

Woods Valley Golf Club (WVMC) Local Rules

Effective – October 11, 2017

Preamble to WVMC Local Rules – 1/3/2017

Based on input from WVMC members, a review of pertinent Rules of Golf, 2016 changes to several Rules of Golf, and input from the SCGA Rules and Competition Department, the WVMC Rules and Tournament Committees produced this Updated Local Rules guideline. It has also been determined that these changes should be, and are, implemented immediately.

Implementation of these corrections to our Local Rules may result in a slight handicap index increase. However, such an increase will result in a more realistic index for our Members. The updated Local Rules follow this brief summary:

- **Play of “native grass areas”.** Several entries in the Rules of Golf prohibit treating native grass areas such as at Woods Valley Golf Course as lateral hazards. And, in fact, treating them as such would constitute an agreement to waive the Rules. Therefore, notwithstanding any W.V.G.C. scorecard, we will no longer play these areas as lateral hazards. Because some of us will now be facing an unplayable ball in those heretofore native grass areas, bear in mind that the relief is relative to the position of the ball, not the obstruction. So, 2 club lengths from the ball or on a line between the ball and flag, or from the prior position of the ball (“stroke and distance”). Or, if a rock, just move the rock (without moving the ball).
- **Play of Provisional Ball.** Item-2 in the following update was drafted based upon suggested verbiage in the Rules of Golf Appendix I. At this time, this local rule applies only to hole-15 due to the inability to see, from the teeing area, the margin of the lateral hazard on the right side of the fairway. This means that one may no longer “assume” a ball is in that hazard area or “best-guess” a ball’s hazard entry point. **The text is written to allow additional holes to be added to this local rule.**
- **Use of a distance measuring device with additional features** – see the note for changes that now conform to the updated golf rule.
- **ESA Areas have been clarified in Rule-10.** There are several areas where stake-to-stake will now define the margin of the hazard **AND** the margin of the ESA.
- **Temporary Immovable Obstruction to left of Hole-2 fairway:** The permanent fence has been installed and it reverts to an OB boundary...see the table on the last page of this document.
- **Tree Limbs as Obstructions.** Golf course personnel have been temporarily laying large tree branches or tree trunk sections in areas to prevent cart traffic and are to be treated as “immovable obstructions” (lift/clean/drop of your ball if one poses interference with your stance or swing).

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For the Woods Valley Golf Club (the "Woods Valley Men's Club" - WMVC), play is governed by the current USGA Rules of Golf and its Decisions, and where applicable, by the following Local Rules and Definitions. Any changes or additions to this will be supplied on a supplementary rules sheet.

Unless otherwise provided, penalty for breach of a Local Rule is two strokes in stroke play or loss of hole in match play.

These rules are adopted only for events sponsored by the WVMC. Any or all of these local rules may be suspended or amended for any WVMC event at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.

- 1. Distance Measuring Devices:** For tournaments and other competitions sponsored by the WVMC, a player may obtain distance information by use of a distance-measuring device. If, during a stipulated round, a player uses a measuring device to gauge or measure other conditions that might affect his play (e.g., gradient, wind speed, temperature, etc.), the player is in breach of Rule 14-3, for which the penalty is disqualification. Moreover, the distance between any objects, including golf balls, is considered to be a matter of public information and therefore not advice. Such information may be shared without restriction. Players may share distance-measuring devices and may, due to the revision of the USGA Decision 8-1/2 (rev.2006), share any measured yardage with another player.
- 2. Stones in Bunkers:** Per USGA rules, stones are considered "loose impediments" and may be moved, except in bunkers and hazards. In the interests of safety, for tournaments and other competitions sponsored by the WVMC stones in bunkers shall be considered as "movable obstructions" and may be removed per rule 24-1. This local rule does not apply to stones in lateral or water hazards.
- 3. Wood Chips or Mulch:** Golf Course management has declared that flower beds be considered as immovable obstructions and that the clearly-defined MULCH areas be treated as flower beds. Do not hit from the flower beds, take relief without penalty. (UPDATE 10/21/14)
- 4. Immovable Obstructions Close to Putting Green:** Per USGA rules, relief from interference by an immovable obstruction may be taken under Rule 24-2. In addition, this local rule stipulates that, if a ball lies off the putting green but not in a hazard and an immovable obstruction on or within two club lengths of the putting green and within two club lengths of the ball intervenes on the line of play between the ball and the hole, the player may take relief as follows: The ball may be lifted and dropped at the nearest point to where the ball lay that (a) is not nearer the hole, (b) avoids intervention and (c) is not in a hazard or on a putting green. The ball may be cleaned when lifted. (The intent of this rule is to provide relief on the line of a putt, from just off the green, when an immovable obstruction, such as a sprinkler head, lying within two club lengths of the putting green, is on the line of putt, even if the player does not putt the ball).
- 5. Practice:** Practice on the course is permitted on any day before or between rounds of a stroke play competition.
- 6. Embedded Ball-Relief:** Through the green, a ball that is embedded in "its own pitch mark" in the ground, other than sand, may be lifted without penalty, cleaned and dropped as near as possible to where it lay but not nearer the hole. The ball, when dropped, must first strike a part of the course through the green. A player may not take relief under this Local Rule if the ball is embedded in sand.
- 7. Close of Competition:** When all scores have been either 1) submitted via scorecards or 2) posted on the official scoring sheet/distribution, the results of the competition shall be deemed as officially closed. Regardless of scorecard submission status, the WVMC Tournament Committee or its representative shall close scorecard submissions 15 minutes after the last tee group completes play of its last hole.
- 8. Ground Under Repair (GUR):** In addition to areas "through the green" that are marked by white lines/circles, French drains, which are exposed trenches filled with rocks or stones are defined as ground under repair. Additionally, except in a hazard, sod seams (not the sod itself) are deemed to be ground under repair and relief is available under Rule 25-1 if the ball lies in or touches a sod seam or the sod seam interferes with the "area of intended swing". All sod seams within the sodded area are considered

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the same seam. **STAKED OFF AREAS ARE MEANT TO KEEP OUT GOLF CARTS. ONLY THE SODDED AREAS ARE GUR.** This rule does NOT provide relief when the stance is the only thing affected.

- 9. Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA):** ESA are marked with signs and/or green-topped red or yellow stakes. Players are not allowed to enter these areas. If it is "known or virtually certain" that a player's ball lies in, or is lost in, an ESA marked as a water hazard or lateral water hazard, the player must, under penalty of one stroke, proceed under Rule 26-1. Split rail fences that bound the hazard area are considered the margin of the hazard and ESA area. **If an ESA Area is NOT bounded by a split rail fence or a painted border, it is now correct and permitted to determine the margin via stake-to-stake. In the absence of a marked fence or stakes, the natural margin of the hazard also defines the ESA margin.**
- 10. Time of Starting:** For WVMC tournaments, a late arriving, or non-arriving player's registration will not automatically be held after the published close of tournament registration. However, if after the departure of the players to their tees, the original tee groups remain with the opening, then note to Rule 6-3 is in effect. Therefore, if a player arrives at his starting point, ready to play, within five minutes after his/her starting time, in the absence of circumstances that warrant waiving the penalty of disqualification as provided in Rule 33-7, the penalty for failure to start on time is loss of the first hole to be played in match play, or two strokes in stroke play. Penalty for lateness beyond five minutes is disqualification.
- 11. Preferred Lie Rule:** When this rule is in use, if a player's ball lies in the fairway, the player may mark, lift and clean his ball without penalty. Before lifting, he must mark the position of the ball. The player must then place the ball on a spot within six inches of and not nearer the hole than where it originally lay that is not in a hazard or on a putting green. The fairway is defined by the "short grass" areas, i.e., the "lower-cut" grass. A player may place his ball only once, and it is in play when it has been placed (Rule 20-4). If the ball fails to come to rest on the spot on which it was placed, Rule 20-3d applies. If the ball when placed comes to rest on the spot on which it is placed and it subsequently moves there is no penalty and the ball must be played as it lies, unless the provisions of any other Rule apply.
- 12. Split Rail Fences and WVMC Hole-by-Hole Rules:** Split rail fences that are NOT golf course boundaries are considered integral parts of the golf course and typically define the boundary of a hazard. The following table offers hole-by-hole clarification of WVMC local rules as they apply to split rail fencing, boundaries and the service road. These issues may have been confusing in the past and are in addition to local rules described on the scorecard.
- 13. Cart Paths as Immovable Obstructions:** The golf course cart paths that have been graded, machine-compacted and landscaped, typically bordered by artificial borders, are immovable obstructions, as are cart paths of artificial construction material.
- 14. Ball or Ball Marker Accidentally Moved While on the Green:** Rules [18-2](#), [18-3](#) and [20-1](#) are modified as follows: When a player's ball lies on the putting green, there is no penalty if the ball or ball-marker is accidentally moved by the player, his partner, his opponent, or any of their caddies or equipment. The moved ball or ball-marker must be replaced as provided in Rules 18-2, 18-3 and 20-1. This Local Rule applies only when the player's ball or ball-marker lies on the putting green and any movement is accidental. Note: If it is determined that a player's ball on the putting green was moved as a result of wind, water or some other natural cause such as the effects of gravity, the ball must be played as it lies from its new location. A ball-marker moved in such circumstances is replaced.

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Hole	Clarification
All	<i>The various low-slung tee-area/green-side/fairway “knee-knocker” ropes or split-rail borders/stanchions are either movable obstructions (ropes/stakes) or immovable obstructions (split rail fences). The movable obstructions may be moved/replaced for a stroke. Relief from the immovable obstructions may be taken with a drop, without penalty, if the obstruction interferes with the intended stance or the intended swing path (but not the flight of the ball).</i>
2	<i>The boundary fence on the left side of Hole-2 is out of bounds. The gravel service road that parallels the left side is considered an obstruction just as a cart path. Relief is granted from the obstruction, no penalty. Note: There are some slope and vegetation areas between the gravel road and the cart path that are in play without relief (they may be your "closest point of relief" from the gravel road). This is also true for some areas left of the gravel road and not out of bounds.</i>
3	<i>Effective 1/3/17, on Hole-3, the deep pump/piping culvert and culvert banks that are to the right of the cart path just past the gold tee area are to be played as Ground Under Repair. Non-penalty relief may be taken, no nearer the hole, in accordance with the rules of golf.</i>
6 7	<i>The split rail fence on left side of the fairway is not a golf course boundary fence. It is the margin of the lateral hazard. If the ball is not in the hazard but the fence obstructs your stance or swing then relief is granted, no penalty.</i>
8	<i>The split rail fence is not a golf course boundary fence. It is the margin of the lateral hazard. (Note: The margin of the hazard is the fence in spite of the marked cart path where the fence is present). If the ball is not in the hazard but the fence obstructs your stance or swing then relief is granted, no penalty.</i>
10 11 12	<i>The split rail fence is a golf course boundary. The area between the cart path and the fence is NO LONGER considered a lateral hazard. No "penalty free" relief from the fence is appropriate.</i>
14	<i>The fence/s to the right of the trees mark the golf course boundary. No "penalty-free" relief from the fence is appropriate.</i>
15	<i>The split rail fence on right side on fairway is now staked/marked as OB. A provisional ball is “encouraged” if ball is possibly in the OB area. Hazard area to right of the green, past the OB fence can be played with a drop/penalty ONLY IF observed to have crossed the hazard margin from the tee (or fairway).</i>
16	<i>The split rail fence is not a golf course boundary fence. It is the margin of the water/lateral hazard. If the ball is not in the hazard but the fence obstructs your stance or swing then relief is granted, no penalty.</i>
17	<i>The split rail fence is not a golf course boundary fence. It is the margin of the lateral hazard. The margin of the hazard is the fence in spite of the marked cart path. If the ball is not in the hazard but the fence obstructs your stance or swing then relief is granted, no penalty.</i>