

# WOWGG – February 2023 Rule of the Month

## Local Rules, including Provisional Ball for Ball in a Penalty Area

In addition to the standard rules of golf, individual golf course committees are allowed to establish Local Rules, to consider specific conditions on that golf course. At Winchester, we have 9 Local Rules that are worth being aware of, which can come in handy and save you strokes. They are listed on p. 48-49 of your roster book and attached here.

Local Rule #3 refers to **Provisional Ball for Ball in a Penalty Area**:

Normally, you're not allowed to hit a Provisional Ball if you know your ball is in a Penalty Area. Instead, you have 3 or 4 options to take relief from a Penalty Area – Play the ball where it lies, Stroke & Distance, Lateral Relief (Red Penalty Areas) and Back-on-the-line Relief.

But, in some cases, you can't see whether your ball is in the Penalty Area. This could easily happen on holes 2, 8, 11, 12, 16 and 17 at Winchester.

In these cases, Local Rule #3 states that on those six holes, you may hit a provisional ball if you are unsure if your ball is in the Penalty Area.

- If you find your original ball out of the Penalty Area, you must play it.
- If you find your ball in the penalty area you can play it or you may play your Provisional Ball if you think the lie is too difficult in the penalty area.



Figure 1- HOLE 8

This is an important point, that you do **NOT** have to hit the original ball inside the Penalty Area. My partner in a tournament took 5 strokes to try to hit the ball out of the tall grass in front of the fairway on hole 8. Then she was lying 6 strokes. If she used her provisional, she incurs one penalty stroke for the provisional, but is only lying 3 strokes.

Keep your roster book or local rules sheet handy when playing and educate others that may not be aware of this rule.

Please everyone, **send me rules questions**, with photos if possible, so I can show the rules relevant to our course. Send to [deedee.owen@gmail.com](mailto:deedee.owen@gmail.com) or text me at 408-234-5017.

Dee Dee Owen, Rules Chair

Feb. 15, 2023

# Winchester Country Club

## Local Rules

**1. Boundaries of Penalty Areas:** Unless marked by paint, in any case where red or yellow stakes generally indicate the beginning or end of a penalty area adjacent to a mowed area of the course, the boundary of the penalty area between the stakes shall be defined (irrespective of the actual placement of the stakes) as follows:

- a) All native grass areas (including rocks) shall be considered within the penalty area;
- b) All maintained (non-native Grass) areas shall be considered outside the penalty area.

**2. Immovable Obstructions:** On holes # 1,3,6,9,12 and 13 drains and large rocks immediately surrounding the drains outside of penalty areas are deemed to be immovable obstructions.

**3. On holes #2, 8, 11, 12, 16 and 17,** players may, at their option, play a provisional ball from the tee for balls that may be lost in the penalty area. If the player plays a provisional ball, the player can no longer proceed under Rule 18-3 and must play the original ball if it is found outside the penalty area. If the ball is found in the penalty area, the player may either play the original ball or continue with the provisional ball.

**4. Environmentally-Sensitive Penalty Areas** are marked by yellow or red stakes with green tops. If a player's ball lies in an environmentally-sensitive penalty area, it is considered lost in the penalty area. If the environmentally-sensitive area interferes with a player's stance or swing, and the ball lies through the green, the player must take appropriate relief without penalty.

**5. Power Lines:** If a ball strikes a power line or cable, the stroke shall be cancelled and replayed, without penalty.

**6. Aeration Holes:** In the General Area, a ball that comes to rest in or on an aeration hole may be lifted without penalty, cleaned, and dropped as near as possible to where it lay but not nearer the hole. If the ball is on the green, it may be placed rather than dropped.

**7. All Public Roads are deemed to be out of bounds:** If a ball crosses or comes to rest on a paved public road it is considered out of bounds. "A ball which crosses a public road defined as out of bounds and comes to rest beyond that road is out of bounds, even though it may lie on another part of the course."

**8. Obstructions Near the Putting Green:** Relief from interference by abnormal course conditions may be taken under Rule 16-1. In addition, if a ball lies off the putting green but not in a penalty area and an abnormal course condition 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 must 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 penalty area or on a putting green. The ball may be cleaned when lifted.

**9. On hole # 3, 4, 12 & 14:** The boundary of the penalty area on the right side of the fairway, between stakes shall be defined as the vertical edge of the cart path that is closest to the penalty area. If a ball comes to rest in the dirt area next to the cart path and is touching the edge of the concrete, the ball is deemed to be in the penalty area. A ball laying on top of the cart path and overhanging the vertical edge of the penalty area is by definition in the penalty area - Rule 17.1