should consider how to evacuate players in case of severe weather or another emergency. If it is felt necessary, an evacuation plan may be created and provided to the players.

(7) Guidance and Explanation of Best Practice to Help Prevent “Backstopping”

“Backstopping” is the common term used to describe the following situation in stroke play:

A player, without agreement with any other player, leaves their ball in place on the putting green close to the hole in a position where another player, who is about to play from off the putting green, could benefit if their ball struck the ball at rest.

As there has been no agreement to leave the ball in place to help any player, there is no breach of the Rules (see Rule 15.3a).

However, The R&A and USGA take the view that “backstopping” fails to take into account all of the other players in the competition and has the potential to give the player with the “backstop” an advantage over those other players.

As a result, the following guidance and explanation of best practice is available for Committees to provide to players to help prevent backstopping:

- In stroke play, the competition involves all players and, because each player in the competition cannot be present to protect their own interests, protecting the field is an important responsibility that all players in the competition share.
- Therefore, in stroke play, if there is a reasonable possibility that a player’s ball close to the hole could help another player who is about to play from off the green, both players should ensure that the player whose ball is close to the hole marks and lifts that ball before the other player plays.
- If all players follow this best practice, it ensures the protection of the interests of everyone in the competition.

6 During the Competition

Once the competition has started, the Committee is responsible for ensuring that players have the information needed to play under the Rules and to assist them in applying the Rules.

6A Starting

Before starting the round, players should be provided with all the information they need to be able to play the course under the Rules.

In stroke play, each player should be given a scorecard and, in net competitions such as Stableford, Maximum Score or Four-Ball, this should include the handicap stroke index allocation as set by the Committee.

When the Committee has prepared additional documents, it should make them available to players before the round, and if possible before players arrive at the first tee so that they have a reasonable amount of time to read them. These could include:

- Local Rules.
- Pace of Play Policy.
- Code of Conduct.
- Evacuation Plan.

Depending on the resources available to them, the Committee may choose to make the documents available in a single location for players to read, for example on a notice board or by digital communication methods. Otherwise they may be provided as handouts to players before they start their round.

When resources allow, the Committee should have a starter at the starting tee(s) to ensure the players have all the information they require and that they start on time.

When the time comes for starting the group, the starter should start the first player at the time assigned. If this is not possible due to the location of the group in front (such as when they are delayed by a ball search), the actual time of starting should be noted so that the Committee can use that information when applying a pace of play policy.

The Committee should adopt a consistent method for handling situations when players may be late in arriving at their first tee. This may include having Committee members or others attempt to locate the missing players or having a countdown in front of other players who are present so that it is clear to all when the player is late. It is good practice to have a clock set to the official time close to the tee and for all referees to set their watches to the same time.

6B The Course

(1) Course Maintenance During Round

While it is preferable to have all maintenance on the course completed before the first group reaches each hole to make sure that all players play

6. During the Competition

the course in the same condition, this is sometimes not possible. Where course maintenance, such as cutting of putting greens, fairways or rough, or the raking of bunkers, takes place during a round, the results of the competition stand as played.

While the Committee should attempt to mark all areas that warrant being marked as ground under repair before the competition begins, there will be times when areas are not noticed until play has begun. There will also be times when weather, vehicles, players or spectators may cause additional damage to the course during play. In these cases, the Committee may decide to mark the areas as ground under repair. The decision to mark an area should be made regardless of whether a player has already played from that area.

(2) *Setting Hole Locations and Teeing Areas*

In a stroke-play competition, all players should play the course with the tee-markers and holes positioned in the same places. The Committee should avoid moving any tee-markers or holes after groups have played a hole, but there may be situations where this cannot be avoided or where they are moved by someone else in error.

a. Teeing Area Becomes Unusable After Start of Round

If a teeing area becomes covered in temporary water or for some other reason is not usable after the round has started, the Committee may suspend play or relocate the teeing area if this can be done without giving any player a significant advantage or disadvantage.

b. Tee-Markers or Hole Moved

If tee-markers or the hole are moved by a member of the course staff, or if tee-markers are moved by a player or anyone else, the Committee should determine if any players have been significantly advantaged or disadvantaged. If so, the round should generally be declared null and void. If the course has not been altered significantly and no player has been given a significant advantage or disadvantage, the Committee may choose to let the round stand.

c. Moving the Position of the Hole Due to Severity of Position

In stroke play, if it becomes apparent during a round that a hole is located such that the ball will not stop near the hole due to the severity of the slope, which has resulted in several players taking an excessive number of putts, the Committee has several options available.

The Committee should consider all factors, including how severe the location is, how many players have completed play of the hole and where the hole is in the round, and take the course of action that it considers to be the fairest to all the players. For example:

- Have play continue with the hole location unchanged on the basis that the conditions are the same for all players in the competition.
- Keep the hole in the same location but take some action to improve the situation such as watering the putting green between groups.
- Declare the round null and void and have all players start the round again with the hole relocated.
- Suspend play, relocate the hole and have the players who played the hole return at the conclusion of their rounds to replay the hole. The score for the hole for these players is the score achieved after the hole is relocated.
- Have all players disregard their score for the hole in question and play an additional hole (whether on the competition course or elsewhere) for their score for the hole.

The last two options should be taken only in extreme circumstances because they alter the round for some or all players.

In match play, the Committee may move the hole between matches.

d. Relocating Hole After Ball Already Positioned Nearby on Putting Green

If a ball is on the putting green when the hole has been damaged, the Committee should attempt to repair the hole so that it conforms with the definition of “hole”. If this is not possible the players may complete the hole with the hole in its damaged state. The Committee can then assess whether the hole needs to be moved prior to the next group playing the hole, such as when the damage is likely to worsen during play. If it does need to be moved, it should be moved to a nearby similar location that provides the same challenge as where the hole was originally located, and ideally by moving it as short a distance as possible from the original location.

It is not desirable to relocate the hole before all players in the group have completed play of the hole. However, the Committee may relocate the hole to a nearby similar position if the hole cannot be repaired to the extent necessary to enable that group to complete the hole and relocating it is necessary to ensure the proper playing of the game. If this is done before the players in the group have completed the hole, the Committee should require any player whose ball is on the putting green to reposition their ball to a position that is comparable to that which the previous stroke had originally given the player. For a ball that lies off the putting green, the Committee should require that ball to be played as it lies.

6. During the Competition

6C Providing Rules Assistance to Players

A Committee may appoint referees to assist with the administration of a competition. A referee is an official named by the Committee to decide questions of fact and apply the Rules.

(1) Duties and Authority of Referees and Committee Members

As detailed in the definition of “referee”, a referee’s duties and authority in match play depends on their assigned role, whereas in stroke play, a referee is responsible for acting on any breach of the Rules they see or are told about.

Whether or not a referee is assigned to one match, they cannot act on a request for a ruling if the facts were known to the opponent at the time and no request was made in time.

See Clarification Committee/1 for limitations that can be put on the role of some referees or some Committee members.

(2) Referee Authorizes Player to Breach a Rule

If a referee authorizes a player to breach a Rule in error, the player will not be penalized. But see Rule 20.2d and Section 6C(9) or 6C(10) for situations where the error can be corrected.

(3) Referee Warns Player About to Breach Rule

While a referee is not obliged to warn a player who is about to breach a Rule, to prevent a player from getting a penalty it is strongly recommended that a referee should do in stroke play so whenever possible in and in match play, when the referee has been assigned to one match for the entire round. A referee who acts in accordance with this recommendation by volunteering information on the Rules in order to prevent breaches of the Rules is acting fairly as they would try to do so uniformly to all players.

But, in match play where the referee has not been assigned to one match for the entire round, they have no authority to intervene. The referee should not warn the player unless asked, and if the player does breach the Rule, the referee should not apply the penalty without the opponent requesting a ruling.

(4) Disagreement with Referee’s Decision

If a player disagrees with a referee’s decision in match play or stroke play, the player is generally not entitled to a second opinion, whether from another referee or the Committee (see Rule 20.2a), but the referee whose decision is questioned may agree to get a second opinion.

The Committee can adopt a policy of always allowing all players a second opinion where they disagree with a referee's decision.

(5) Player Responsible for Providing Correct Information to Referee

A referee will often rely on the assistance of a player to determine the facts of a situation before making a ruling. In these situations, the player needs to do their best to provide correct information to the referee so that the referee can make a ruling.

If the ruling given turns out to have been wrong when additional information is brought to the attention of the Committee (such as by reviewing video), the action the Committee should take is based on whether the player did their best to provide the correct information to the referee.

If the player failed to do their best (such as by deliberately giving the referee misleading comments or deliberately withholding information) and this resulted in the referee directing the player to play from a wrong place, the Committee should correct the ruling so that the player is in breach of Rule 14.7 on the hole in question. The same would be true if a referee did not penalize the player when a penalty should have been applied (such as when the player improved their conditions affecting the stroke). The Committee should also consider whether the player should be disqualified for serious misconduct under Rule 1.2a.

However, if the player did do their best to provide correct information, and the referee made a ruling based wholly or in part on information the player provided, the player should not be penalized retrospectively for playing from a wrong place. But, the player may still be penalized retrospectively if their actions before speaking to the referee were a breach of the Rules.

For example, a player sees their ball at rest move in the rough before a stroke and does not believe they were the cause of the movement. They then speak to a referee and state that they do not think they touched the grass near the ball prior to its movement. Based on that information, the referee rules that the ball will be played as it lies without penalty. Later in the round, video evidence shows that the player did touch the grass very close to the ball causing it to move. By doing so, the player should have been given one penalty stroke and replaced the ball before making the next stroke. In this situation, the Committee should retrospectively add one penalty stroke to player's score on that hole for causing their ball to move. But, because the player did their best to help the referee with the ruling, the player would not be penalized for playing from a wrong place.

A similar example would be when a player improves the conditions affecting their stroke while preparing to play (such as by walking across

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the fringe of the putting green and unknowingly stepping on and pressing down a small pile of sand on their line of play). A nearby referee with an incomplete view of the player's actions is concerned the player may have improved their lie. When asking the player what they did, the player states they thought they stepped over the line of play. Based on this information the referee rules there is no penalty. It is later discovered the player did walk on their line and, in doing so, pressed down sand that improved their line of play. Even though the player did their best to provide the referee with correct information, the action had already occurred at the time of the conversation so the Committee should correct the ruling and retrospectively rule that the player gets the general penalty on that hole.

(6) *How to Resolve Questions of Fact*

Resolving questions of fact is among the most difficult actions required of a referee or the Committee.

- In all situations involving questions of fact, resolution of the doubt should be made based on all the relevant circumstances and information available at the time. When the Committee is unable to determine the facts to its satisfaction, it should treat the situation in a way that is reasonable, fair and consistent with how similar situations are treated under the Rules.
- Testimony of the players involved is important and should be given due consideration. There is no set process for evaluating the testimony of the players or for assigning the weight to be given to such testimony and each situation should be treated on its own merits. The proper action depends on the circumstances in each case and should be left to the judgment of the referee, or the Committee. Where there is a question relating to the Rules in a situation where it is one player's word against another's and the weight of evidence does not favour either player, the benefit of the doubt should be given to the player who made the stroke or whose score is involved.
- Testimony of those who are not a part of the competition, including spectators, should be considered and evaluated. It is also appropriate to use television footage and the like to assist in resolving doubt, although the "naked eye" standard should be applied when using such evidence (see Rule 20.2c).
- When a player has been required to determine a spot, point, line, edge, area or location under the Rules, the Committee should determine if the player used reasonable judgment in doing so. If so, that decision will be accepted even if, after the stroke is made, the determination is shown to be wrong (see Rule 1.3b(2)).

- It is important that any questions of fact be resolved as soon as possible, therefore, a referee may be limited to evaluating the evidence available to them at the time. But any such ruling may be further reviewed by the referee, or the Committee, if additional evidence becomes available after the initial ruling.

If a judgment is made by a referee, the player is entitled to proceed on the basis of that ruling whether it is an interpretation of the Rules of Golf or a resolution of a question of fact. If the ruling is found to be wrong, the Committee may have the authority to make a correction (see Rule 20.2d and Section 6C(9) or 6C(10)). However, in all circumstances, including both match play and stroke play, the referee or Committee is limited in its ability to make corrections by the guidance contained in Rule 20.2d.

(7) True State of the Match Not Determinable

If two players complete their match but do not agree on the result, they should refer the matter to the Committee.

The Committee should gather all available evidence and attempt to determine the true state of the match. If the Committee is unable to determine the true state of the match, it should resolve the situation in the fairest way, which could mean ruling that the match should be replayed if possible.

(8) Handling Ruling When Player Proceeds Under Rule That Does Not Apply

When a player proceeds under a Rule that does not apply to their situation and then makes a stroke, the Committee is responsible for determining the Rule to apply in order to give a ruling based on the player's actions.

For example:

- A player took relief away from a boundary object under Rule 16.1b. They have proceeded under a Rule that does not apply. As Rule 19.1 (Unplayable Ball) requires the player to have decided to proceed under it before taking relief, the Committee may not apply Rule 19 to the player's actions. As there was no Rule that allowed the player to lift their ball in such a situation, the Committee should determine that Rule 9.4 applies and none of the Exceptions save the player from penalty.
- A player decided that their ball was unplayable in a penalty area, dropped it according to the procedure of option b or c of Rule 19.2 and played it from within the penalty area. As Rule 17.1 is the only Rule that allows the player to lift their ball for relief in a penalty area, the Committee should determine that Rule 17 applies and rule accordingly. As a result, the player is considered to have played from a wrong place (see Rule 14.7) and, in addition, gets the one penalty stroke under Rule 17.1.

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- A player's ball lay in temporary water that they mistook for a penalty area. The player dropped and played a ball according to the procedure in Rule 17.1d(2). As Rule 16.1b was the only Rule that allowed the player to lift their ball for relief in that situation, the Committee should determine that Rule 16.1b applies and rule accordingly. As a result, assuming that the player did not drop a ball in and play from an area that satisfied Rule 16.1b, the player is considered to have played from a wrong place (see Rule 14.7).
- A player did not know the location of their original ball but assumed, without knowledge or virtual certainty, that it was in ground under repair. The player dropped and played another ball under Rules 16.1e and 16.1b. As the player did not know the location of their original ball, in these circumstances, Rule 18.1 was the only Rule that the player could have proceeded under. Therefore, the Committee should determine that Rule 18.1 applies and rule accordingly. As a result, the player is considered to have put a ball into play under penalty of stroke and distance and to have played from a wrong place (see Rule 14.7) and, in addition, gets the stroke-and-distance penalty under Rule 18.1.

(9) Handling Wrong Rulings in Match Play

Under Rule 20.2a, a player has no right to appeal a referee's ruling. But, if a ruling by a referee or the Committee is later found to be wrong, the ruling should be corrected if possible under the Rules (see Rule 20.2d). This section clarifies when a wrong ruling should be corrected in match play.

a. Correction of Wrong Ruling by a Referee During Match

- A referee should not correct a wrong ruling after either player makes their next stroke. But if a player should have been disqualified and was not, that ruling may be corrected any time before the start of the player's next match, or before the result of the competition is final (but there is no time limit on disqualifying a player under Rules 1.2 or 1.3b(1)).
- If no more strokes are made on a hole after a ruling has been made, a referee should not correct a wrong ruling once either player makes a stroke from the next teeing area.
- If neither of the above bullet points apply, a wrong ruling by a referee should be corrected.
- In a situation where a wrong ruling can be corrected, if the wrong ruling has resulted in one or more players lifting their ball, the referee is responsible for directing the players to replace their balls and complete the hole, with the correct ruling applied.
- The principles above also apply where a referee fails to penalize a player for a breach of a Rule due to misunderstanding the result of a hole.

- » For example, a referee fails to advise a player of a loss of hole penalty for a breach of the pace of play policy as the referee believed the player had already lost the hole. On the next hole, the referee learns that the player had not lost the hole. If the player or the opponent has made a stroke from the teeing area of that next hole, the referee can no longer correct the error.

b. Correction of Wrong Ruling Made on Final Hole of Match Before Result Is Final

Where a referee makes a wrong ruling on the final hole of a match and no more strokes are played, it should be corrected at any time up until the result of the match is final, or if the match is tied and goes to extra holes, until either player makes a stroke from the next teeing area.

c. Wrong Ruling by Referee in Match Results in Player Making Stroke from Wrong Place

If a player in match play proceeds on the basis of a ruling from a referee which results in the player making a stroke from a wrong place, and the Committee then learns of the wrong ruling, the following principles apply:

- If a serious breach is not involved, and the player has not been seriously disadvantaged due to playing from a wrong place, it is too late to correct the ruling once the player has made a stroke from the wrong place. The strokes made after the wrong ruling stand with no penalty for playing from the wrong place.
- If a serious breach is involved or the player has been seriously disadvantaged due to playing from a wrong place:
 - » If the opponent has not yet made their next stroke on the hole concerned, the Committee should correct the ruling.
 - » If the opponent has not made a stroke on the hole after the ruling was given, the Committee should correct the ruling if neither player has made a stroke from the next teeing area, or in the case of the final hole of the match, if the result of the match is not yet final.
 - » Otherwise it is too late to correct the ruling, and the strokes made after the wrong ruling stand with no penalty.

(10) Handling Wrong Rulings in Stroke Play

A player has no right to appeal a referee's ruling (see Rule 20.2a). But if a ruling by a referee or the Committee is later found to be wrong, the ruling should be corrected if possible under the Rules (see Rule 20.2d). This section clarifies when a wrong ruling should be corrected in stroke play.

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a. Correction of Wrong Ruling by Referee in Stroke Play

When possible, a referee should correct a wrong ruling in stroke play that involves the incorrect application of a penalty or failure to apply a penalty, provided the competition has not closed (see Rule 20.2e).

b. Player in Stroke Play Wrongly Advised Stroke Does Not Count

In stroke play, a referee wrongly advises a player that their stroke does not count and to play again without penalty. Once the player has replayed the stroke, the ruling stands (including the referee's cancellation of the stroke) and the player's score with the replayed stroke is the player's score for the hole.

c. Player in Stroke Play Makes Stroke from Wrong Place Due to Wrong Ruling; Procedure for Player When Error Is Discovered

In stroke play, if a player proceeds on the basis of a ruling from a referee, which results in the player making a stroke from a wrong place and the Committee then learns of the wrong ruling, the following principles apply:

- If a serious breach is involved, or the player has been seriously disadvantaged due to playing from a wrong place:
- If the player has not made a stroke to begin another hole or, for the final hole of the round, before returning their scorecard, the Committee should correct the ruling. The Committee should direct the player to cancel the stroke made from the wrong place and any subsequent strokes and proceed correctly. The player gets no penalty for playing from a wrong place.
- Otherwise it is too late to correct the ruling and the strokes made after the wrong ruling stand with no penalty.

d. Referee Gives Player Incorrect Information; Player Acts on Information in Subsequent Play

If a referee provides a player with incorrect information on the Rules, the player is entitled to act on such information in their subsequent play.

Consequently, the Committee may be required to make a judgment as to both the duration of the player's entitlement and their proper score when, as a result of proceeding according to the incorrect information provided, the player is liable to a penalty under the Rules.

In these situations, the Committee should resolve the matter in whatever manner it considers most fair, in light of all the facts and with the objective of ensuring that no player receives an undue advantage or disadvantage. In cases where the incorrect information significantly affects the results of the competition, the Committee may have no option but to cancel the round. The following principles are applicable:

- General guidance on the Rules

When a member of the Committee or a referee provides incorrect information in the nature of general guidance about the Rules, the player should not be exempt from penalty.

For example, a player asks a referee, for future reference, if they are allowed to remove sand surrounding their ball in the general area. The referee incorrectly advises the player they are allowed to do so. Because the question did not relate to a specific situation, the player would not be exempt from penalty if the player breached that Rule later in the round.

- Specific ruling

When a referee gives a wrong ruling, the player is exempt from penalty. The Committee should extend this exemption for the duration of the competition in circumstances where the player proceeds incorrectly on their own in exactly the same manner as advised by a referee earlier in the competition. However, that exemption ceases if, in that competition, the player becomes aware of the proper procedure or has their actions questioned.

For example, a player asks a referee for help in taking relief from a red penalty area and the referee incorrectly tells the player that they must drop again because their stance is in the penalty area. If the player drops again for that same reason when taking relief from a red penalty area later in the round or during the next round of the same competition the Committee should not penalize the player for playing from a wrong place.

- Guidance on Local Rules or Terms of the Competition

When a member of the Committee or a referee gives incorrect information on whether a Local Rule or Term of the Competition is in effect, the player is exempt from penalty for acting on that information. This exemption applies for the duration of the competition unless corrected earlier, in which case, the exemption ends at that point.

For example, if the player is told by a referee that distance-measuring devices are allowed even though the Local Rule prohibiting their use is in effect, that player does not incur a penalty for using the distance-measuring device during the competition. However, if the Committee learns of the wrong ruling, the player should be informed of the mistake as soon as possible.

- Equipment ruling

When a member of the Committee or a referee rules that a non-conforming club is conforming, the player is exempt from penalty

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for using the club. This exemption applies for the duration of the competition unless corrected earlier, in which case, the exemption ends at the completion of the round during which the correction was made.

e. Player Lifts Ball Without Authority Due to Misunderstanding Referee's Instructions

If a player lifts their ball when not allowed to do so as a result of a reasonable misunderstanding of a referee's instructions, there is no penalty, and the ball must be replaced unless the player proceeds under another Rule.

For example, a player's ball comes to rest against a movable obstruction and they ask for relief. A referee correctly advises the player that the obstruction may be removed under Rule 15.2 and that the spot of the ball should be marked in case it moves during the removal of the obstruction. The player marks the position of the ball and lifts it before the referee can stop them.

The player will normally be penalized one stroke under Rule 9.4 for lifting their ball when it is not allowed, but provided the referee is satisfied that the player misunderstood the instruction, the ball is replaced without penalty.

f. Player Wrongly Advised to Continue with Provisional Ball by Referee

A player had reason to play a provisional ball from the teeing area and finds their original ball in a penalty area. The player is then wrongly advised by a referee that they must continue with the provisional ball and completes the hole with the provisional ball. Although the provisional ball was a wrong ball which the player was required to abandon under Rule 18.3c, the player gets no penalty for playing the provisional ball.

If the Committee then becomes aware of the wrong ruling, it should rule that the player's score for the hole consists of the tee shot with the original ball plus the number of strokes the player took to complete the hole with the provisional ball after the wrong ruling, with the second stroke with the provisional ball being the player's second stroke on the hole. But if it would have been clearly unreasonable for the player to have played the original ball from the penalty area, they must also add one penalty stroke under Rule 17.1 to the score for the hole.

g. Committee Makes Wrong Ruling When Player Has Played Two Balls Under Rule 20.1c(3); When Ruling May Be Corrected

In stroke play, a player plays two balls under Rule 20.1c(3), reports the facts to the Committee, and the Committee tells the player to score with the incorrect ball. Such a mistake is a wrong ruling and not an administrative error. Therefore Rule 20.2d applies and the answer depends on when the Committee learns of its wrong ruling:

- If the Committee learns of the wrong ruling before the competition closes, it should correct the ruling by changing the score for the hole in question to that of the correct ball.
- If the Committee learns of the wrong ruling after the competition has closed, the score with the incorrect ball remains the player's score for the hole in question. Under Rule 20.2d, such a ruling is final once the competition has closed.

h. Disqualification Penalty Wrongly Applied to Winner of Event; Error Discovered After Two Other Players Play Off for First Place

If, as a result of a wrong ruling by the Committee, the rightful winner of a competition is disqualified and two other players play-off for first place, the best procedure depends on when the Committee realizes its error. If the Committee learns of its wrong ruling before the result of the competition is final, the Committee should correct the wrong ruling by rescinding the disqualification penalty and declaring that player to be the winner. If the Committee learns of the wrong ruling after the result of the competition is final, the result stands, with the player disqualified.

i. Application of Disqualification Penalty in Competition in Which Not All Scores Used to Determine Winner

In a scenario such as a multiple round stroke-play team competition when not all the players' scores count towards the team's score for a round, a player's score cannot count for the round when they are disqualified but could count for other rounds. For example, when two scores of three team members count, if a player is disqualified in the first of four rounds, the disqualification applies only to the first round and their scores for the remaining rounds can still be used.

This applies to all competitions in which not all scores are used to determine the winner (for example, an individual competition in which the player counts their three best scores from four rounds).

If a player is disqualified for a breach of Rule 1.3b or the Committee's Code of Conduct, it is up to the Committee to determine whether the disqualification should be for the round or the entire competition.

(11) Combining Match Play and Stroke Play

Combining match play and stroke play is discouraged as certain Rules are substantially different between the two forms of play. But if players either request to combine the two forms of play or, having done so on their own, ask for a ruling, the Committee should make its best efforts to support the players.

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a. When Players Request to Combine Match Play and Stroke Play

If a Committee allows players to play a match while competing in a stroke-play competition, the players should be told to apply the Rules for stroke play. For example, no concessions are allowed and if one player plays out of turn, the other does not have the option of recalling the stroke.

b. When Players Request a Ruling Having Combined Match Play and Stroke Play

When players request a ruling in a situation where they have combined match play and stroke play, the Committee should apply the Rules of Golf as they would apply to each of match play and stroke play, where possible. For example, if one player did not complete a hole for whatever reason then they are disqualified from the stroke-play competition for a breach of Rule 3.3c. But for Stableford, Maximum Score and Par/Bogey see Rules 21.1c, 21.2c and 21.3c respectively.

6D Enforcing Pace of Play

Where a Pace of Play policy is in place for a competition, it is important the Committee understands and actively enforces the policy to ensure that players adhere to the policy.

For more information and example policies, see Model Local Rule Section 8K.

6E Suspensions and Resumptions

(1) Immediate and Normal Suspensions of Play

There are two types of suspensions of play that a Committee can order, each with different requirements for when players must stop play (see Rule 5.7b).

- Immediate suspension (such as when there is imminent danger). If the Committee declares an immediate suspension of play, all players must stop play at once and must not make another stroke until the Committee resumes play.
- Normal suspension (such as for darkness or unplayable course). If the Committee suspends play for normal reasons, what happens next depends on whether a group is between two holes or playing a hole.

The Committee should use a way of signalling an immediate suspension that is different than that used for a normal suspension. The signals to be used should be communicated to the players in the Local Rules.

See Model Local Rule J-1 – Methods for Suspending and Resuming Play

When play is suspended, the Committee will need to evaluate if the players should be left in position on the course or brought back to the clubhouse.

Whether a suspension is immediate or normal, the Committee should resume play when it is possible to do so. Players will resume play from where they stopped (see Rule 5.7c).

(2) Deciding When to Suspend and Resume Play

Deciding when play should be suspended and then resumed can be difficult decisions for a Committee. A Committee should take the following guidelines into consideration:

a. Lightning

The Committee should use whatever means it has available to determine if there is a danger from lightning and take what actions it believes are appropriate. Players may also stop play on their own when they believe there is a danger from lightning (see Rule 5.7a).

When the Committee concludes there is no further danger from lightning and orders play to be resumed, players must resume play. See Clarification 5.7c/1 for what to do if a player refuses to start because they feel there is still a danger from lightning.

b. Visibility

It is recommended that, if landing areas are no longer visible to players (for example, due to fog or darkness), play should be suspended. Similarly, if players are unable to read the line of play on a putting green due to a lack of visibility, play should be suspended.

c. Temporary Water

If all the area around a hole is covered in temporary water and it cannot be removed, in stroke play the course should be considered unplayable and the Committee should suspend play under Rule 5.7.

In match play, if the temporary water around the hole cannot be removed, the Committee may suspend play or relocate the hole.

d. Wind

Several balls being moved by the wind may be a reason to suspend play, but only one or two balls moving due to the wind on one green would not usually merit the Committee suspending play. On the putting green there are Rules in place to help players avoid getting penalties or for being advantaged if the ball is blown closer to the hole or disadvantaged if the ball is blown farther from the hole (see Rules 9.3 and 13.1).

The Committee should consider suspending play due to wind only if there are several instances of balls moving and players are having problems

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with replacing the ball on the spot from which it was blown, or at least reasonably close to that spot if the ball will not remain at rest on the original spot.

(3) Resumption of Play

When play is to be resumed following a suspension, players will resume play from where they stopped (see Rule 5.7d).

The Committee should be prepared to consider the following:

- If players were evacuated from the course, whether players should be given time to warm up before resuming play.
- If the practice areas were closed during the suspension, when they should be reopened to give players sufficient time to get ready to play.
- How to get players back to their positions on the course.
- How to ensure that all players are back in position before resuming play. This might include having members of the Committee in position to observe and report when all players have returned.

(4) Whether to Cancel Round

a. Match Play

A match should not be cancelled once play has begun as both players in a match are playing in the same conditions, without one having an advantage over the other.

If the players stop play by agreement as allowed in Rule 5.7a or the Committee feels that conditions are such that play should be suspended, the match should resume from where it was suspended.

In a team competition, if some matches are completed while others cannot be completed on the arranged day due to poor light or weather, the Terms of the Competition should clarify how the complete and incomplete matches will be treated (see Section 5A(4)). For example:

- The result of completed matches stand as played and incomplete matches are to be continued or replayed on a later date,
- All matches are to be replayed, and each team is free to alter its original team, or
- Any matches that cannot be completed as scheduled are considered to be tied.

b. Stroke Play

In stroke play there is no set guidance for when a Committee should cancel a round. The proper action depends on the circumstances in each case and is left to the judgment of the Committee.

A round should be cancelled only in a case where it would be very unfair not to cancel it. For example, it would be reasonable to cancel a round if a small number of players begin a round under extremely bad weather conditions, conditions subsequently worsen and play for the remainder of that day is impossible, but when play will resume the next day the weather is likely to be significantly better.

When a round is cancelled, all scores and penalties during that round are cancelled. That would normally include any disqualification penalty, but, if a player is disqualified for a serious misconduct (see Rule 1.2) or for a breach of the Code of Conduct, that disqualification should not be cancelled.

(5) Player Refuses to Start or Stops Play Due to Weather Conditions

If, because of bad weather, a player refuses to start at the time arranged by the Committee or stops play during the round and the Committee later cancels that round, the player gets no penalty as all penalties in a cancelled round are cancelled.

(6) Removal of Temporary Water or Loose Impediments from Putting Green

If temporary water, sand, leaves or other loose impediments accumulate on a putting green during a round, the Committee may do what is necessary to remove the condition, for example, by using a squeegee, or by brushing or blowing the putting green. It is not necessary for the Committee to suspend play to take these actions.

In such cases, the Committee may, when necessary, get the help of players to remove the loose impediments or sand. However, a player is in breach of Rule 8.1 if they remove temporary water on the line of play without the Committee's permission.

A Committee may adopt a policy that clarifies what actions are considered appropriate for a Committee member, someone designated by the Committee (for example, a member of the maintenance staff), or players, to remove temporary water on the putting green.

See Model Local Rule J-2: Model Local Rule for Allowing Temporary Water on Putting Green to be Removed by a Squeegee.

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(7) Match Begun in Ignorance Course Closed

If players begin a match when the course is closed and the Committee then learns of their action, the match should be replayed in its entirety as play on the closed course is considered null and void.

6F Scoring

(1) Match Play

It is usually the players' responsibility to report the result of their match at a location designated by the Committee. If a referee has been assigned to the match, they may be assigned this duty instead of the players.

If a player makes a request for a ruling during the match that has not been resolved, the Committee should determine if the request meets the requirements in Rule 20.1b(2) and make its ruling. This may result in the players needing to return to the course to continue the match.

Once the result has been reported, it is considered final and no request for a ruling can be accepted unless it meets the requirements in Rule 20.1b(3).

(2) Stroke Play

In stroke play, players should be given an opportunity to resolve any issues that need to be clarified with the Committee (see Rules 14.7b and 20.1c(4)), check their scorecards and have any mistakes corrected. If there is a mistake on the scorecard, a player may ask the marker or the Committee to make or ratify a change to their scorecard (see Rule 3.3b(2)) up to the time that it is returned.

Once the scorecard has been returned, the Committee should check it to make sure that it has the player's name, the required signatures and correct hole-by-hole scores. The Committee should add up the player's scores, and in a net competition, calculate the player's handicap strokes and use it to calculate the player's net score.

In other forms of stroke play, such as Stableford or Par/Bogey, or in a Four-Ball competition, the Committee should determine the final result for the player or side. For example, in a Stableford competition, the Committee is responsible for determining the number of points that the player scores for each hole and in total for the round.

6G Making Cuts; Establishing Draws; Creating New Groups

(1) Making Cuts and Creating New Groups

For a competition played over multiple rounds, the Terms of the Competition may state that:

- Players will be regrouped for later rounds based on their total score to that point.
- The size of the field will be reduced for the final round or rounds (often called the “cut”).

In both cases, the Committee should generate new groupings and publish them. It is customary for the players with the highest scores to tee off first and the players with the lowest scores to tee off last, although the Committee may choose to alter this order.

The Committee can choose how to regroup players who finish with the same total score. For example, the Committee may decide that the first player to return a specific score will receive a later tee time than those who complete the round later with the same score.

If two tees are to be used for later rounds (for example, half the field starts on the first hole and the other half starts on the tenth hole), the Committee may decide to arrange the groups such that the players with the highest scores tee off last on one side (such as from the 10th tee) and the players with the lowest scores tee off last on the other side (such as the 1st tee). This results in the players in the middle of the field being the first to tee off on each tee.

Details of how the application of penalties under the exception to Rule 3.3b(3) should impact on a cut line or match play draw after they have been made are available on RandA.org.

(2) Dealing with Withdrawals and Disqualifications in Match Play

In match play, if a player withdraws or is disqualified from the competition before the start of their first match and the Committee has not specified how such a situation is dealt with in the Terms of the Competition, the Committee's options are as follows:

- Declare the player's next opponent the winner by default, or
- If the player withdraws before their first-round match:
 - » If time permits, produce a new match-play draw, or
 - » Replace the player with a player from the list of alternates or reserves, or

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- » Where players have qualified through stroke play for the match-play competition, replace the player with the player who is now the final qualifier.

If the player withdraws or is disqualified after their first or subsequent match, the Committee could:

- » Declare the player's next opponent the winner by default, or
- » Require all players eliminated by the player in match play to play off for that position.

If both finalists in a match-play competition are disqualified, the Committee may decide to conclude the competition without a winner. Alternatively, the Committee could elect to have the defeated semi-finalists play a match to determine the winner of the competition.

If a player in a match-play competition is disqualified, the player should still be entitled to any prize they won previously in the competition, for example, for winning the stroke-play qualifying competition.

(3) Dealing with Withdrawals and Disqualifications in Stroke Play

If a player withdraws or is disqualified before the first round in a stroke-play competition (for example, due to failure to start on time), the Committee may replace the player with another player not currently in the field (often called an alternate or reserve) if one is available. Once the player has started their first round they should not be replaced.

(4) Qualifying for Match Play

When stroke-play qualifying is used to determine the draw(s) for match play, the Committee can choose to break ties for various positions in the draw randomly or by using a scorecard count-back or play-off. This should be specified in the Terms of the Competition.

(5) Misapplication of Handicap Affects Match-Play Draw

In a stroke-play qualifying round for a match-play competition, if the Committee calculates the player's handicap incorrectly or misapplies the player's handicap which results in an incorrect draw, the Committee should deal with the matter in the fairest way possible. The Committee should consider amending the draw and cancelling the matches affected by the error.

If the error is discovered after the second round of match play starts, it is too late to correct the draw.

7 After the Competition

7A Resolving Ties in Stroke Play

After all the scorecards have been returned in stroke play, the Committee may need to resolve ties for first place or other positions. The Committee should do so by applying the method detailed in the Terms of the Competition (see Section 5A(6)) which should have been specified in advance.

In a stroke-play qualifier where a fixed number of players will move into match play, or when the competition is a qualifier for a later competition, there may be a play-off or play-offs to decide which players advance, which the Committee should organize.

(1) Disqualification or Concession of Defeat in Stroke-Play Play-Off

In a stroke-play play-off between two players, if one of them is disqualified or concedes defeat, it is not necessary for the other player to complete the play-off hole or holes to be declared the winner.

(2) Some Players Do Not Complete Stroke-Play Play-Off

In a stroke-play play-off between three or more players, if not all of them complete the play-off hole or holes, the order in which the players are disqualified or decide to withdraw determines the result of the play-off if necessary.

7B Finalizing Results

As detailed in Section 5A(7), it is important for the Committee to clarify in the Terms of the Competition when and how the result of the competition is final, as this will affect how the Committee will resolve any Rules issues that occur after play is complete in both match play and stroke play (see Rule 20).

The Committee should ensure that it carries out its responsibilities for finalizing the results of a match or stroke-play competition in line with the Terms of the Competition. For example:

- When the result of a match will be considered final when the Committee has recorded it on the official scoreboard, the Committee should ensure this is carried out as soon as possible.
- If there are any Rules questions which may impact the result of the stroke-play competition, the Committee should resolve these issues, even if this means delaying the closing of the competition and announcing the winners.

7. After the Competition

7C Awarding Prizes

If the competition involves amateur golfers, the Committee should only award prizes to amateur golfers that are allowed under the Rules of Amateur Status. Committees should refer to the Rules of Amateur Status and the accompanying Guidance Notes which are available at RandA.org.

7D Rules or Scoring Issues Arising After Competition

When an issue regarding the Rules is brought to the attention of the Committee after the competition is closed, the resolution will depend on the nature of the problem. If the issue is one where a player may have proceeded incorrectly under the Rules, the Committee should refer to

Rule 20.2e to determine if a penalty of disqualification needs to be applied to the player.

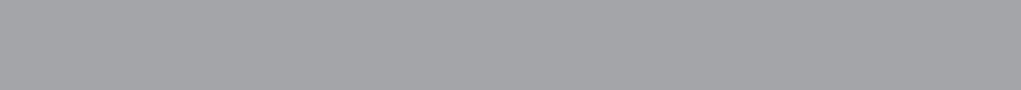
When the issue is due to an administrative error by the Committee, it should correct the error and issue new results. If necessary, the Committee should retrieve any prizes mistakenly presented and award them to the correct players.

Administrative errors include:

- Having allowed ineligible players to enter.
- Miscalculating a player's total score.
- Incorrectly calculating a player's handicap.
- Incorrectly applying a handicap.
- Leaving a player out of the final results.
- Applying the wrong method of deciding ties.



Model Local Rules and Other Forms of Play



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8 Model Local Rules

A Local Rule is a modification of a Rule or an additional Rule that the Committee adopts for general play or a particular competition. The Committee is responsible for deciding whether to adopt any Local Rules and for making sure they are consistent with the guidelines provided in Section 8(1).

Local Rules that are inconsistent with these guidelines are not authorized, and a round played with such a Local Rule in place is not considered to have been played by the Rules of Golf.

If a Committee adopts a Local Rule that is inconsistent with the stated purpose of the Model Local Rules, the handicapping authority should be consulted as to whether players may submit acceptable scores from that round for handicap purposes.

(1) Guidelines for Establishing Local Rules

Before establishing a Local Rule, the Committee should consider the following guidelines:

- a. Local Rules have the same status as a Rule of Golf for that competition or course.
- b. While a Committee has significant authority under the Rules of Golf to adopt Local Rules to fit the particular needs of a course or competition, Committees should only use Local Rules to deal with the types of situations covered by the purpose statements in Section 8.
- c. A Model Local Rule can either be adopted in its entirety or can serve as an example of how to write a particular type of Local Rule. But if a Committee changes the wording of a Model Local Rule to fit the particular needs of the course or competition, it needs to ensure that the changes are consistent with the stated purpose.

Examples of changes to Model Local Rules that would fit with this requirement include:

- Extending the use of Model Local Rule E-4 (Relief from Aeration Holes) to be used for vertical cuts.
 - Extending the use of Model Local Rule F-10 (Damage by Animals) to bunkers.
- d. Unless otherwise stated, the penalty for a breach of a Local Rule should be the general penalty.
 - e. A Committee must not use a Local Rule to waive or modify a Rule of Golf simply because it might prefer a Rule to be different.

Examples of Local Rules that are not authorized include:

- Allowing the use of non-conforming clubs.
 - Extending the search time from three minutes to five minutes.
 - Allowing a player to have more than one caddie.
- f. Rule 1.3c(3) states that the Committee does not have the authority to apply penalties in a different way than stated in the Rules of Golf. Therefore a Committee must not use a Local Rule to waive, modify or apply a penalty.

Examples of Local Rules that would not be authorized include:

- Waiving the penalty for playing from the wrong teeing area if the player corrects the error within one minute of making the stroke.
 - Reducing the penalty for making a stroke with a non-conforming club from disqualification to the general penalty.
 - Applying a penalty of one stroke for a player failing to notify another player that they are going to lift a ball to identify it.
- g. Where a Local Rule is based on the Model Local Rules, the Committee may seek assistance in interpreting the Local Rule from The R&A. But where the Committee has written its own Local Rule, it is matter for the Committee to interpret that Local Rule.
- h. If a Local Rule is introduced because of a temporary situation, it should be removed as soon as the situation no longer requires the use of the Local Rule.
- i. The Model Local Rules in Section 8 cover the situations and issues that arise often enough to justify having a model form. Occasionally, a Local Rule may be warranted where no model language has been provided. Where this is the case, the Committee should write the Local Rule in clear and simple terms. But most importantly, the Local Rule should be aligned with the purpose statements in the Rules of Golf and Model Local Rules.

For example, allowing free relief from divot holes in the fairway is not aligned with the central principle of playing the course as you find it and the ball as it lies, as established in the Purpose of Rule 1.

If the Committee believes that a Local Rule not covered by these guidelines may be needed because of local abnormal conditions that interfere with fair play, it should consult with The R&A.

(2) *Communication of Local Rules*

The Committee should ensure that any Local Rules are made available to the players whether on the scorecard, through a Notice to Players or by digital methods of communication.

Where a shorthand version of the full text of the Model Local Rule is provided, for example on the back of the scorecard, the Committee should ensure that the full text is available, for example on a noticeboard or on a website.

8A Course Boundaries and Out of Bounds

A-1 Common Ways of Defining Boundaries and Boundary Edges

Purpose. There are many ways in which a Committee may define the boundaries of the course and it is not appropriate or possible to provide a complete list of Local Rules that can be used for this purpose.

The key is to be clear and specific when defining boundaries in the Local Rules.

The most common method of defining boundaries is by using stakes, painted lines and existing fences. It is not necessary to describe every boundary in the Local Rules, but it is helpful to describe the methods used to define the boundaries. It is recommended that specific details are provided where the boundary might not be visually obvious and where the method used to define the boundary is less common. Some examples of how these may be described are provided below:

- “*Out of bounds* is defined by [insert methods of defining *out of bounds*, for example, white stakes, lines and fences].”
- “The boundary to the left of [specify hole number] is defined by the course-side edge of the white paint [lines | dots] [specify location, such as the pavement].”
- “The maintenance area between [specify hole numbers] is *out of bounds* as defined by the fence surrounding the area.”

See Sections 2A and 5B(1) for more information on defining out of bounds.

A-2 Clarifying Boundary When Using Wall, Road or Other Objects

Purpose. The definition of “out of bounds” clarifies that when a boundary is defined by a wall, road or other objects, the Committee should define the boundary edge.

Depending on the nature or condition of a wall, there may be good reasons for defining the boundary as being beyond the wall or, alternatively, using the course-side edge of the wall as the boundary.

Model Local Rule A-2.1

“The *course-side edge* of [identify object, for example, any wall or any road] defines the boundary of the *course*.”

Model Local Rule A-2.2

“A ball is *out of bounds* when it is beyond [identify object, for example, any wall or any road] defining the boundary of the *course*.”

Model Local Rule A-2.3

“The boundary on [specify hole number] is defined by [insert description of object or feature].”

A-3 Boundary Fence to be Treated in a Different Way

Purpose. When defined by a fence, the boundary edge is defined by the line between the course-side points of the fence posts at ground level (excluding angled supports), and those fence posts are out of bounds. But the Committee may choose to treat a boundary fence in a different way due to the nature of the fence, or vegetation surrounding the fence.

The Committee cannot change how the boundary is defined in relation to a line or stake.

Model Local Rule A-3

“A ball is *out of bounds* when it is beyond the fence [specify hole number] at ground level (excluding angled supports).”

A-4 Internal Out of Bounds

Purpose. For course design or safety reasons, a Committee can choose to specify that a particular part of the course is out of bounds during the play of a particular hole.

This is done to stop players who are playing that hole from playing to and from another part of the course. For example, on a dog-leg hole, an internal out of bounds may be used to prevent a player from cutting the dog-leg by playing a ball to the fairway of another hole.

But a Local Rule stating that a ball is out of bounds if it crosses a boundary, even if it re-crosses the boundary and comes to rest on the same part of the course, is not authorized because a ball is only out of bounds when it comes to rest out of bounds.

Model Local Rule A-4

“During play of [specify hole number], the [specify location or side] of the hole, defined by [insert description of method of defining *out of bounds*, for example, white stakes], is *out of bounds*.”

These [insert objects used to define *out of bounds*, for example, stakes] are *boundary objects* during the play of [specify hole number]. For all other holes, they are [immovable|movable] *obstructions*.”

A-5 Out of Bounds When Public Road Runs Through Course

Purpose. When a public road runs through a course, it is usually defined as out of bounds. This can make it possible for a ball played from one side of the road to come to rest in bounds on the other side of the road, even though that ball would be out of bounds if it came to rest on the road itself.

If the Committee believes that it is unfair or dangerous to treat those situations differently, it may adopt a Local Rule stating that a ball played from one side of the road that comes to rest on the other side of that road is out of bounds.

If a road crosses a particular hole where the players have to play from one side to the other in the normal course of play, the Committee should specify that this Local Rule does not apply to that road in the play of that hole.

Model Local Rule A-5

“A ball coming to rest on or beyond the road [identify the road or the holes where it comes into play] is *out of bounds*, even if it comes to rest on another part of the *course* that is in bounds for other holes.”

A-6 Stakes Showing Out of Bounds

Purpose. When out of bounds is defined by a line on the ground, a trench or in another way that might not be visible from a distance, the Committee may place stakes along the boundary to allow players to see where the boundary edge is from a distance.

Boundary objects may not be moved and free relief is generally not given, but the Committee may provide for relief from these stakes through the following Model Local Rule, which should also clarify the status of these stakes. If the Committee is defining the stakes as obstructions, it may define the stakes as immovable obstructions or movable obstructions.

It is recommended that such stakes be marked differently than other boundary stakes on the course, for example, white stakes with black tops may be used for this purpose.

Model Local Rule A-6

“Where a boundary is defined by [identify boundary, for example, a white line painted on the ground], white stakes with black tops have been placed for visibility. These stakes are [immovable | movable] *obstructions*.”

8B Penalty Areas

B-1 Defining Penalty Areas

Purpose. There are many ways in which a Committee can define penalty areas on the course and so it is not appropriate or possible to provide a complete list of Local Rules that can be used for this purpose.

The key is to be clear and specific when defining penalty areas in the Local Rules.

While it is a good practice to mark the edges of penalty areas using stakes and lines, there are times when the edge of the penalty area can be defined by a physical feature and by using language on the scorecard or Local Rules sheet. This should only be done when there will be no confusion about where the edge of the penalty area begins.

Some examples of how these may be described are provided below:

- “The red *penalty area* on [specify hole number] extends to and coincides with the boundary edge.”
- “The red *penalty area* on [specify hole number] defined on only one side extends to infinity.”
- “All desert areas are red *penalty areas* and the edge of the *penalty area* is where the grass and desert meet.”
- “All areas of lava are red *penalty areas*.”
- “Where an artificial wall surrounds the edge of a lake or other body of water, the *penalty area* is defined by the outside edge of the wall.”

When a penalty area is potentially in play for more than one hole, the Committee may choose to define it as a yellow penalty area during play of one hole to maintain the challenge of that hole. But, a Local Rule may be introduced to define the penalty area as red for the play of all other holes, where lateral relief is appropriate.

- “When playing the [specify hole number] the yellow *penalty area* on [specify other hole number] is to be played as a red *penalty area*.”
- “The yellow *penalty area* on [specify hole number] is to be played as a red *penalty area* when playing all other holes.”

See Sections 2C and 5B(2) for more information on defining penalty areas.

B-2 Relief on Opposite Side of Red Penalty Area

Purpose. Rule 17.1 gives a player the option to take lateral relief or back-on-the-line relief based on where their ball last crossed the edge of a red penalty area. But in some cases (for example, due to the location of the red penalty area right next to a course boundary), those options may leave the player with no reasonable option other than to take stroke-and-distance relief.

A Committee can introduce a Local Rule to allow lateral relief on the opposite side of the red penalty area as an extra relief option under Rule 17.1d.

When considering a Local Rule to allow additional relief:

- The Committee should consider introducing the Local Rule in situations when a player could be seriously disadvantaged if it was not introduced. Two such examples are:
 - » Where a boundary coincides with the edge of a penalty area down the side of a hole such that if a ball last crossed into the penalty area on the boundary side, the player would be likely to have no realistic relief option other than to play again under stroke and distance.
 - » Where the layout of the penalty area is such that there could be doubt as to where the ball last crossed into the penalty area and the decision on which side of the penalty area the ball last crossed has a considerable impact on where to take relief. This applies if a relatively narrow penalty area is bounded by bushes or thick rough on one side and fairway on the other.
- It is recommended that the Committee specify the location of specific penalty area(s) that the Local Rule applies to, rather than applying it to all red penalty areas on the course. This Local Rule should not be used to allow a player to use this opposite side relief option to get across a red penalty area to a more favourable location than is available if only normal lateral relief under Rule 17.1d is used.
- Where this option is available, it may also be desirable to mark the penalty area(s) in a special way such as putting a different coloured top on any stakes where the extra option is available, and this should be stated in the Local Rule.
- Instead of using this Local Rule, the Committee may decide to put one or more dropping zones in place (see Model Local Rule E-1).

Model Local Rule B-2.1

“If a player’s ball is in a *penalty area*, including when it is *known or virtually certain* to be in a *penalty area* even though not found, the player may take relief using one of the options under Rule 17.1d, each for **one penalty stroke**.

Or, if the ball last crossed the edge of the red *penalty area* on [specify hole number and location], as an extra relief option for **one penalty stroke**, the player may *drop* the original ball or another ball on the opposite side of the *penalty area*:

- Reference Point: The estimated point on the opposite edge of the *penalty area* that is the same distance from the *hole* as the estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the red *penalty area* such that a straight line between these two estimated points does not cross outside the *penalty area*.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: Two *club-lengths*, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
 - » Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
 - » May be in any *area of the course* except the same *penalty area*, **but**
 - » If more than one *area of the course* is located within two *club-lengths* of the reference point, the ball must come to rest in the *relief area* in the same *area of the course* that the ball first touches when *dropped* in the *relief area*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

Model Local Rule B-2.2

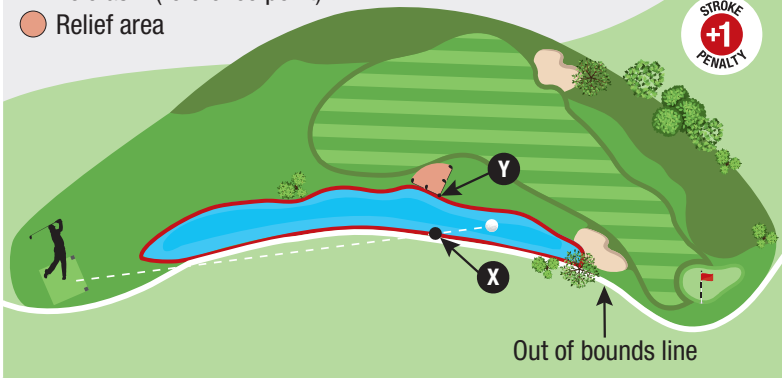
Model Local Rule B-2.1 applies but with the following amendment to the second paragraph:

“Or, if the ball last crossed the edge of a red *penalty area* that coincides with a boundary of the *course*, as an extra relief option for **one penalty stroke**, the player may *drop* the original ball or another ball on the opposite side of the *penalty area*.”

8B. Model Local Rules

MLR B-2.1 AND B-2.2: RELIEF ON OPPOSITE SIDE OF RED PENALTY AREA

- X** Point that ball entered the penalty area
- Y** Point on opposite edge the same distance from the hole as X (reference point)
-  Relief area



If it is known or virtually certain that the player's ball is in a red penalty area, the player may take relief using one of the options under Rule 17.1d or, as an extra relief option when Model Local Rule B-2.1 or B-2.2 is introduced, the player may also take lateral relief on the opposite edge of the penalty area for one penalty stroke.

Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
The estimated point (point Y) on the opposite edge of the penalty area that is the same distance from the hole as the estimated point (point X) where the original ball last crossed the edge of the red penalty area	Two club-lengths from the reference point	The relief area: • Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and • May be in any area of the course except the same penalty area

B-3 Provisional Ball for Ball in a Penalty Area

Purpose. Under Rule 18.3, a player is not allowed to play a ball provisionally if it is known or virtually certain that their ball is in a penalty area.

But in unusual cases, the size, shape or location of a penalty area may be such that:

- The player cannot see whether the ball is in the penalty area,
- It would unreasonably delay play if the player had to go forward to look for the ball before returning to play another ball either under penalty of stroke and distance or another option under Rule 17, and

- If the original ball is not found, it would be known or virtually certain that the ball is in the penalty area.

For such situations, to save time, a Committee may choose to modify Rule 18.3:

- Rule 18.3a is modified to allow the player to play a ball provisionally under Rule 17.1d(1), Rule 17.1d(2) or, for a red penalty area, Rule 17.1d(3).
- Rules 18.3b and 18.3c are modified to state when such a provisional ball must or may be played or abandoned, as stated in the Model Local Rule.

Model Local Rule B-3

“If a player does not know whether their ball is in the *penalty area* [identify location], the player may play a *provisional ball* under Rule 18.3, which is modified in this way:

In playing the *provisional ball*, the player may use the *stroke-and-distance* relief option (see Rule 17.1d(1)), the *back-on-the-line* relief option (see Rule 17.1d(2)) or, if it is a red *penalty area*, the *lateral relief* option (see Rule 17.1d(3)). If a dropping zone is available for this *penalty area* (see Model Local Rule E-1), the player may also use that relief option.

Once the player has played a *provisional ball* under this Local Rule, they may not use any further options under Rule 17.1 in relation to the original ball.

In deciding when that *provisional ball* becomes the player’s ball *in play* or if it must or may be abandoned, Rule 18.3c(2) and 18.3c(3) apply except that:

- When Original Ball Is Found in Penalty Area Within Three-Minute Search Time. The player may choose either to:
 - » Continue to play the original ball as it lies in the *penalty area*, in which case the *provisional ball* must not be played. All strokes with that *provisional ball* before it was abandoned (including *strokes* made and any penalty strokes solely from playing that ball) do not count, or
 - » Continue to play the *provisional ball* in which case the original ball must not be played.
- When Original Ball Is Not Found Within Three-Minute Search Time or Is Known or Virtually Certain to Be in Penalty Area. The *provisional ball* becomes the player’s ball *in play*.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty*.”

B-4 Defining Open Watercourse as Part of General Area

Purpose. If an open watercourse does not usually contain water (such as a drainage ditch or run-off area that is dry except during a rainy season), the Committee can define that area as part of the general area.

The Committee can also choose to mark such an open watercourse as a penalty area during times of the year when it contains water, or leave it as part of the general area, in which case any water that collects would be treated as temporary water. However, areas that would normally contain water should be marked as penalty areas throughout the year.

See Model Local Rule F-20 for when the open watercourse may be defined as an abnormal course condition.

Model Local Rule B-4.1

“The [describe specific watercourse and location, for example, ditch at the 6th hole] is to be treated as part of the *general area* and not as a *penalty area*.”

Model Local Rule B-4.2

“All [describe specific types of watercourses, such as concrete drainage ditches] are to be treated as part of the *general area* and not as a *penalty area*.”

B-5 Special Relief When Penalty Area Next to Bunker

Purpose. There may be particular holes where part of the edge of a red penalty area is so close to a bunker that a player taking lateral relief under Rule 17.1d(3) will need to drop a ball in the bunker.

In such a case, a Committee can choose to create an extra relief option allowing the player, for one penalty stroke, to take relief in a dropping zone positioned in the general area.

Model Local Rule B-5

“This Local Rule allows the use of a dropping zone as an extra relief option when:

- A player’s ball is in the red *penalty area* [identify location], including when it is *known or virtually certain* to be in the *penalty area* even though not found, [and if applicable]
- [describe where the ball must cross the edge of the *penalty area*, such as between two specially marked stakes].

In that case, the player has these relief options, each for **one penalty stroke**:

- The player may take relief under one of the options in Rule 17.1d, or
- As an extra option, the player may *drop* the original ball or another ball in the nearest dropping zone to the point where the ball last crossed the edge of the red *penalty area* and that is not nearer the *hole* than that point. The dropping zone is a *relief area* under Rule 14.3.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*

8C Bunkers

C-1 Clarifying Edge of Bunker

Purpose. When it may be difficult to determine the edge of a bunker due to wear, or when bunkers blend into areas of sand that are in the general area or in a penalty area, the Committee may need to define the edge of the bunker. Some examples of how these may be described are provided below:

- “The edge of the *bunker* [specify location and hole number, for example, the left of the 15th green] is defined by the outside edge of the [insert colour] stakes at ground level, and the stakes themselves are inside the *bunker*. The stakes are *movable obstructions*.”
- “The edge of the *bunker* [specify location and hole number] is defined by the [identify colour] line painted in the sand.”
- “The edge of the *bunker* to the right of [specify location and hole number] is defined by the groove that has been dug into the sand.”
- “Any areas of sand that have been prepared (for example, raked) are considered to be a part of a *bunker*.”

See Sections 2D and 5B(3) for more information on bunkers.

C-2 Changing Status of Areas of Sand

Purpose. The definition of “bunker” specifies that a Committee may define a prepared area of sand as part of the general area or define a non-prepared area of sand as a bunker by Local Rule.

Model Local Rule C-2.1

Defining a prepared area of sand as part of the general area:

“The prepared area[s] of sand [detail holes or locations] are part of the *general area* and are not *bunkers*.”

Model Local Rule C-2.2

Defining a non-prepared area of sand as a bunker:

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“The non-prepared area[s] of sand [detail holes or locations] are *bunkers* and not part of the *general area*.”

C-3 Clarifying Status of Material Similar to Sand when Material is not in a Bunker

Purpose. Bunkers on a course sometimes contain materials similar to sand, such as crushed shells or lava dust. Such materials are treated as sand when applying Rule 12. (See the definition of “bunker”).

For consistency, the Committee can choose to treat such materials as sand everywhere else on the course as well.

Model Local Rule C-3

“The [identify material such as crushed shell or lava dust] used to fill *bunkers* is treated as sand both when in a *bunker* and everywhere else on the *course*. This means that these materials are not *loose impediments*. A player must not improve the *conditions affecting the stroke* by removing these materials, except when they are on the *putting green* (see Rule 13.1c(1)).”

C-4 Declaring Practice Bunkers to Be Part of General Area

Purpose. When bunkers within the boundaries of the course are used for practising, they do not lose their status as bunkers by default. However, the condition of practice bunkers may be very poor because players frequently do not rake them. If the Committee wishes to provide relief to players, the bunker may be defined or marked as ground under repair which means it becomes part of the general area, allowing players to take free relief outside the bunker.

Model Local Rule C-4

“The practice *bunker* located [specify location] is *ground under repair* and is part of the *general area*. Free relief is available under Rule 16.1b.”

8D Putting Greens

D-1 Clarifying Edge of Putting Green

Purpose. There may be times when it is difficult for a player to determine if their ball is on the putting green because there is not a discernible difference in the height of the grass on the putting green compared to that on the apron. In cases like this, the Committee may choose to define the edges of putting greens with a painted line or dots.

Model Local Rule D-1

“The edges of *putting greens* are defined by [insert colour of lines | dots]. The dots/line are [on] [off] *the putting green* and free relief is not available from the dots/line.”

D-2 Status of Putting Green When Temporary Putting Green Is Used

Purpose. There may be times when a putting green for a hole cannot be used for some reason, for example due to bad weather, or for reasons related to repair or maintenance. When this is the case, the Committee may wish to prepare a temporary putting green and put a Local Rule in place to define this as the putting green used for that hole. The putting green that has been replaced by a temporary putting green automatically becomes a *wrong green* because it is no longer the putting green for the hole the player is playing.

Model Local Rule D-2

“Temporary *putting greens* are used as *putting greens* on holes [insert hole numbers] as defined by [insert description, for example, the areas of fairway surrounded by white lines]. Any *putting green* that has been replaced by a temporary *putting green* is a *wrong green* and free relief from interference must be taken under Rule 13.1f.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*”

D-3 Prohibiting Relief from Wrong Green When Only Stance Interference Exists

Purpose. There may be situations where a Committee wishes to deny a player relief from a wrong green when the only interference is to the player’s stance, for example:

- There is thick rough close to some putting greens and the Committee considers that it would be unfair to require a player to take relief into such areas, or
- One large green is used as the putting green for two separate holes, but the Committee decides to divide the green. It may also choose not to require a player whose ball is on the putting green for the hole being played to take relief when their stance is on the other putting green.

Model Local Rule D-3.1

“Rule 13.1f is modified in this way:

Interference does not exist if a *wrong green* only interferes with the player’s stance.”

Model Local Rule D-3.2

“Rule 13.1f is modified in this way:

When a player’s ball lies on the *putting green* of [specify hole number], interference does not exist for the player’s *stance* on the *putting green* of [specify hole number] or the reverse.”

D-4 Prohibiting Play from Fringe of Wrong Green

Purpose. If balls played on a particular hole often come to rest on the green of a nearby hole:

- The nearest point of complete relief when taking relief from that wrong green under Rule 13.1f will usually be on the apron or fringe next to that green, and
- That apron or fringe may become damaged as a result.

To prevent such damage, the Committee can choose to require players to take relief under Rule 13.1f by reference to a modified nearest point of complete relief that avoids interference with both the wrong green and the apron or fringe or by using a dropping zone (see Model Local Rule E-1).

Model Local Rule D-4.1

“When playing [specify hole number], if the player must take relief under Rule 13.1f because their ball came to rest on the *putting green* of [specify hole number] or that *putting green* interferes with their *stance* or area of intended swing:

- In finding the *relief area* to be used when taking this relief, the *putting green* of [specify hole number] is defined to include the area of fairway within [specify distance such as two *club-lengths*] from the edge of the *putting green*.
- This means that the *nearest point of complete relief* must avoid interference from this area in addition to the *putting green*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*”

Model Local Rule D-4.2

“*Wrong greens* are treated as including [specify distance from edge of *wrong green*/area around *wrong green*]. When a player has interference from a *wrong green* under Rule 13.1f, including this expanded area, the player must take free relief.

[Interference does not exist when the area only interferes with the player’s *stance*.]

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

D-5 Status of Practice Green or Temporary Green

Purpose. Wrong greens include practice greens for putting or pitching by definition, but the Committee may choose to allow play from them by Local Rule (meaning that a player whose ball lies on such a green must play it from there).

A temporary green for a hole is typically part of the general area when it is not in use, but the Committee may wish to clarify its status or declare it to be a wrong green. The Committee may also define a practice green or temporary green to be ground under repair which would allow a player to take free relief under Rule 16.1b.

Model Local Rule D-5.1

“The practice green located [insert details of where the green is located] is not a *wrong green* and free relief is not required or allowed under Rule 13.1f.”

Model Local Rule D-5.2

“The temporary green located [insert details of where the green is located] is a *wrong green* even when not in use and relief must be taken under Rule 13.1f.”

Model Local Rule D-5.3

“The practice green located [insert details of where the green is located] is not a *wrong green* and free relief is not required to be taken under Rule 13.1f, but it is *ground under repair* and a player may take free relief under Rule 16.1b.”

D-6 Dividing a Double Green into Two Separate Greens

Purpose. When a course has a green that serves as the putting green for two holes, the Committee may wish to divide the green into two separate greens through a Local Rule. This would require a player who is on the wrong portion of the green to take relief under Rule 13.1f. The method of defining the separation should be specified. This Local Rule may be modified such that interference does not exist when the wrong green only interferes with the player’s stance for cases where the player’s ball is on the correct portion of the green but their stance is on the other portion of the green.

Model Local Rule D-6

“The green serving holes [specify hole numbers] is considered to be two separate greens divided by [specify method such as coloured stakes]. A player who has interference with the portion of the green for the hole not being played is on a *wrong green* and must take relief under Rule 13.1f.

[Interference does not exist when the *wrong green* only interferes with the player’s *stance*.]

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

8E Special Relief Procedures

E-1 Dropping Zones

Purpose. A dropping zone is a special relief area that may be adopted by the Committee. When taking relief in a dropping zone, the player must drop a ball in and have it come to rest in the dropping zone. Dropping zones should be considered when there may be practical problems with players using the normal relief options under a Rule, such as:

- Rule 13.1f – Wrong Green.
- Rule 16.1 – Abnormal Course Conditions (Including Immovable Obstructions).
- Rule 16.2 – Dangerous Animal Condition.
- Rule 17 – Penalty Areas.
- Rule 19 – Unplayable Ball.
- Model Local Rule E-5 – Alternative to Stroke and Distance for Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds.
- Model Local Rule F-23 – Temporary Immovable Obstructions.

The following points apply when dropping a ball in a dropping zone:

- The player does not have to stand in the dropping zone when dropping the ball.
- When a player is using a dropping zone, the relief area is defined by that dropping zone and the ball must be dropped in and come to rest in the dropping zone (see Rule 14.3).
- If the dropping zone is defined by a line on the ground, the line is inside the dropping zone.

The Committee may provide more than one dropping zone for certain situations, such as for a large penalty area. Where this is the case, the

Committee should specify which dropping zone to use, such as the nearest dropping zone, or the nearest dropping zone not nearer the hole.

See Section 21 for additional information regarding dropping zones.

Model Local Rules have been provided for two of the most common uses of dropping zones, however these may be adapted as appropriate for the other Rules mentioned above.

Model Local Rule E-1.1

This Model Local Rule covers the example of a dropping zone used as an extra option for taking relief from a penalty area.

“If a player’s ball is in the [identify colour if restricting use] *penalty area* [identify location], including when it is *known or virtually certain* to be in that *penalty area* even though not found, the player has these relief options, each for **one penalty stroke**:

- The player may take relief under Rule 17.1, or
- As an extra option, the player may *drop* the original ball or another ball in the dropping zone [describe how the dropping zone is defined and where located]. The dropping zone is a *relief area* under Rule 14.3.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

Model Local Rule E-1.2

This Model Local Rule covers the example of a dropping zone used as an extra option for taking relief from an abnormal course condition such as a large area of ground under repair.

“If a player’s ball is in the *ground under repair* [identify location], including when it is *known or virtually certain* that a ball that has not been found is in the *ground under repair*, the player has these relief options:

- The player may take relief under Rule 16.1, or
- As an extra option, the player may take free relief by *dropping* the original ball or another ball in the dropping zone [describe how the dropping zone is defined and where located]. The dropping zone is a *relief area* under Rule 14.3.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

Model Local Rule E-1.3

This Model Local Rule covers the example of a dropping zone used as the only relief option available (other than stroke and distance) for taking relief

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from a penalty area, but it may be adapted for any other Rule mentioned above.

“If a player’s ball is in the [identify colour if restricting use] *penalty area* [identify location], including when it is *known or virtually certain* to be in that *penalty area* even though not found, the player has these relief options, each for **one penalty stroke**:

- The player may take *stroke-and-distance* relief under Rule 17.1d(1), or
- The player may *drop* the original ball or another ball in the dropping zone [describe how the dropping zone is defined and where located]. The dropping zone is a *relief area* under Rule 14.3.

The player must not take relief under Rules 17.1d(2) or 17.1d(3).

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

E-2 Cleaning Ball

Purpose. When ground conditions may cause mud to stick to the ball, the Committee can choose to allow the player to mark, lift, clean and replace the ball in the general area. Such relief should be limited to those portions of the course where needed.

While the Local Rule for Preferred Lies (Model Local Rule E-3) is designed for use only in areas cut to fairway height or less in the general area, this Local Rule can be used throughout the general area or restricted to specific areas. The Committee could choose to use both Local Rules, permitting preferred lies in the fairways and cleaning the ball elsewhere in the general area.

It is not authorized to implement this Local Rule once play has begun for a stroke-play round. Doing so would allow players who had more holes to play the advantage of using it for a longer period of time. The Local Rule may be implemented once a match has begun between the play of two holes as opponents have an equal benefit.

For guidance on when and how this Local Rule may be used in order for acceptable scores to be submitted for handicap purposes (for example, if it must be limited to fairway only), consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction.

Model Local Rule E-2

“When a player’s ball lies in [identify area, such as the *general area*, at the 6th hole, in the *general area* cut to fairway height or less, etc.], the ball may be lifted, cleaned and *replaced* without penalty. The player must *mark*

the spot of the ball before lifting it (see Rule 14.1) and the ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (see Rule 14.2).

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*

E-3 Preferred Lies

Purpose. When temporary abnormal conditions might interfere with fair play, the affected parts of the course can be defined as ground under repair. But adverse conditions such as heavy snows, spring thaws, prolonged rains or extreme heat can sometimes damage the course or prevent use of heavy mowing equipment.

When such conditions are widespread on the course, the Committee can choose to adopt a Local Rule for “preferred lies” to allow fair play or help protect some or all fairways. Such a Local Rule should be withdrawn as soon as conditions allow.

The use of this Local Rule outside the fairway in the general area is not recommended as it may result in a player receiving free relief from areas where a ball might otherwise be unplayable (such as in areas of bushes or trees).

When conditions such as wet ground throughout parts of the course may cause mud to stick to the ball, rather than using a Local Rule for “preferred lies”, the Committee may choose to allow the player to mark, lift, clean and replace the ball in the general area (see Model Local Rule E-2).

It is not authorized to implement a Local Rule for preferred lies once play has begun for a stroke-play round. Doing so would allow players who have more holes to play the advantage of using it for a longer period of time. The Local Rule may be implemented once a match has begun between the play of two holes as opponents have an equal benefit.

For guidance on when and how this Local Rule may be used in order for acceptable scores to be submitted for handicap purposes (including the size of the relief area and if it may only be used in the fairway), consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction.

Model Local Rule E-3

“When any part of a player’s ball touches part of the *general area* cut to fairway height or less [or identify a specific area such as on the fairway of the 6th hole], the player may take free relief once by placing the original ball or another ball in and playing it from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: Spot of the original ball.

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- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: [Specify size of *relief area*, such as one *club-length*, one scorecard length or 6 inches] from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
 - » Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
 - » Must be in the *general area*.

In proceeding under this Local Rule, the player must choose a spot to place the ball and use the procedures for *replacing* a ball under Rules 14.2b(2) and 14.2e. **But** for the purposes of applying Rule 14.2e, the player has only chosen the spot on which to place the ball once the ball has been set down, and the player has let the ball go with the intent for that ball to be *in play*.

After a ball has been placed and is *in play* under this Local Rule, if the player then proceeds under another Rule that provides relief, this Local Rule may be used again.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

E-4 Relief from Aeration Holes

Purpose. Aeration holes do not fall within the meaning of holes made by the maintenance staff or “damage on the putting green” in Rule 13.1c. Therefore players are not allowed to repair them on the putting green or take free relief from them in the general area or on the putting green, but such holes can interfere with the proper playing of the game.

If the Committee declares aeration holes to be ground under repair, a player may find it impractical or impossible to obtain complete relief. Therefore, when aeration holes may significantly interfere with the lie of the ball, the Committee can choose to give relief for a ball that lies in or touches an aeration hole. This Local Rule should be withdrawn when the aeration holes have healed enough to avoid significant interference.

Model Local Rule E-4

“If a player’s ball lies in or touches an aeration hole:

- (a) Ball in General Area. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b. If the ball comes to rest in another aeration hole the player may take relief again under this Local Rule.
- (b) Ball on Putting Green. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1d.

But interference does not exist if the aeration hole only interferes with the player’s *stance* or area of intended swing or, on the *putting green*, on the player’s *line of play*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

E-5 Alternative to Stroke and Distance for Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds

Purpose. When a provisional ball has not been played, significant issues with pace of play can result from a player needing to take stroke-and-distance relief for a ball that is out of bounds or cannot be found. The purpose of this Local Rule is to allow a Committee to provide an extra relief option that allows a player to play on without returning to the location of the previous stroke.

The Local Rule is appropriate for general play where golfers are playing casual rounds or playing their own competitions. The Local Rule is not appropriate for competitions limited to highly skilled players (that is, professional competitions and elite amateur competitions). For guidance on when and how this Local Rule may be used in order for acceptable scores to be submitted for handicap purposes, consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or the other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction.

Where a Committee has introduced such a Local Rule for general play, and removes it for competitions, it should ensure that all players are aware of this before play begins.

A Committee may introduce such a Local Rule for all play on the course or only for one or two specific holes where it may be especially useful (for example, where players are unable to see the landing area and therefore may not know whether or not to play a provisional ball).

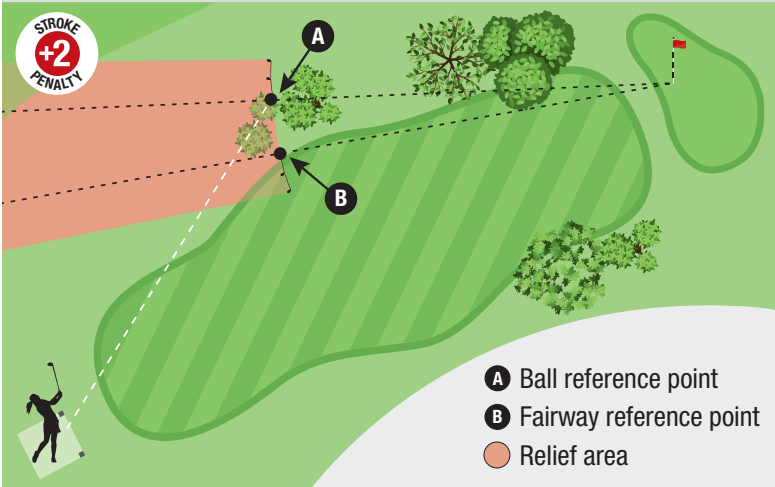
This option allows the player to drop in a large area between the point where the ball is estimated to have come to rest or gone out of bounds and the edge of the fairway of the hole being played that is not nearer the hole.

The player gets two penalty strokes when using this relief option. This means that the relief is comparable to what could have been achieved if the player had taken stroke-and-distance relief.

This Local Rule cannot be used for an unplayable ball, or for a ball that is known or virtually certain to be in a penalty area.

If a provisional ball is played and neither the original ball nor the provisional ball are found, then the Local Rule may be applied for the provisional ball that cannot be found.

MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 1: BALL NOT FOUND

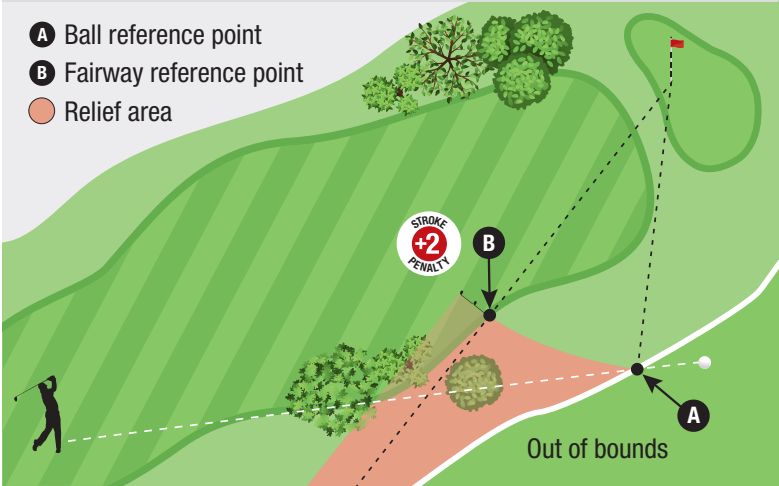


When a player's ball has not been found, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

Reference Points	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have come to rest on the course (point A) B. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point	Anywhere between: • A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line), and • A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line)	The relief area: • Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and • Must be in the general area

Player Notes:
As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.

MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 2: BALL OUT OF BOUNDS



When a player's ball is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

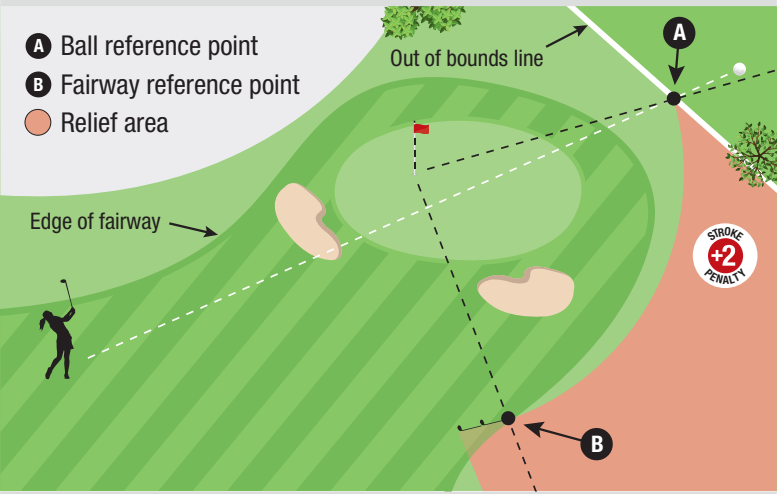
Reference Point	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have last crossed the edge of the course boundary to go out of bounds (point A) B. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point	Anywhere between: • A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line but still on the course), and • A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line)	The relief area: • Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and • Must be in the general area

Player Notes:

As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.

MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 3:

BALL NOT FOUND OR OUT OF BOUNDS
CLOSE TO GREEN



When a player's ball has not been found or is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds, the player may take stroke-and-distance relief, or when Model Local Rule E-5 is introduced, the player has the additional option to drop a ball in and play from the relief area described below for two penalty strokes:

Reference Points	Size of Relief Area	Limits on Relief Area
A. Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have come to rest on the course or last crossed the edge of the course boundary to go out of bounds (point A) B. Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played (point B) that is nearest to the ball reference point, but is not nearer the hole than the ball reference point	Anywhere between: • A line from the hole through the ball reference point (point A) (and within two club-lengths to the outside of that line), and • A line from the hole through the fairway reference point (point B) (and within two club-lengths to the fairway side of that line)	The relief area: • Must not be nearer the hole than the ball reference point, and • Must be in the general area

Player Notes:
As the relief area is likely to be very large, the ball could roll a considerable distance from the spot where it first strikes the ground and not need to be dropped again.

Model Local Rule E-5

“When a player’s ball has not been found or is *known or virtually certain* to be *out of bounds*, the player may proceed as follows rather than proceeding under *stroke and distance*.

For **two penalty strokes**, the player may take relief by *dropping* the original ball or another ball in this *relief area* (see Rule 14.3):

Two Estimated Reference Points:

(a) Ball Reference Point: The point where the original ball is estimated to have:

- Come to rest on the *course*, or
- Last crossed the edge of the *course* boundary to go out of bounds.

(b) Fairway Reference Point: The point of fairway of the hole being played that is nearest to the ball reference point, **but** is not nearer the *hole* than the ball reference point.

For purposes of this Local Rule, “fairway” means any part of the *general area* cut to fairway height or less.

If a ball is estimated to be *lost* on the course or last crossed the edge of the *course* boundary short of the fairway, the fairway reference point may be a grass path or a teeing ground for the hole being played cut to fairway height or less.

Size of Relief Area Based on Reference Points: Anywhere between:

- A line from the *hole* through the ball reference point (and within two *club-lengths* to the outside of that line), and
- A line from the *hole* through the fairway reference point (and within two *club-lengths* to the fairway side of that line).

But with these limits:

Limits on Location of Relief Area:

- Must be in the *general area*, and
- Must not be nearer the *hole* than the ball reference point.

Once the player puts a ball *in play* under this Local Rule:

- The original ball is no longer *in play* and must not be played.
- This is true even if the ball is found on the *course* before the end of the three-minute search time (see Rule 6.3b).

But the player may not use this option to take relief for the original ball when:

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- That ball is *known or virtually certain* to have come to rest in a *penalty area*, or
- The player has played another ball provisionally under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.3).

A player may use this option to take relief for a *provisional ball* that has not been found or is *known or virtually certain* to be *out of bounds*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

E-6 Line of Play Relief for Protective Fence

Purpose. A fence (or similar protective screen) is sometimes used to protect players on one hole from shots played at another hole.

If such a fence is close to the playing area for another hole, the Committee can choose to use a dropping zone or zones to give a player an extra relief option without penalty when they are playing that other hole and the fence is on the line of play.

The player should be entitled to relief only when the ball is nearer the hole than a dropping zone, so that a player whose ball is well away from the fence is not allowed to move forward to the dropping zone. The Committee should take this into consideration when positioning the dropping zone or zones to ensure that this relief will be available only for situations where it believes such free relief is justified.

Model Local Rule E-6

“During play of the [specify hole number], if the protective fence on the [specify hole number] is on a player’s *line of play* the player may take free relief by *dropping* a ball in and playing it from the dropping zone [describe location].

But this relief is only allowed if the ball is *in play* nearer the *hole* than where the dropping zone is located (see Rule 14.3).

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

E-7 Relief from Electric Boundary Fence

Purpose. Where an electric fence is used as a boundary object, a Local Rule providing free relief for a ball lying within a certain distance (for example, two club-lengths) of the boundary fence is allowed. In these circumstances, to ensure the safety of the player, the player can measure the two club-lengths from the fence and has a one club-length relief area in which to drop the ball no nearer the hole than where the ball originally lay.

Model Local Rule E-7

“If a player’s ball lies on the *course* and within [specify distance, such as two *club-lengths*] of the electric boundary fence on hole[s] [specify location(s)], the player may take free relief using the procedure in Rule 16.1, **but** based on this reference point:

- The point that is [specify distance, such as two *club-lengths*] from the fence and an equal distance from the *hole* to the spot of the original ball.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*”

E-8 Defining No Play Zones

Purpose. There may be some parts of the course where the Committee wishes to prohibit play, in which case each part must either be defined as part of an abnormal course condition or a penalty area.

The Committee can use no play zones for any reason, such as:

- To protect wildlife, animal habitats, and environmentally-sensitive areas.
- To prevent damage to young trees, flower beds, turf nurseries, re-turfed areas or other planted areas.
- To protect players from danger.
- To preserve sites of historical or cultural interest.

See Sections 2G and 5B(5) for more information on No Play Zones and how to mark them distinctively.

Model Local Rule E-8.1

“The area defined by [specify how the area is marked, for example, with blue stakes with green tops] [specify where it is located, for example, on the right of the fairway on hole 8] is a *no play zone* that is treated as an *abnormal course condition*. Relief must be taken from interference by the *no play zone* under Rule 16.1f.”

Model Local Rule E-8.2

“The area within the [red /yellow] *penalty area* defined by [specify how the area is marked and where it is located, for example, with red / yellow stakes with green tops on the right of hole 8] is a *no play zone* that is treated as a *penalty area* and relief must be taken from interference by the *no play zone* under Rule 17.1e.”

E-9 Defining an Area of Out of Bounds as a No Play Zone

Purpose. Although a player may not play a ball from out of bounds, there may be areas that are out of bounds that the Committee may wish to

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designate as no play zones, for example, to stop players from damaging anything growing in that area when it interferes with the play of a ball on the course. In this case, a player must take free relief if the player's ball is on the course but their area of intended stance is in the no play zone out of bounds or if their swing touches something that is in the no play zone.

Model Local Rule E-9

"The [identify the area] is *out of bounds* and is defined as a *no play zone* and the player must take relief under Rule 16.1f(2) if their ball is on the *course* and anything in the *no play zone* interferes with the player's area of intended *stance* or swing. The player must not play the ball as it lies.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a."

E-10 Protection of Young Trees

Purpose. To help prevent damage to young trees when a player makes a stroke, a Committee can choose to designate the young trees as no play zones so that:

- If a player has any type of interference as defined in Rule 16.1 from such a tree designated as a no play zone, they must take relief under Rule 16.1f.
- If the player's ball lies in a penalty area, they must either take free relief under the Local Rule within the penalty area or proceed with penalty under Rule 17.1.

Similarly, the Committee may mark a collection of young trees as a single no play zone.

Alternatively, the Committee may choose to define young trees to be abnormal course conditions so that the player is not required to take relief.

In either case, such trees should be identified by stakes, tape, or in some other clear way.

When the tree has matured and no longer needs this protection, the Committee should withdraw the Local Rule and/or remove the identifying object from the tree.

Model Local Rule E-10.1

"The young trees identified by [identify markings] are *no play zones*:

- If a player's ball lies anywhere on the *course* other than in a *penalty area* and it lies on or touches such a tree or such a tree interferes with the player's area of intended *stance* or area of intended swing, the player must take relief under Rule 16.1f.

- If the ball lies in a *penalty area*, and interference to the player's *stance* or area of intended swing exists from such a tree, the player must take relief under Rule 17.1e.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a."

Model Local Rule E-10.2

"The young trees identified by [identify markings] are *abnormal course conditions*. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a."

E-11 Ball Deflected by Power Line

Purpose. If a permanent overhead power line may interfere with the reasonable play of a hole, a Committee can require that if a ball hits the power line (and towers, support wires or poles supporting the power line), the stroke does not count and the player must play the stroke again. This Local Rule should not generally be used for power lines that do not interfere with play of a hole or are out of bounds.

A Local Rule that gives a player the option to replay the stroke for a ball that hits a power line is not authorized.

Model Local Rule E-11

"If it is *known or virtually certain* that a player's ball hit [describe the structure, for example, a power line, tower, wire or pole supporting a power line] during the play of [specify hole number], the player must replay the *stroke* by playing the original ball or another ball from the spot where that *stroke* was made (see Rule 14.6).

If the player replays the *stroke* but does so from a *wrong place*, they get the **general penalty** under Rule 14.7.

If the player does not replay the *stroke*, they get the **general penalty** and the *stroke* counts, but the player has not played from a *wrong place*."

E-12 Compulsory Use of Fairway Mats

Purpose. It may be necessary to protect parts of the course from damage during play, such as when prolonged periods of cold weather are limiting the amount of grass growth. When this is the case, a Committee may decide to require the use of mats on parts of the general area cut to fairway height or less, when a putter is not being used for the stroke.

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The use of this Local Rule outside the fairway in the general area is not recommended and it is not authorized to restrict the use of putters to specific areas.

For guidance on when and how this Local Rule may be used in order for acceptable scores to be submitted for handicap purposes, consult the rules or recommendations contained within the World Handicap System™ publications or other guidance as provided by the handicapping body in the local jurisdiction.

Model Local Rule E-12

“When a player’s ball lies in a part of the *general area* cut to fairway height or less and a putter is not being used for the *stroke*, the player must take free relief by lifting the original ball and placing the original ball or another ball on an artificial mat and play it from there. The mat must be placed on top of the spot where the ball came to rest.

If a ball when placed rolls off the mat, the player must try to place it a second time. If the ball again does not stay on the mat, the mat must be moved to the nearest spot, not nearer the *hole*, where the ball will come to rest on the mat when placed.

If the ball on the mat is accidentally moved before a *stroke* is made, there is no penalty and the ball must be placed again on the mat.

If a tee is used to secure the mat into the ground, the ball must not be placed on the tee.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

8F Abnormal Course Conditions and Integral Objects

F-1 Defining Abnormal Course Conditions and Integral Objects

Purpose. There are many ways in which a Committee can define abnormal course conditions and integral objects on the course and so it is not appropriate or possible to provide a complete list of Model Local Rules that can be used for this purpose.

The key is to be clear and specific when defining abnormal course conditions and integral objects in the Local Rules.

The Committee may adopt Local Rules for the following purposes without the need for them to fit with the Model Local Rules:

- Clarifying the status of uncommon objects as obstructions.
- Declaring any artificial object to be an integral object (and not an obstruction).

- Declaring artificial surfaces and edges of roads to be integral objects.
- Declaring roads and paths that don't have artificial surfaces and edges to be obstructions if they could unfairly affect play.
- Defining temporary obstructions on the course or next to the course as movable, immovable or temporary immovable obstructions.

No specific Model Local Rules are included in this section given the variety of options available, but some examples are provided below:

- “*Ground under repair* is defined by any area encircled by a white line [or insert other colour or description as appropriate].”
- “*Ground under repair* includes exposed rocks in areas cut to fairway height or less [or within a stated distance of the fairway, such as two club-lengths].”
- “Areas in *bunkers* where sand has been removed by the movement of water resulting in deep furrows through the sand are *ground under repair*.”
- “Mats that are secured and plastic cable ramps that are covering cables are *immovable obstructions*.”
- “Protective fences around greens are *immovable obstructions*.”
- “The rails on split rail fences are [*movable or immovable*] *obstructions*.”
- “Retaining artificial walls and pilings when located in *penalty areas* are *integral objects*.”
- “Wires and other objects [closely] attached to trees are *integral objects*.”

See Sections 2F and 5B(4) for more information on abnormal course conditions.

See Sections 2H and 5B(4) for more information on integral objects.

F-2 Limited Relief for Embedded Ball

Purpose. Rule 16.3 normally allows relief whenever a ball is embedded anywhere in the general area (other than in sand in areas that are not cut to fairway height or less).

But a Committee may choose:

- To allow relief only when a ball is embedded in a part of the general area cut to fairway height or less.
- Not to allow free relief for a ball embedded in the wall or lip of a bunker (such as a stacked turf or soil face).

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Model Local Rule F-2.1

“Rule 16.3 is modified in this way:

Free relief is allowed only when a ball is *embedded* in part of the *general* area that is cut to fairway height or less.

[Stacked turf faces above *bunkers* are not cut to fairway height or less for the purpose of this Rule.]

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

Model Local Rule F-2.2

“Rule 16.3 is modified in this way:

Free relief is not allowed when a ball is *embedded* in [stacked turf faces] [soil faces] above *bunkers*.”

F-3 Ground Under Repair Treated as Part of Nearby Obstruction

Purpose. Ground under repair may be located right next to an immovable obstruction. For example, when a flower bed that the Committee has defined to be ground under repair is surrounded by an artificially surfaced cart path or when cart traffic causes damage next to a cart path.

This can lead to complicated relief situations. After taking relief from one condition, a player may find that there is now interference by the other condition; and after taking relief from that other condition, the player may find that the first condition once again interferes.

Although the definition of “nearest point of complete relief” contemplates this scenario, the Committee can choose to treat both conditions as a single abnormal course condition to allow the player to take relief in one step. When this is done, the areas of ground under repair should either be connected to the immovable obstruction by white lines or should be defined in some other clear way.

This Model Local Rule gives examples of how to address situations of this type:

Model Local Rule F-3.1

When white lines are used to mark the ground under repair:

“Where white-lined areas of *ground under repair* are tied into [artificially surfaced road or path or other identified *obstruction*], they are treated as a single *abnormal course condition* when taking relief under Rule 16.1.”

Model Local Rule F-3.2

When white lines are not used to mark the ground under repair:

“Where areas of damaged ground are right next to [artificially surfaced road or path or other identified *obstruction*] they are treated as a single *abnormal course condition* when taking relief under Rule 16.1.”

Model Local Rule F-3.3

For decorative planted areas such as flower beds surrounded by an immovable obstruction such as a cart path:

“Where a [describe area, such as decorative planted areas] is surrounded by an artificially surfaced road or path (including everything growing within that area), they are treated as a single *abnormal course condition* when taking relief under Rule 16.1.”

F-4 Extensive Damage Due to Heavy Rain and Traffic

Purpose. When heavy rain has resulted in many areas of unusual damage to the course (such as deep ruts caused by vehicles or deep footprints caused by spectators), and it is not feasible to define them with stakes or lines, the Committee has the authority to declare such unusual damage to be ground under repair.

Model Local Rule F-4

“*Ground under repair* may include areas of unusual damage, including areas where spectators or other traffic have combined with wet conditions to alter the ground surface materially, but only when so declared by an authorized *referee* or member of the *Committee*.”

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*”

F-5 Immovable Obstructions Close to Putting Greens

Purpose. When a ball lies anywhere other than on the putting green, an immovable obstruction on the player’s line of play is not, of itself, interference under Rule 16.1. Free relief is normally not allowed.

But if the aprons or fringes of putting greens are cut short enough that putting from off the green is likely to be a common choice of stroke, immovable obstructions that are close to the putting green may interfere with such strokes.

In that case, the Committee can choose to give an extra relief option under Rule 16.1 when a player’s ball lies in the general area and an immovable obstruction close to the putting green is on the player’s line of play.

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The Committee may limit such relief to certain situations, such as only for particular holes or obstructions, or only when the ball and the obstruction are in part of the general area cut to fairway height or less.

Model Local Rule F-5.1

“Relief from interference by an *immovable obstruction* may be taken under Rule 16.1.

The player has an extra option to take relief when such *immovable obstructions* are on or close to the *putting green* and on the *line of play*:

Ball in General Area. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b if an *immovable obstruction* is:

- On the *line of play*, and is:
 - » On or within two *club-lengths* of the *putting green*, and
 - » Within two *club-lengths* of the ball.

But complete relief must be taken, which includes both physical and *line of play* interference.

Exception – No Relief If Line of Play Clearly Unreasonable. There is no relief under this Local Rule if the player chooses a *line of play* that is clearly unreasonable.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

Model Local Rule F-5.2

Model Local Rule F-5.1 applies but with the following addition to the second paragraph:

“This Local Rule only applies when both the ball and the *obstruction* are in part of the *general area* cut to fairway height or less.”

F-6 Prohibiting Relief from Abnormal Course Condition When Only Stance Interference Exists

Purpose. A Committee may wish to deny relief for interference with the player’s stance from some conditions such as animal holes, as interference to the stance does not significantly affect the stroke or if relief for interference with the stance could result in repeatedly taking relief from nearby similar conditions.

Model Local Rule F-6

“Rule 16.1a(1) is modified in this way:

Relief is not allowed if [insert condition from which relief is restricted] only interferes with the player's stance."

F-7 Relief from Seams of Cut Turf

Purpose. A portion of the course that has been repaired with cut turf is often marked as ground under repair until it is stable enough for play.

But when the area of turf itself no longer needs to be marked as ground under repair, the Committee may still choose to allow relief when:

- A ball lies in one of the cut turf seams (also known as sod seams).
- A seam interferes with the player's area of intended swing.

When such seams only interfere with the player's stance, there is no need to allow relief.

Model Local Rule F-7

"If a player's ball lies in or touches a seam of cut turf or a seam interferes with the player's area of intended swing:

- (a) Ball in General Area. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b.
- (b) Ball on Putting Green. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1d.

But interference does not exist if the seam only interferes with the player's stance.

All seams within the area of cut turf are treated as the same seam in taking relief. This means that if a player has interference from any seam after *dropping* the ball, the player must proceed as required under Rule 14.3c(2) even when the ball is still within one *club-length* of the reference point.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a."

F-8 Relief from Cracks in Ground

Purpose. In certain conditions, parts of the course may suffer due to cracks in the ground. The lie of a ball could be seriously affected if it comes to rest in such a crack, but a player's stance may not be hindered by the condition, in which case a Local Rule that gives relief for the lie of ball and area of intended swing only is recommended.

Model Local Rule F-8

"Cracks in the ground [specify areas of the course, such as in parts of the general area cut to fairway height or less] are ground under repair. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b.

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[**But** relief is not allowed if the crack only interferes with the player's stance.]

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a."

F-9 Relief from Tree Roots in or Close to Fairway

Purpose. In the unusual situation where exposed tree roots are found in the fairway, it may be unfair to prohibit the player from taking relief from the roots. The Committee can choose to treat such tree roots as ground under repair from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1b.

In some circumstances where exposed tree roots are found close to the fairway, the Committee can also choose to treat such tree roots within a specified distance from the edge of the fairway (for example four club-lengths), as ground under repair from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1b.

In doing so, the Committee can choose to limit relief to interference with the lie of ball and the area of intended swing.

Model Local Rule F-9

"If a player's ball lies in the *general area* and there is interference from exposed tree roots that are [specify *area of the course*, such as in a part of the *general area* cut to fairway height or less or in the rough within a certain number of *club-lengths* from the edge of the area cut to fairway height or less], the tree roots are treated as *ground under repair*. The player may take free relief under Rule 16.1b.

[**But** relief is not allowed if the tree roots only interfere with the player's stance.]

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a."

F-10 Damage by Animals

Purpose. There may be times when animals cause damage to the course that is so widespread that it is not practical to mark all the damaged areas as ground under repair. Also, some types of animal damage may not be covered by Rule 16.1.

This Model Local Rule shows how the Committee can choose to address these issues.

If animals, including insects, create damage on a course, the Committee can choose to treat such damage as ground under repair from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1. This is done by defining the areas or the condition rather than attempting to mark all the areas of damage.

A Committee can choose to limit relief only for damage that interferes with the lie of the ball or the area of intended swing.

Model Local Rule F-10

“Areas of damage in [specify the *areas of the course*, such as, the *general area*] caused by [type of *animal*] are treated as *ground under repair* from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1b.

[**But** relief is not allowed if the damage only interferes with the player’s *stance*.]

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-11 Ant Hills

Purpose. Ant hills are loose impediments and may be removed under Rule 15.1. They are not animal holes from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

But there are situations when ant hills are difficult or impossible to remove (such as when large, hard or conical in shape). In that case, the Committee can adopt a Local Rule giving the player an option to treat such ant hills as ground under repair.

It is not necessary to adopt such a Local Rule for fire ants as fire ants are considered a dangerous animal condition and free relief is available under Rule 16.2.

Model Local Rule F-11

“[Describe the types of ant hills] ant hills on the *course* are, at the player’s option, *loose impediments* that may be removed under Rule 15.1 or *ground under repair* from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-12 Animal Dung

Purpose. The dung of a bird or other animal is a loose impediment that may be removed under Rule 15.1.

But if there is concern with the effect of dung on fair play, the Committee can give players the option of treating dung as ground under repair from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

If treating the dung as ground under repair will not necessarily give full relief when a ball is on the putting green, a Committee can also allow players to use a greens switch/whip or similar maintenance equipment to

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remove the dung from the line of play without penalty, even if doing so improves the line of play or other conditions affecting the stroke.

Model Local Rule F-12

“At the player’s option, dung from [specify dung from which relief would be given, for example, goose dung, dog dung] may be treated either as:

- A loose impediment that may be removed under Rule 15.1, or
- Ground under repair from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

[If dung is found on the *putting green*, the player may also use the greens switch/whip located by the *putting greens* to remove the dung from the *line of play*. If doing so *improves the line of play* or other conditions affecting the stroke, there is no penalty under Rule 8.1a.]

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-13 Animal Hoof Damage

Purpose. The hoofs of animals such as deer or elk can cause damage on the course. This damage can be repaired on the putting green (see Rule 13.1), but free relief is not available elsewhere on the course. A Committee may wish to allow players to take relief from this damage as ground under repair without having to mark all such areas.

Since damage caused by animals may be repaired on the putting green the Committee can declare such damage as ground under repair or allow players to repair it.

Model Local Rule F-13

“Damage that is caused by *animal hoofs* is *ground under repair* from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

[**But** on the *putting green*, Rule 16.1 does not apply and such damage may be repaired under Rule 13.1.]

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-14 Accumulations of Loose Impediments

Purpose. At certain times of the year, piles of loose impediments such as leaves, seeds or acorns may make it difficult for a player to find or play their ball. A Committee can choose to treat such piles of loose impediments in the general area or in a bunker as ground under repair from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

This Local Rule may not be used for penalty areas as relief is not available for abnormal course conditions in penalty areas.

The Local Rule should be limited to the hole(s) where problems are created by such loose impediments and should be withdrawn as soon as conditions allow.

Model Local Rule F-14

“During play of the [specify hole number], any ground with temporary accumulations of [identify types of *loose impediments*] in the *general area* or in a *bunker* is treated as *ground under repair* from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*”

F-15 Mushrooms on Putting Green

Purpose. If mushrooms growing on the putting green may interfere with fair play, the Committee can treat them as ground under repair so that a player may take free relief under Rule 16.1d.

Model Local Rule F-15

“Mushrooms that are attached on the *putting green* are *ground under repair* from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1d.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*”

F-16 Bunker Filled with Temporary Water

Purpose. If a bunker or multiple bunkers are filled with temporary water, free relief under Rule 16.1c may not be sufficient to allow for fair play as players may be limited to taking maximum available relief or relief outside the bunker for one penalty stroke. A Committee can choose to treat certain bunkers as ground under repair in the general area so that free relief is allowed outside the bunker.

The Committee should only use this Local Rule for specifically identified bunkers and is not authorized to make a Local Rule providing generally that all bunkers filled with temporary water are ground under repair. The rationale for this is that individual bunkers may change from being completely flooded to partially flooded during the round, and it would be inappropriate for some players to get free relief from a bunker treated as ground under repair in the general area, whereas other players have to treat it as a bunker as it is not completely flooded at the time their ball is in it.

Model Local Rule F-16

“The *bunker* filled with *temporary water* on [insert location of *bunker*, for example, left of 5th green] is *ground under repair* in the *general area*. It is not treated as a *bunker* during the *round*.

The player may take free relief under Rule 16.1b.

All other *bunkers* on the *course*, whether they contain *temporary water* or not, are still *bunkers* for all purposes under the Rules.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-17 All Roads and Paths Treated as Obstructions

Purpose. Where roads or paths that are not artificially surfaced may interfere with fair play, the Committee can choose to designate such roads as immovable obstructions from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

Model Local Rule F-17

“All roads and paths on the *course* [or identify particular types or locations], even if not artificially-surfaced, are treated as *immovable obstructions* from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-18 Treating Movable Objects to Be Immovable

Purpose. The Committee can choose to treat certain movable objects on the *course*, such as all stakes (other than boundary stakes), bins and directional poles, to be immovable so as to discourage players from moving them.

The implications of this Local Rule should be fully considered by the Committee in advance as it may result in players breaching Rule 8.1 by moving an obstruction that is treated as immovable.

Model Local Rule F-18

“All stakes [or identify the *movable obstructions* that are to be considered *immovable*] on the *course* are treated as *immovable obstructions* from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1. Relief is not allowed to be taken under Rule 15.2.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty.”

F-19 Edging Grooves Near Putting Greens

Purpose. Edging grooves are sometimes cut on the apron or fringe of the putting green to keep grasses from creeping onto the putting green. Because it can be difficult to play a ball from such grooves, a Committee can choose to treat them as ground under repair from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

Relief should be allowed only for interference with the lie of the ball or the area of intended swing.

Model Local Rule F-19

“The edging grooves around the aprons or fringes of *putting greens* are *ground under repair*. If a player’s ball lies in or touches a groove or a groove interferes with the area of intended swing:

- (a) Ball in General Area. The player may take free relief under Rule 16.1b.
- (b) Ball on (including touching) the Putting Green. The player may take free relief under Rule 16.1d.

But interference does not exist if the edging groove only interferes with the *line of play* or with the player’s *stance*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-20 Concrete Drainage Channels

Purpose. Narrow concrete drainage channels are sometimes found on courses where flooding is common. This can create issues for play because:

- These channels are penalty areas as defined in the Rules.
- They often run next to cart paths and are more like immovable obstructions than penalty areas.

The Committee can choose to treat these drainage channels as immovable obstructions in the general area rather than as penalty areas.

See Model Local Rule B-4 for when an open watercourse can be defined to be part of the general area.

Model Local Rule F-20

“Drainage channels that are made of artificial materials and run next to cart paths are treated as *immovable obstructions* in the *general area* and are part of the cart path. A player may take free relief under Rule 16.1b.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

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F-21 Painted Lines or Dots

Purpose. If the Committee puts paint lines or dots down on the putting green or in a part of the general area cut to fairway height or less (for example, for distance markings), it may treat those areas as abnormal course conditions from which free relief is available under Rule 16.1.

When such paint lines or dots only interfere with the player's stance, there is no need to allow relief.

Alternatively, the Committee can choose to clarify that there is no free relief available from such paint lines or dots.

Model Local Rule F-21.1

"Painted lines or dots on the *putting green* or in a part of the *general area* cut to fairway height or less are to be treated as *ground under repair* from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1.

But interference does not exist if painted lines or dots only interfere with the player's *stance*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a."

Model Local Rule F-21.2

"Free relief is not allowed from painted lines or dots [describe area, for example, in areas where the grass is not cut to fairway height or less].

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a."

F-22 Temporary Lines and Cables

Purpose. Temporary lines and cables are often placed on the course to provide power and communications for a competition. These cables may be on the surface of the ground or above or below the ground. Such lines and cables are not normally present and are not part of the challenge of playing the course, so the Committee may choose to provide extra relief when they interfere with play.

Model Local Rule F-22

"Temporary lines and cables for power and communications (and mats covering or poles supporting them) are *obstructions*:

1. If they can be moved with reasonable effort and without damaging the *obstruction* or the *course*, they are *movable obstructions* and a player may remove them without penalty under Rule 15.2.

2. Otherwise they are *immovable obstructions* from which the player may take relief as follows:
 - (a) Ball in General Area or in Bunker. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1.
 - (b) Ball in Penalty Area. Rule 16.1b is modified to allow the player the extra option to take free relief from interference by these *immovable obstructions* in a *penalty area* by dropping a ball and playing it from this relief area:
 - Reference Point: The *nearest point of complete relief* in the *penalty area*.
 - Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: One *club-length*, **but** with these limits:
 - Limits on Location of Relief Area:
 - » Must be in the *penalty area* in which the ball came to rest,
 - » Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
 - » There must be complete relief from all interference by the *immovable obstruction*.
3. If it is *known or virtually certain* that a player's ball hits a temporary elevated line or cable, the player must replay the *stroke* by playing the original ball or another ball from the spot where that *stroke* was made (see Rule 14.6).

If the player replays the *stroke* but does so from a *wrong place*, they get the **general penalty** under Rule 14.7.

If the player does not replay the *stroke*, they get the **general penalty** and the *stroke* counts, but the player has not played from a *wrong place*.

- 4. Grass-covered trenches for temporary lines or cables in the *general area* are *ground under repair*, even if not marked. The player may take free relief under Rule 16.1.

But there are two exceptions:

Exception 1 – Ball Strikes Elevated Cable That Rises from Ground: If a ball hits an elevated section of cable rising from the ground, the *stroke* counts, and the ball must be played as it lies.

Exception 2 – Ball Strikes Wires Supporting Temporary Immovable Obstruction: Guy wires supporting a temporary *immovable obstruction* (TIO) are part of the TIO and are not covered by this Local Rule, unless the *Committee* states that the guy wires are to be treated as temporary elevated lines or cables under this Local Rule.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-23 Temporary Immovable Obstructions

Purpose. When obstructions are temporarily placed on or next to the course, the Committee should specify whether they are movable obstructions (see Rule 15.2), immovable obstructions (see Rule 16.1) or temporary immovable obstructions (“TIOs”).

TIOs (such as a grandstand or a tent) are not normally present and are not considered to be part of the challenge of playing the course. Because of their temporary nature, this Local Rule provides an additional relief option that is not allowed from immovable obstructions, although the player can still choose to treat the TIO as if it were an immovable obstruction and use the relief procedures available in Rule 16.1.

The additional relief provided by this Local Rule includes the ability for a player to take relief when the TIO is located on the straight line between their ball and the hole (known as “line of sight relief”) by moving sideways, keeping the same distance from the hole, so that the TIO is no longer between the player’s ball and the hole (also known as moving along the “equidistant arc”).

When a player takes relief from a TIO, whether under this Local Rule or the relief procedures in Rule 16, the player is guaranteed complete relief from physical interference. But only when relief is taken using the additional relief option under this Local Rule will the player normally be guaranteed complete relief from line of sight interference from the TIO.

Model Local Rule F-23

“Definition of TIO: A temporary *immovable obstruction* (TIO) is a structure that is temporarily placed on or next to the *course*, usually for a particular competition, and is fixed or does not meet the definition of *movable obstruction*.

Examples of TIOs are temporary tents, scoreboards, grandstands, television towers and toilets.

TIOs include any supporting guy wires connected to them, except when the *Committee* decides the supporting guy wires are to be treated as *immovable obstructions* or as temporary elevated lines or cables using Model Local Rule F-22.

The outermost edge of the TIO is used in determining whether a ball is under the TIO or whether the TIO is on the player’s line of sight between the ball and the *hole*.

Lines or stakes may be used to define the edges of a TIO or to connect multiple TIOs into a single, larger TIO.

A TIO is different from an *immovable obstruction* and this Local Rule provides additional relief from interference by a TIO. This means that the player can choose to take relief by using either:

- The procedure for taking relief from an *abnormal course condition* in Rule 16.1, as if the TIO were an *immovable obstruction* (this relief is also available when the ball lies in a *penalty area* or when the TIO is *out of bounds*), or
- The additional relief option available under this Local Rule.

a. When Relief Is Allowed

Relief from a TIO is normally allowed when there is physical interference or line of sight interference from the TIO.

Interference under this Local Rule means that the player has:

- Physical interference,
- Line of sight interference, or
- Both physical and line of sight interference.

(1) Meaning of Physical Interference by Temporary Immovable Obstruction. Physical interference exists when:

- The player's ball touches or lies in or on a TIO, or
- The TIO interferes with the player's area of intended *stance* or area of intended swing.

(2) Meaning of Line of Sight Interference by Temporary Immovable Obstruction. Line of sight interference exists when:

- The player's ball touches or lies in, on or under a TIO, or
- The TIO is on the player's line of sight to the *hole* (that is, the TIO is located on the straight line between the ball and the *hole*), or
- The ball is within one *club-length*, measured on an equidistant arc from the *hole*, of a spot where the TIO would be on the player's direct line of sight to the *hole* (this one *club-length* wide area is commonly referred to as the "corridor").

(3) When No Relief Is Available Despite Having Interference. If the ball touches or is in or on the TIO, relief is always available.

But when the ball neither touches nor is in or on the TIO, there is **no** relief under this Local Rule if any of the following applies:

- From either physical interference or line of sight interference:

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- » There is no relief when playing the ball as it lies would be clearly unreasonable because of something from which the player is not allowed to take free relief (such as when the player is unable to make a *stroke* because of where the ball lies in a bush outside the TIO), and
- » There is no relief when interference exists only because the player chooses a club, type of *stance* or swing or direction of play that is clearly unreasonable under the circumstances; and
- From line of sight interference:
 - » There is no relief when it is clearly unreasonable for a player to play the ball far enough that the ball will reach the TIO, and
 - » There is no relief when the player cannot show that there is a *stroke* that they could reasonably make that would both (a) have the TIO (including the corridor) on the line of that *stroke*, and (b) result in the ball finishing on a direct line to the *hole*.

b. Relief from Interference for Ball in General Area

If the player's ball is in the *general area* and there is interference by a TIO (including a TIO located *out of bounds*), the player may take free relief by *dropping* the original ball or another ball in and playing it from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: The *nearest point of complete relief* where both physical and line of sight interference no longer exist.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: The entire area within one *club-length* from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
 - » Must be in the *general area*,
 - » Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
 - » There must be complete relief from both physical and line of sight interference by the TIO.

If the player has physical interference from the TIO, instead of using this relief procedure they may choose to take relief using the procedure for taking relief from an *abnormal course condition* in Rule 16.1, treating the TIO as if it were an *immovable obstruction*. The relief procedure under Rule 16.1 is also available when the ball lies in a *penalty area* or when the TIO is *out of bounds*. See Clause f of this Local Rule for how the player may proceed under other relief Rules.

c. Relief from Interference from Ball in Bunker or Penalty Area

If the player's ball is in a *bunker* or a *penalty area* and there is interference by a TIO (including a TIO located *out of bounds*), the player may take either free relief or penalty relief:

(1) Free Relief: Playing from Bunker or Penalty Area. The player may take free relief as provided in Clause b, **except that** the *nearest point of complete relief* where interference no longer exists, and the *relief area* must be in that *bunker* or *penalty area*.

If there is no such point in that *bunker* or *penalty area* where interference no longer exists, the player may still take this relief as provided above by using the *point of maximum available relief* in the *bunker* or the *penalty area* as the reference point.

(2) Penalty Relief: Playing from Outside Bunker or Penalty Area. For **one penalty stroke**, the player may *drop* the original ball or another ball in and play it from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: The *nearest point of complete relief* not nearer the *hole* where both physical and line of sight interference no longer exist that is outside that *bunker* or *penalty area*.
- Size of Relief Area from Reference Point: The entire area one *club-length* from the reference point, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
 - » Any area of the course other than in that *bunker* or *penalty area* or on the *putting green*,
 - » Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
 - » There must be complete relief from both physical and line of sight interference by the TIO.

If the player has physical interference from the TIO, instead of using this relief procedure they may choose to take relief using the procedure for taking relief from an *abnormal course condition* in Rule 16.1c, treating the TIO as if it were an *immovable obstruction*.

The relief procedure under Rule 16.1b is also available when the TIO is *out of bounds* or the ball lies in a *penalty area*. If a ball lies in a *penalty area*, the reference point and *relief area* must be in that *penalty area*.

See Clause f of this Local Rule for how the player may proceed under other relief Rules.

d. Relief When Ball in TIO Not Found

If the player's ball has not been found but is *known or virtually certain* to have come to rest in a TIO:

- The player may take relief under this Local Rule by using the estimated point where the ball last crossed the edge of the TIO on the *course* as the spot of the ball for purposes of finding the *nearest point of complete relief*.
- Once the player puts another ball *in play* to take relief in this way:
 - » The original ball is no longer *in play* and must not be played.
 - » This is true even if it is then found on the *course* before the end of the three-minute search time (see Rule 6.3b).

But if it is not *known or virtually certain* that the ball came to rest in the TIO, the player must play under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.2).

e. Committee Authority to Modify TIO Relief Procedures

When adopting this Local Rule, the *Committee* may modify the relief procedures in Clauses b and c in either or both of the following ways:

(1) Optional or Mandatory Use of Dropping Zones. The *Committee* may permit or require a player to use a dropping zone as the *relief area* for taking relief under this Local Rule. When doing so, the *Committee* may add the dropping zone for relief from only physical interference or only line of sight interference or it may be used for relief from both types of interference.

(2) “Either Side” Relief Option. The *Committee* may permit the player the option to take relief on the other side of a TIO in addition to the relief options allowed under Clauses b and c of this Local Rule. **But** the option to take relief on either side does not apply when using the procedures in Rule 16.1.

f. Player May Proceed Under Other Relief Rules

(1) Taking Relief by Using the Procedures in Rule 16.1 or this Local Rule. If a player has physical interference from the TIO as defined in Clause a, the player may either:

- Choose to use the relief procedures in Rule 16.1 or
- Use this Local Rule.

But the player may not take relief under one of these options and then take relief under the other.

If the player chooses to use the procedure for taking relief from an *abnormal course condition* in Rule 16.1, they must treat the TIO as if it is an *immovable obstruction* and take relief based on where the ball lies:

- In the general area using the procedures in Rule 16.1b.
- In a bunker using the procedures in Rule 16.1c.
- In a penalty area using the procedures in Rule 16.1c as if the ball lies in a *bunker*.
- On the putting green using the procedures in Rule 16.1d.

(2) Taking Relief under Rule 17, 18 or 19. This Local Rule does not prevent the player from taking relief under Rule 17, 18 or 19 rather than taking TIO relief under this Local Rule.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.”

F-24 Free Relief From Immovable Obstructions in Penalty Areas

Purpose. When a player’s ball is in a penalty area and the player has interference from an immovable obstruction, free relief is not available (see Rule 16.1a(2)). However, there may be instances where a Committee may wish to provide free relief within the penalty area from certain obstructions.

When using this Local Rule, the Committee should specify which immovable obstruction it applies to (rather than allowing free relief from all immovable obstructions) and on which hole it applies if it does not apply to all holes.

Model Local Rule F-24

“Relief from interference by [specify which *immovable obstruction(s)*] located in the *penalty area* on [specify hole number] is allowed under Rule 16.1b, with the following modifications:

- Reference Point: The *nearest point of complete relief* must be in the *penalty area*.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: One *club-length*, but with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
 - » Must be in the *penalty area* in which the ball came to rest,
 - » Must not be nearer the *hole* than the reference point, and
 - » There must be complete relief from all interference by the *immovable obstruction*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a*”

F-25 Nearest Point of Complete Relief to be Determined Without Crossing Over, Through or Under Abnormal Course Condition

Purpose. There are times when a player may have interference from an abnormal course condition, such as a narrow fence or wall, and their nearest point of complete relief may be on the other side of the abnormal course condition, which may have a significant and undesirable impact on the outcome of the relief.

Although the player is allowed to measure their club-lengths across or through objects, the Committee may wish to require that the nearest point of complete relief be determined without crossing over, through or under the abnormal course condition.

The Committee may also wish to use this Model Local Rule to prevent players from being able to measure across or through an object.

Model Local Rule F-25.1

“When taking relief under Rule 16.1, the *nearest point of complete relief* must be determined without crossing over, through or under the [specify *abnormal course condition* and hole number].

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a*.”

Model Local Rule F-25.2

“When taking relief from [specify *abnormal course condition* and hole number], the *relief area* must be on the same side of the *abnormal course condition* as the reference point.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a*”

F-26 Gates in Boundary Fences and Walls

Purpose. If a Committee wants to prohibit players from getting free relief from closed gates in boundary fences or walls (such as when it is an entrance to a private property) they may treat such a gate as part of the boundary object when in a closed position.

The implications of this Local Rule should be fully considered by the Committee in advance as it may result in players breaching Rule 8.1 by moving the gate.

Model Local Rule F-26

“All closed gates that are attached to boundary walls and fences are part of the *boundary object*. Relief is not allowed from such a gate under Rules 15.2 or 16.1.

But an open gate is not treated as part of the *boundary object* and may be closed or moved to a different position.”

8G Restrictions on Use of Specific Equipment

G-1 List of Conforming Driver Heads

Purpose. To remove any doubt that drivers being used in a competition are conforming, a Committee can choose to require players to use only drivers with clubheads that have been evaluated and approved as conforming under the Equipment Rules. A List of Conforming Driver Heads is found at RandA.org.

This Local Rule is recommended for use only in competitions limited to highly skilled players (that is, professional and elite amateur competitions).

Even if this Local Rule is not in place, any driver used must conform to the requirements in the Equipment Rules.

Model Local Rule G-1

“Any driver the player uses to make a *stroke* must have a clubhead, identified by model and loft, which is on the current List of Conforming Driver Heads issued by The R&A.

This list is regularly updated and is found at RandA.org.

Exception – Pre-1999 Driver Heads: A driver with a clubhead that was made before 1999 is exempt from this Local Rule.

Penalty for Making a Stroke with Club in Breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.

There is no penalty under this Local Rule for carrying but not making a *stroke* with a driver that is not on the List of Conforming Driver Heads.”

G-2 Groove and Punch Mark Specifications

Purpose. Effective 1 January 2010, the Equipment Rules were revised to provide new groove and punch mark specifications for all clubs other than drivers and putters. Until four years’ notice is given, clubs made before 2010 are not required to meet these specifications.

But a Committee may choose to adopt a Local Rule requiring players to use only clubs that meet all the specifications included in the current Equipment Rules. This is recommended for use only in competitions

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limited to highly skilled players (that is, professional and elite amateur competitions).

An Equipment Database can be found at RandA.org to assist in finding which clubs may be used.

Model Local Rule G-2

“In making a *stroke*, the player must use clubs that conform to the groove and punch mark specifications in the *Equipment Rules* that took effect on 1 January 2010.

An Equipment Database of fairway woods, hybrids, irons and wedges which have been tested for conformance to the current *Equipment Rules* is found at RandA.org.

Penalty for Making a Stroke with Club in Breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.

There is no penalty under this Local Rule for carrying but not making a *stroke* with a club which does not conform to these groove and punch mark specifications.”

G-3 List of Conforming Golf Balls

Purpose. To remove any doubt that the balls being used in a competition are conforming, a Committee may choose to require the player to use only balls which have been evaluated and approved as conforming under the Equipment Rules.

A List of Conforming Golf Balls is found at RandA.org and is updated monthly.

Even if this Local Rule is not in place, any ball used must conform to the requirements in the Equipment Rules.

Model Local Rule G-3

“Any ball used in making a *stroke* must be on the current List of Conforming Golf Balls issued by The R&A.

This list is regularly updated and is found at RandA.org.

If a ball that is not on the List of Conforming Golf Balls is *dropped, replaced* or placed but has not yet been played, the player may correct the mistake, without penalty, under Rule 14.5.

Penalty for Making a Stroke with a Ball Not on Current List in Breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.”

G-4 One Ball Rule

Purpose. To prevent a player from using balls with different playing characteristics depending on the nature of the hole or shot to be played during a round, the Committee can choose to require that a player use only a single type of ball that is on the List of Conforming Golf Balls.

Each individual listing on the List of Conforming Golf Balls is considered a different ball. Golf balls of different colours with identical markings are considered different balls.

This Local Rule is recommended for use only in competitions limited to highly skilled players (that is, professional competitions and elite amateur competitions).

Model Local Rule G-4

“During a *round*, each ball at which the player makes a *stroke* must be the same brand and model as found in a single entry on the current List of Conforming Balls.

If a different brand and/or model is *dropped*, *replaced* or placed but has not yet been played, the player may correct the mistake, without penalty, under Rule 14.5. When correcting the mistake, the player must use a ball of the same brand and model as used at the start of the *round*.

If a player discovers they have played a ball in breach of this Local Rule, they must revert to using a ball of the same brand and model as used at the start of the *round* when they play from the next *teeing area*; otherwise the player is **disqualified**.

If the discovery is made during the play of a hole, the player may complete play of this hole with the ball played in breach or place a ball of the correct brand and model on the spot where the ball played in breach of this Local Rule was lifted from.

Penalty for Making a Stroke at a Ball in Breach of Local Rule: The player gets **one penalty stroke** for each hole during which they are in breach of this Local Rule.”

G-5 Prohibiting Use of Distance-Measuring Devices

Purpose. Although Rule 4.3 allows players to use equipment to measure distance (subject to certain requirements), a Committee can choose to prohibit the use of any electronic distance-measuring devices.

Model Local Rule G-5

“Rule 4.3a(1) is modified in this way:

During a *round*, a player must not obtain distance information by using an electronic distance-measuring device.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – see Penalty Statement to Rule 4.3.”

G-6 Prohibiting Use of Motorized Transportation

Purpose. A Committee can choose to prohibit players from using any type of motorized transportation such as a golf cart during a round. This is appropriate when the Committee views walking as an integral part of playing in the competition or when it believes that the use of motorized transportation would be unsafe or might damage the course.

In adopting this Local Rule, the Committee can allow motorized transportation in limited ways, such as to take players from one hole to another when those holes are far apart or allowing members of the Committee to give a player a ride when they will play, or has played, again under penalty of stroke and distance.

If a player accepts a ride without the permission of the Committee, the Committee can waive the penalty if it would have authorized the player to ride in that situation had the request been made. For example, if a player who had lost a ball and needed to return to the teeing area accepted a ride from a volunteer when there was no Committee member available, the Committee could waive the penalty if members of the Committee would have given the player the ride if asked.

But, when motorized transportation is not allowed by Local Rule, it is a principle of the Local Rule that players should walk the entire course, so authorization should not be given if a player has been given a ride forwards when they have not already walked that distance. For example, if a player stops to buy a refreshment after playing their tee shot, and then accepts a ride forward to their ball from a volunteer, the penalty under the Local Rule should not be waived.

Model Local Rule G-6

“During a *round*, a player or *caddie* must not ride on any form of motorized transportation **except** as authorized or later approved by the *Committee*.

[A player who will play, or has played, under penalty of *stroke and distance* is always authorized to ride on motorized transportation.]

[Players and *caddies* may ride on the shuttle between holes [identify hole] and [identify hole].]

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: The player gets the *general penalty* for each hole during which there is a breach of this Local Rule. If the breach occurs between the play of two holes, it applies to the next hole.”

G-7 Prohibiting Use of Certain Types of Shoes

Purpose. To protect the course from damage, the Committee can prohibit the use of shoes with metal or traditionally designed spikes.

The Committee also may prohibit the use of shoes with other features that may cause undesirable damage.

Model Local Rule G-7

“Rule 4.3a is modified in this way:

During a *round*, a player must not make a *stroke* while wearing shoes with:

- Traditional spikes – that is, spikes having single or multiple points designed to penetrate deeply into the surface of the ground (regardless of whether made of metal, ceramic, plastic or other materials); or
- Spikes of any design that are entirely or partially made of metal, if such metal may come in contact with the *course*.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – see Penalty Statement to Rule 4.3.”

G-8 Prohibiting or Restricting Use of Audio and Video Devices

Purpose. Rule 4.3a(4) permits a player to use equipment to listen to audio or watch video of matters unrelated to the competition being played. But the Committee can adopt a Local Rule prohibiting the use of audio and video devices altogether during a round.

Model Local Rule G-8

“Rule 4.3a(4) is modified in this way:

During a round, a player must not listen to or watch content of any nature on a personal audio or video device.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – see Penalty Statement to Rule 4.3.”

G-9 Replacing Club That is Broken or Significantly Damaged

Purpose. Rule 4.1a(2) allows a player to repair or replace a club that is damaged during the round, except in cases of abuse. But a Committee may adopt a Local Rule to restrict replacement of a club to cases where the club is broken or significantly damaged, which does not include a club that is cracked.

Model Local Rule G-9

“Rule 4.1a(2) is modified in this way:

Rule 4.1a(2) applies except that a club that is damaged by the player or their caddie during the *round* (including while play is stopped under Rule 5.7a) may only be replaced if it is “broken or significantly damaged”.

For the purposes of this Local Rule:

A club is “broken or significantly damaged” when:

- The shaft breaks into pieces, splinters or is bent (but not when the shaft is only dented),
- The club face impact area is visibly deformed (but not when the club face is only scratched or cracked),
- The clubhead is visibly and significantly deformed (but not when the clubhead is only cracked),
- The clubhead is detached or loose from the shaft, or
- The grip is loose.

Exception: A club face or clubhead is not “broken or significantly damaged” solely because it is cracked.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – See Rule 4.1b.”

G-10 Prohibiting Use of Clubs Longer than 46 Inches

Purpose. To limit the maximum allowable club-length, a Committee may choose to adopt a Local Rule which restricts the maximum length for clubs, other than putters, to 46 inches.

A measurement tolerance of 0.20 inches is allowed above 46 inches.

For an explanation of the measurement of a club, see Figure 3 under Part 2.1c of the Equipment Rules.

This Local Rule is recommended for use only in competitions limited to highly skilled players (that is, professional competitions and elite amateur competitions).

For the avoidance of doubt, when this Model Local Rule is in effect, the application of the physical need exception allowing a player to use clubs longer than 46 inches is not available.

Model Local Rule G-10

“In making a *stroke*, the player must not use a club, except for a putter, which exceeds 46 inches in length.

Penalty for Making a Stroke with a Club in Breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.

There is no penalty under this Local Rule for carrying but not making a *stroke with a club that does not conform to these length specifications.*”

G-11 Restricting Use of Green-Reading Materials

Purpose. Rule 4.3, and specifically Clarification 4.3a/1, puts limitations on the size and scale of detailed green-reading materials. But to ensure that players and caddies use only their eye and feel to help them read the line of play on the putting green, the Committee may further restrict the use of green-reading materials by requiring that players are limited throughout their round to using only the yardage book that has been approved for use in the competition.

This Local Rule is intended only for the highest levels of competitive golf and, even then, only to competitions where it is realistic for the Committee to undertake an approval process for yardage books.

When introducing this Local Rule, the Committee is responsible for approving the yardage book that players may use, and the approved yardage book should contain diagrams of putting greens with minimal detail only (such as significant slopes, tiers or false edges that indicate sections of greens).

Players and caddies may add handwritten notes to the approved yardage book to help them read the line of play on a putting green, so long as those notes are allowed under this Local Rule.

Model Local Rule G-11

“Rule 4.3a is modified in this way:

During a *round*, the player may use only the yardage book(s) approved by the *Committee*. This restriction also applies to any other maps of the *course*, including hole-location sheets.

Additional restrictions apply to handwritten notes and any other materials used by the player that could help read the *line of play* on the *putting green*:

- Handwritten notes may be added to an approved yardage book or approved hole-location sheet before or during the *round* by the player or the player’s *caddie* only and are limited to information gathered by the player or *caddie* only.
- Handwritten notes may contain information gained only through personal experiences of the player or the player’s *caddie* from the *course* or by watching a televised broadcast, but are limited to information gained:

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- » While observing a ball that was rolled or played (whether by the player, *caddie* or someone else), or
- » Through the player's or *caddie's* feel or general observations of the *putting green*.

These additional restrictions on handwritten notes or other materials do not apply to such information when they could not help the player read the *line of play* on the *putting green* (such as handwritten or printed information containing swing thoughts or listing carry distances for the player's clubs).

During a *round*, if a player uses:

- A yardage book, other maps of the *course* or a hole-location sheet that has not been approved by the *Committee*,
- An approved yardage book or approved hole-location sheet that contains a handwritten note or information gained in a manner that is not allowed, or
- Any other materials that could help with reading the *line of play* on the *putting green* (whether a specific *putting green* or greens in general),

the player is in breach of this Local Rule.

“Use” means to look at:

- Any page of a yardage book or other maps of the *course* or a hole-location sheet that has not been approved by the *Committee*, or
- Any of the following when doing so could help the player or *caddie* read the *line of play* on the *putting green*:
 - » A page in an approved yardage book or an approved hole-location sheet that contains a handwritten note or information gained in a manner that is not allowed, or
 - » Any other materials.

Penalty for Breach of this Local Rule:

- Penalty for first breach: **General Penalty**
- Penalty for second breach: **Disqualification.**”

G-12 Prohibiting Use of Materials to Help Read the Line of Play for Stroke from Putting Green

Purpose. Clarification 4.3a/1 limits the size and scale of detailed putting green maps and any similar electronic or digital materials that a player may use during a round to help with reading their line of play on the putting green so that a player's ability to read a green remains an essential part of the skill of putting. But a Committee may choose to place even greater

emphasis on the judgment, skills and abilities of the player to read their line of play on the putting green by prohibiting the use of any materials for such a purpose.

Model Local Rule G-12

“Rule 4.3a is modified in this way:

During a *round*, a player must not use any written, printed, electronic or digital materials to help with reading their *line of play* for any *stroke* to be made from the *putting green*.

Penalty for Breach of this Local Rule:

- Penalty for first breach: **General Penalty**
- Penalty for second breach: **Disqualification.**”

8H Defining Who May Help or Give Advice to Players

H-1 Use of Caddie Prohibited or Required; Caddie Restrictions

Purpose. A Committee may choose to modify Rule 10.3 to:

- Prohibit the use of caddies,
- Require players to use a caddie, or
- Limit a player’s choice of caddie (such as requiring the caddie to be an amateur, not allowing a parent, relative or another player in the competition, etc.).

Model Local Rule H-1.1

If caddies are not allowed:

“A player must not have a *caddie* during the *round*.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: The player gets the **general penalty** for each hole during which they have a *caddie*. If the breach happens or continues between two holes, the player gets the **general penalty** for the next hole.”

Model Local Rule H-1.2

If there are limits on who the player may have as a caddie:

“A player must not have [identify prohibited type of *caddie* for example, a parent or guardian] as their *caddie* during the *round*.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: The player gets the **general penalty** for each hole during which they are helped by such a *caddie*. If the breach

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happens or continues between two holes, the player gets the **general penalty** for the next hole.”

Model Local Rule H-1.3

If a player is required to have a caddie:

“A player must have a *caddie* during the *round*.”

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: The player gets the **general penalty** for each hole during which they do not have a *caddie*.”

H-2 Appointment of Advice Giver in Team Competitions

Purpose. Under Rule 24.4a, in a team competition, including where there are both team and individual competitions, the Committee can allow each team to name one or two people who may give advice to team members while they are playing on the course:

- Any “advice giver” must be identified to the Committee before giving advice.
- The Committee can limit the types of advice that this person may give (such as not allowing the advice giver to point out the line of play when a ball lies on the putting green).
- The Committee can prohibit an advice giver from walking on certain parts of the course (such as putting greens).
- It is not normal for a Committee to allow two advice givers per team, unless the nature of the competition warrants it, for example in a competition where no caddies are permitted or there is a large number of players on each team.
- The Committee should determine the appropriate penalty for a breach by an advice giver. This may be a penalty to a specific player who was assisted in a prohibited manner or an overall penalty for the team, for example the addition of two strokes to the team’s score in a stroke-play event.

Model Local Rule H-2

“Each team may name [one/two] advice giver[s] whom players on the team may ask for *advice* and receive *advice* from during the *round*. The team must identify each advice giver to the *Committee* before any player on the team begins their *round*.”

[The team may change its advice giver during the *round*, but must tell the *Committee* when it is doing so.]

[The advice giver must not point out a *line of play* [or walk on the *putting green*] when the ball of a team player lies on the *putting green*.]

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 10.2]

H-3 Restricting Who Can Be a Team Captain

Purpose. Under Rule 24.3, in a team competition the Committee can set limits on who may serve as a team captain and on the conduct of the team captain under Rule 24.4a. Where advice givers are allowed (see Model Local Rule H-2), the team captain may also be an advice giver.

Model Local Rule H-3

“A team captain must be [insert eligibility restriction, such as a member of the same club].”

H-4 Treating Advice Giver as Part of the Player’s Side

Purpose. The Committee can provide that the advice giver has the same status as a member of the side to ensure the Rules of Golf apply to that person’s actions (such as the player getting a penalty under Rule 9.4 if the advice giver causes the player’s ball to move).

Model Local Rule H-4

“The advice giver has the same status as a member of the *side* in relation to each member of their team.”

H-5 Advice: Team Members in Same Group

Purpose. Under Rule 24.4c, in stroke play where a player’s score for the round counts only as part of the team’s score, the Committee can adopt a Local Rule allowing team members playing in the same group to give each other advice even if they are not partners.

Model Local Rule H-5

“Rule 10.2 is modified in this way:

Where players from the same team are playing together in the same group, those players may give advice to and ask for advice from each other during the round.”

8I Defining When and Where Players May Practise

I-1 Practising Before Rounds

Purpose. Rule 5 covers practising on the course before, during and between competition rounds:

- **Match Play (Rule 5.2a).** Players in a match may practise on the course before or between rounds, as they usually will have an equal chance to do so because they play at the same time.

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- Stroke Play (Rule 5.2b). Players must not practise on the course before a round on the day of a competition, as they may not have an equal chance to do so because they usually play in different groups at different times. But they are allowed to practise on a day of the competition after their competition play for the day is complete.
- Match Play and Stroke Play (Rule 5.5b). After completing a hole and before starting the next hole, a player may putt or chip on or near the putting green of the hole just completed, the teeing area of the next hole or any practice green.

There are many different considerations about whether to allow practice on the course, such as fairness to the players, possible interference with set-up of the course and maintenance activities, the amount of time before or between rounds, or when players are encouraged to play on the course outside the competition.

For these or other reasons, a Committee can choose to adopt a Local Rule that modifies these default provisions by either allowing or prohibiting such practice entirely or by limiting when, where or how such practice may take place.

Model Local Rule I-1.1

“Rule 5.2a is modified in this way:

A player must not practise on the competition *course* before or between rounds.”

[Or, if players are allowed to practise in limited ways: Describe those limits and when, where and how a player may practise on the *course*.]

Penalty for Breach of this Local Rule:

- Penalty for first breach: **General Penalty** (applied to the player’s first hole).
- Penalty for second breach: **Disqualification.**”

Model Local Rule I-1.2

“Rule 5.2b is modified in this way:

A player may practise on the competition *course* before or between rounds.”

[Or, if players are allowed to practise in limited ways: Describe those limits and when, where and how a player may practise on the *course*.]

[Or, if players are prohibited from practising on the *course* both before and between rounds: “A player must not practise on the competition *course* before or between rounds.”]

I-2 Prohibiting Practising on or Near Previous Putting Green

Purpose. Rule 5.5b allows a player, between the play of two holes, to practise putting or chipping on or near the putting green of the hole just completed. But if this may affect pace of play or for other reasons (such as preventing players from practice putting to future hole locations), the Committee may choose to prohibit such practice. The Committee may also prohibit players from putting or chipping on or near any practice green between the play of two holes.

Model Local Rule I-2

“Rule 5.5b is modified in this way:

Between the play of two holes, a player must not:

- Make any practice *stroke* on or near the *putting green* of the hole just completed, or
- Test the surface of that *putting green* by rubbing the *putting green* or rolling a ball.
- [Make any practice *stroke* on or near any practice green.]

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty.*”

8J Procedures for Bad Weather and Suspensions of Play

J-1 Methods for Suspending and Resuming Play

Purpose. Rule 5.7b requires players to stop playing immediately if the Committee declares an immediate suspension of play. The Committee should use a distinct method of telling players about an immediate suspension.

The following signals are generally used, and it is recommended that all Committees use these signals where possible:

Immediate Suspension: One prolonged note of the siren.

Normal Suspension: Three consecutive notes of the siren.

Resume Play: Two short notes of siren.

Model Local Rule J-1

“A suspension of play for a dangerous situation will be signalled by [insert signal to be used]. All other suspensions will be signalled by [insert signal to be used]. In either case, resumption of play will be signalled by [insert signal to be used]. See Rule 5.7b.”

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J-2 Removal of Temporary Water

Purpose. A Committee may adopt a Local Rule that clarifies what actions are appropriate for a Committee member, someone designated by the Committee (for example, a member of the maintenance staff), or player, to remove temporary water on the putting green.

Model Local Rule J-2

“If a player’s ball lies on the *putting green* and there is interference by *temporary water on the putting green*, the player may:

- Take free relief under Rule 16.1d, or
- Have their *line of play* squeegeed.
- [Have the *putting green* squeegeed when a ball lies adjacent to the *putting green* in any area of the course, but only when authorized by the Committee.]

Such squeegeeing should be done across the *line of play* and extend a reasonable distance beyond the *hole* (that is, at least one roller length) and only be carried out by [specify who may carry this out, for example the maintenance staff].”

8K Pace of Play Policies

To encourage and enforce prompt play, the Committee should adopt a Local Rule setting a Pace of Play Policy. The following Model Local Rules give some examples of how the Committee can choose to address the issue of Pace of Play. The Committee can adopt other Local Rules to suit the resources available to them and so these are not an exhaustive list.

Other sample policies are available at RandA.org.

K-1 Maximum Time for All or Part of Round

Purpose. In competitions where there are few or no referees on the course, it may be desirable for the Committee to formulate a simple Local Rule that establishes a time limit that it considers adequate for players to complete the round and/or a certain number of holes. These time limits will vary depending on the numbers in groups and the form of play. If a group exceeds the prescribed time limit and is out of position on the course, each player in the group is subject to penalty.

Model Local Rule K-1

“If a group finishes the *round* [or specify number of holes] more than the starting interval behind the group in front and over [specify time, for example, 3 hours 45 minutes] from the time of starting [or specify as

required], all players in the group are subject to **one penalty stroke** [or specify as required].”

K-2 Hole-by-Hole and Shot-by-Shot Pace of Play Policy

Purpose. In competitions where there is an adequate number of referees on the course, the Committee can put a Pace of Play policy into effect that allows a set length of time for each hole, and then if players exceed that time, establishes a maximum time to play each stroke.

The Model Local Rule below is an example of a policy for a stroke play competition where players will be individually timed when the group is out of position.

A modified penalty structure which may be used in a pace of play policy is also detailed in Model Local Rule K-3.

Options for Being Out of Position

A group is out of position when it is over the allocated time for the holes that have been played and not in position with the group in front of them. When defining when a group is out of position the policy should specify when the group is considered out of position by reference to the group in front of them.

The policy provided in Model Local Rule K-2 defines out of position as being when the group is more than the starting interval behind the group in front of them.

Alternatively, the definition of out of position could be based on a group's location on the course in relation to the group in front, for example:

- All players in the group in front have played their strokes from the teeing area of the next hole before the group have reached the tee of a par 3, or
- A par 4 or par 5 hole is clear of play before all players in the group have played their strokes from the teeing area.

Time for Making a Stroke

When a group is being timed, each player must make their stroke within a specified time limit. The Committee may require all strokes to be made in the same amount of time or it may adopt the optional language shown below to allow an additional period of time for the first player to play from a specific area such as the teeing area or the putting green.

Bad Times in Multiple Round Stroke Play Competitions

For stroke play competitions over more than one round, the Committee may decide to carry bad times throughout the competition. For example, if a player gets a bad time under the Local Rule during the first round,

the next bad time in a later round would be the second bad time and the penalty for a second bad time would apply.

It would not be appropriate to carry bad times over from stroke play to match play or from one match to another in a match-play competition.

Model Local Rule K-2

“Maximum Allowable Time

The maximum allowable time is the maximum time considered necessary by the *Committee* for a group to complete its *round*. This is expressed in a per-hole and aggregate time format and includes all time associated with playing the game, for example, for rulings and walking times between holes.

The maximum time allotted for the completion of 18 holes at [insert course name] is [insert maximum time, for example, 4 hours and 05 minutes]. The following procedure applies only if a group is “out of position”.

Definition of Out of Position

The first group and any group after a starter’s gap will be considered “out of position” if, at any time during the *round*, the group’s cumulative time exceeds the time allowed for the number of holes played. Any following group will be considered out of position if it is [specify when a group is out of position to the group in front of them (see examples above)] [and has exceeded the time allowed for the number of holes played].

Procedure When Group is Out of Position

1. *Referees* will monitor pace of play and decide whether a group that is “out of position” should be timed. An assessment of whether there are any recent mitigating circumstances, for example, a lengthy ruling, *lost* ball, unplayable ball, etc. will be made.

If a decision is made to time the players, each player in the group will be subject to individual timing and a *referee* will advise each player that they are “out of position” and they are being timed.

In exceptional circumstances, an individual player, or two players within a group of three, may be timed instead of the entire group.

2. The maximum time allocated per *stroke* is [specify a time limit such as 40 seconds].

[10 extra seconds are allowed for the first player to play: a) a tee shot on a par 3 hole; b) an approach shot to the green; and c) a chip or putt.]

The timing will start when a player has had sufficient time to reach the ball, it is their turn to play and they are able to play without interference

or distraction. Time taken to determine distance and select a club will count as time taken for the next *stroke*.

On the *putting green*, timing will start when the player has had a reasonable amount of time to lift, clean and *replace* the ball, repair damage that interferes with the *line of play* and move *loose impediments* on the *line of play*. Time spent looking at the *line of play* from beyond the *hole* and/or behind the ball will count as part of the time taken for the next *stroke*.

Timings will be taken from the moment it is decided by the *referee* that it is the player's turn to play and they are able to play without interference or distraction.

Timing ceases when a group is back in position and players will be advised accordingly.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule:

- Penalty for first bad time: Verbal warning.
- Penalty for second bad time: **One penalty stroke.**
- Penalty for third bad time: **General Penalty** applied in addition to the penalty for the second bad time.
- Penalty for fourth bad time: **Disqualification.**

A player will be assessed a bad time in breach of this Local Rule only when they have exceeded the maximum time allocated per *stroke* while being timed. Until a player has been advised of a bad time, they cannot incur a further bad time.

Procedure When Again Out of Position During Same Round

If a group is “out of position” more than once during a *round*, the above procedure will apply on each occasion. Bad times and the application of penalties in the same *round* will be carried forward until the *round* is completed.”

Additional Options for Inclusion in Model Local Rule K-2

The following are optional additions which have not been included in Model Local Rule K-2, but these can be incorporated by a Committee as required:

- The definition of out of position may be amended to state that players must be given an official warning before being timed, for example to give the players at least a hole to improve their position.
- The procedure for when a group is out of position may be amended to provide that players are allowed a reasonable time to calculate their yardage before the clock is started.

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- The procedure when again out of position during the same round may be amended to provide that any bad times carry over to the end of the stroke play rounds of the competition.
- The policy may provide that at any time, if a player is observed by a referee to take longer than a specified time to play a shot (for example, 120 seconds), they will be notified of the excessive shot time and be timed, even although the group is in position.

K-3 Modified Pace of Play Penalty Structure

Purpose. A Committee may modify the penalty for a breach of any Pace of Play policy such that the penalty for a first bad time is one penalty stroke.

The Committee may choose to apply the general penalty for a first bad time, instead of a one-stroke penalty.

Model Local Rule K-3

“The penalty statement to Model Local Rule K-2 is modified in this way:

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule:

- Penalty for first bad time: **One penalty stroke.**
- Penalty for second bad time: **General Penalty** applied in addition to the penalty for the second bad time.
- Penalty for third bad time: **Disqualification.”**

8L Scorecard Responsibilities

L-1 Modification of Penalty Under Rule 3.3b(2) for Missing Player or Marker Certification

Purpose. Rule 3.3b(2) imposes a penalty of disqualification when the hole scores on the scorecard have not been certified by the player, the marker or both.

But in situations where the Committee feels it is more appropriate to modify the penalty to two strokes, it may choose to do so.

Model Local Rule L-1

“Rule 3.3b(2) is modified in this way:

If a player returns a *scorecard* without the hole scores being certified either by the player, the *marker* or both, the player gets the **general penalty (two penalty strokes)**.

The penalty applies to the last hole of the player’s *round*.”

L-2 Making Player Responsible for Handicap on Scorecard

Purpose. Rule 3.3b(4) states that there is no requirement for a player's handicap to be shown on the scorecard and that it is the Committee's responsibility to calculate the player's handicap strokes for the competition in order to calculate the player's net score.

But in some circumstances, it can be difficult for the Committee to calculate players' handicaps, for example, where the Committee does not have a computer system to help with the administration of the competition or where they do not have access to a database of player handicaps.

In such situations, the Committee may choose to modify Rule 3.3b(4) to require players to show their handicap on the scorecard. Depending on the handicap system operating in the local jurisdiction, the Committee may need to specify which handicap must be shown on the scorecard.

Model Local Rule L-2

"Rule 3.3b(4) is modified in this way:

The player is responsible for showing their handicap [specify what handicap is to be shown, for example, Handicap Index™, Course Handicap™, Playing Handicap™] on the scorecard.

Once the Committee receives the scorecard from the player at the end of their round, the Committee is responsible for:

- Adding up the player's scores, and
- Applying the player's handicap strokes to calculate the player's net score.

If the player returns a scorecard without the right handicap:

- Handicap on Scorecard Too High or No Handicap Shown. If this affects the number of strokes the player gets, the player is **disqualified** from the handicap competition. If it does not, there is no penalty.
- Handicap on Scorecard Too Low. There is no penalty and the player's net score stands using the lower handicap as shown."

8M Model Local Rules for Players with Disabilities

M-1 Placing the Ball for Players Using Wheeled Mobility Devices

Purpose. The function of some wheeled mobility devices creates a situation where the player's stance (based on where the device is first positioned) cannot be promptly and consistently taken in relation to where the ball comes to rest.

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This Local Rule can be adopted by the Committee to assist a player who uses a wheeled mobility device so that they do not have to reposition the device multiple times to achieve the desired set-up position.

This Local Rule may be applied anywhere on the course, including the putting green, the general area, penalty areas and bunkers.

It is not the purpose of this Local Rule to impact on the decision that a player using a wheeled mobility device needs to take in relation to safety (such as positioning the device on steeply sloped ground). In such situations, other relief Rules (such as unplayable relief under Rule 19 or penalty area relief under Rule 17) may be applied.

Model Local Rule M-1

“Before making a *stroke*, a player using a wheeled mobility device may take free relief by placing the original ball or another ball in and playing it from this *relief area*:

- Reference Point: Spot of the original ball.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: 6 inches from the *reference point*, which may be nearer the *hole*, **but** with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:
 - » Must be in the same *area of the course*, and
 - » Must not be in an area of grass cut to fairway height or less unless the original ball came to rest in a part of the *general area* cut to fairway height or less (this means, for example, that a ball in the rough may not be placed in the fairway).

When taking relief under this Local Rule, the player is allowed to place a ball more than once (such as when the first attempt to place a ball is slightly too far back in their *stance*).

Exception – No Relief When Clearly Unreasonable to Play Ball. Relief is not available under this Local Rule when playing the ball as it lies would be clearly unreasonable (such as when the ball has come to rest in a bush and it is in such a position where the player would be unable to make a *stroke*).

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*”

M-2 Free Relief from Specified Bunkers for Players Using Wheeled Mobility Devices

Purpose. The design and shape of certain bunkers create a situation where it is very hard or virtually impossible for a player in a wheeled mobility device to get in and/or out of the bunker to play their ball.

Rule 25.4n modifies Rule 19.3 so that when a player with a wheeled mobility device takes relief for an unplayable ball in a bunker, the player may take back-on-the-line relief outside that bunker for one penalty stroke. But, particularly in competitions involving only players using wheeled mobility devices, if a Committee feels that it would be appropriate to give free relief from certain bunkers or all bunkers on a course, it may do so.

Model Local Rule M-2

“For players who use wheeled mobility devices, [identify specific bunker(s) or all bunkers on the course] are *ground under repair* in the general area. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b.”

M-3 Limited Exemption from Rule 10.1b (Anchoring the Club) for Players with Ataxia or Athetosis

Purpose. Players with ataxia or athetosis resulting in severe jerking and/or shaking movements can find it almost impossible to putt without being able to use some form of anchored stroke. These conditions particularly impact on putting due to the minimal movement involved in making such a stroke when combined with the extreme body movements that are a symptom of the conditions.

This Local Rule allows a Committee to exempt such players from penalty under Rule 10.1b (Anchoring the Club) **provided the following three requirements** are met:

- The player holds a WR4GD pass or EDGA Access pass,
- The player has ataxia or athetosis, and
- The Committee determines that there is clear evidence that the condition significantly and negatively impacts the player’s ability to putt (for example, the player regularly takes 50 or more putts per round).

Model Local Rule M-3

“Where the *Committee* has determined that there is clear evidence that a player’s ability to putt is significantly and negatively impacted by ataxia or athetosis, and the player holds a WR4GD pass or EDGA Access pass, that player is exempt from penalty under Rule 10.1b (Anchoring the Club).”