

The Rules Applied – Jan 2022

It is the responsibility of all golfers to know the rules of golf and to apply them properly in tournament play. In order to better acquaint BMGC members with the rules and their application to particular situations which occur at DeBell, the club will be providing a short discussion in connection with each tournament. Today . . .

So I hit my tee shot up along the right side of the first hole at DeBell, about 5 feet behind the sprinkler box. The box is directly in my line. Do I get line of sight relief?

Sorry, no. Sprinkler boxes are immovable obstructions, like cart paths, sprinkler heads and interior protective fences (not perimeter fences). These are all known as abnormal course conditions. You get free relief when the condition interferes with your lie, stance or area of intended swing. However, when an abnormal course condition interferes only with your line of play, free relief is not allowed.

What if I'm 1 foot behind the sprinkler box, and it does interfere with my stance or swing?

Ah, in that case, you would indeed be entitled to free relief. In taking relief, the player first marks his ball, and then determines the nearest point of complete relief – the point where the obstruction does not interfere with lie, stance or swing – making sure that the point is no nearer to the hole. In determining whether the obstruction interferes with your swing, you must use the club which you, in good faith, would use on your next shot if the obstruction were not there. You must mark your nearest point of relief.

From the relief point the player measures 1 club length (this time using your longest club). You may measure your 1 club length in any direction, provided it is no nearer to the hole than your original ball. The player marks the extremities of relief and drops (knee high drop) within the area of relief. Please note that the ball must come to rest within 1 club length of the nearest point of relief (imagine a semi circle around the nearest point of relief). If the ball rolls outside the semi circle the player drops again. If the ball rolls outside the semi circle a second time the player places the ball where the drop landed. Upon completion of the drop the player picks up his marks and continues to play with no penalty.

<https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/rules/rules-2019/rules-of-golf/rule-16.html>

The Rules Applied – Feb 2022

Today's rule addresses a matter which happens frequently . . .

I'm in a stroke play event and proceed to hit my tee shot on hole 10 into the barranca on the right. Now what?

Under the Debell local rules, barrancas are red-tipped penalty areas. If you find your ball and wish to play it, you may do so. You may even ground your club and move loose impediments (but you may not move the ball).

If you do not find your ball, or do not want to play from there, you have three options, all of which involve a 1-stroke penalty – (a) you may re-hit from your original position (if you hit your tee shot in the barranca, you may go back to the tee and hit again; (b) you may drop your ball in a spot which is on a line stretching from the pin to the point of entry into the barranca **and** no closer to the hole (this option is not available on Hole 10, because there is no point on such a line, unless you go into the barranca); or (c) you may drop your ball within 2 club lengths of the point of entry into the barranca. To do this, first determine the place where the ball entered the penalty area and mark it with a tee. From there, measure 2 club lengths no nearer the whole using your longest club (putters are not allowed) and marking the spot with a tee. The relief area is the arc between the relief point and the penalty area, going away from the hole. Drop a ball in the relief area (knee high drop). If the ball comes to rest in the relief area the ball is in play, pick up the tees and proceed with a penalty of 1 stroke. If the ball rolls out of the area, then drop a second time. If it rolls out a second time, then place your ball where the previous drop landed. Once again pick up the tees and proceed with a penalty of 1 stroke. Hence you hit your tee shot, took a drop (1 stroke penalty) and are now hitting your third shot.

Would I ever use that option (a) – rehiting?

You might use it on Hole 1, if your tee shot was yanked straight to the left or on Hole 13, if you shanked it right.

How about option (b) – that straight line back thing?

That could come into play if you hit your tee shot right on Hole 11, although you may have to go back a bit.

rule 14.3



The Rules Applied – Mar 2022

Today's rule addresses Holes 3 and 4 at DeBell . . .

My approach shot crossed the ravine on Hole 3, and landed short of the bunkers on the right. Unluckily, it rolled backwards into the barranca. What are my options?

Last month we discussed red-staked penalty areas, such as the barrancas at DeBell. There are however two areas at DeBell with yellow-staked penalty areas – in front of 3 green and just past 4 tee. Relief from these areas are slightly different than the red-staked areas.

In yellow-staked areas, you have 3 options: first you may play the ball from the penalty area, (grounding the club and moving loose impediments is ok); second, you may hit again from the point at which the original shot was played, incurring a 1 stroke penalty; lastly, you may take a drop straight back from the point of entry, also with a 1 stroke penalty. Under this last option, you determine the point of entry into the penalty area (in this case, that point would be on the green side of the ravine) and mark it. Determine a straight line from the hole to the point of entry and continue that line backwards (away from the hole) as far as you want. That line will take you back through the penalty area, away from the green. Once you determine your relief point, mark it with a tee and drop within 1 club length from that point. The ball must stay within 1 club length of your point of relief, and the drop must be no closer to the hole than your entry into the penalty area (but this will not be an issue if you have crossed the ravine).

Can I just drop my ball on the green side of the ravine, within 2 club lengths, no closer to the hole, as I would do with other barrancas at DeBell?

Unfortunately, no. You do not have that option. That is the difference between red-staked and yellow-staked penalty areas.

What if my approach shot clears the ravine on the left side of Hole 3, but hits a tree and bounces back into the ravine?

You'd have to determine your straight line back from the point of entry. This might put you on 4 fairway. In that case, the option of replaying the original shot might make more sense.

Rule 17



The Rules Applied (April 2022)

Today, we deal with the unhappy times when one must hit a provisional ball . . .

We're on 13 tee, and I hit my ball left toward the hillside, and my buddy hits right toward the barranca – both shots are probably gone. So we both should hit provisional shots, right?

Uh, no. A player may only play a provisional ball if he believes his original ball might be out of bounds or lost outside a penalty area (rule 18.3). The ball hit toward the hillside might be lost, and therefore you may play a provisional; but your buddy may not, because his ball was headed toward a penalty area (the barranca).

If a player decides to play a provisional ball, he must declare this before the provisional stroke is made, and he must identify both the original and provisional balls so that his playing companions will be able to determine which is which. It is not sufficient to say, "I'm hitting another". If the player does not make clear that he is hitting a provisional, then the second ball is a ball in play – it is not a provisional – regardless of whether the original ball is found.

OK, so I pop up my provisional, way short of where my original ball probably went. Now what?

As long as your provisional ball is farther away from the hole than your original ball, you may continue to play it as a provisional. Again, you must declare it as a provisional before hitting it, or else it is a ball in play.

OK, I did all that, and after I hit my second shot with my provisional ball, I find my original ball farther down the fairway (closer to the hole).

Lucky you. Your provisional ball is now out of play. Instead of lying 4 (original tee shot, penalty, provisional shot, second shot with provisional ball), your original ball is in play, and you are lying 1.

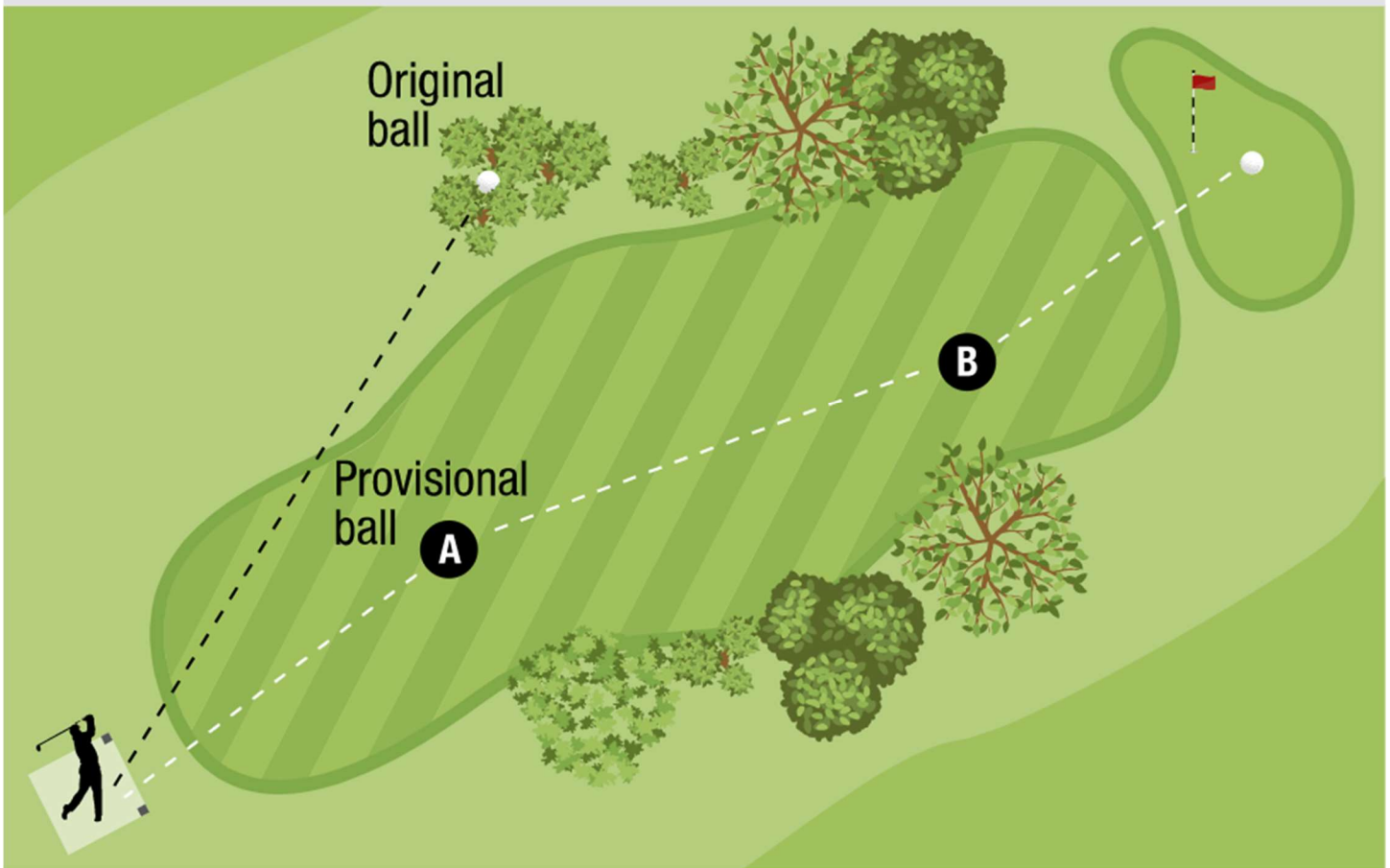
But what if my provisional off the tee was a career shot, rolling down to the 150 mark and giving me a shot at the green and a chance for par. Can I just use it and forget the original ball?

Sorry, no. If a player declares that his second ball is a provisional, he is required to make a reasonable search for his original ball. The player may ask others not to search (although they need not comply), and the search is subject to a 3 minute time limit. However, he must make a reasonable effort to find and identify his ball, even if he would prefer not to find it.

But what if I find my original ball in an unplayable lie? Can I take a penalty and use my provisional?

No. Once you find your original ball, the provisional is dead, and you will need to look at your options for an unplayable lie as if no provisional had ever been hit.

DIAGRAM 18.3c: PROVISIONAL BALL PLAYED FROM SPOT NEARER HOLE THAN WHERE ORIGINAL BALL IS ESTIMATED TO BE



A player's original ball played from the teeing area may be lost in a bush, so the player announces and plays a provisional ball, and it comes to rest at point A. As point A is farther from the hole than where the original ball is estimated to be, the player may play the provisional ball from point A without it losing its status as a provisional ball. The player plays the provisional ball from point A to point B. As point B is nearer the hole than where the original ball is estimated to be, if the player plays the provisional ball from point B, the provisional ball becomes the ball in play under penalty of stroke and distance.

The Rules Applied – May 2022

Part of the joy of DeBell is finding your ball in a place from which it simply cannot be played . . .

So on 13 tee, I hit a big tee shot, with just a bit too much draw, and I find it in a bush to the left of the cart path. No one likes difficult shots more than me, but this is just unplayable. What are my options?

Of course, you can always try to play the ball out of the bush. Best of luck.

Alternatively, with a penalty of 1-stroke, you have three options: First, you may measure 2 club lengths (no closer to the hole), mark your spot with a tee, and drop within that 2-club length distance. Your ball must come to rest within that area. (If it does not, then re-drop; and if the ball does not come to rest within the area on the second drop, then place your ball where your second drop had landed.)

Suppose my ball rolls into another unplayable lie, do I get to redrop?

Sorry, no. If your ball stays within the relief area, it is in play. If you believe it is unplayable and want to make a second drop, you will incur a second penalty.

Ok, so what other options are there?

The second option is to take line of sight relief, going backward (away from the hole) on a straight line from the hole to your ball. There is a problem here, in that you cannot see the green from the left of the cart path. So you may have to eyeball your line from the right side of the fairway, or you may enlist another player in your group to line you up as you stand at your ball and attempt to point at the flag. Once you have your line, you may walk backward (away from the hole) as far as you want, on that line. You may have to walk 75 or 100 yards back, but this might lead you to the right side of the cart path. Once you have identified your point of relief, you may drop within 1 club length of that point.

And there is a third option, which is to go back to the place of your previous shot (in this case, your tee shot), and re-hit.

If I hit a provisional shot, can I simply use that one?

No, we talked about this last month – once your first shot is found and identified, your provisional is out of play. If you want to use the third option, you will need to go back to the tee and re-hit.

The Rules Applied – June 2022

Fences. Sometimes, you can't get a break. And sometimes, you can.

I'm off to a rough start – on the first hole, I hit my second shot up against the fence on the right side; on the second hole, I hit my tee shot up against the fence on the right side. Other than aiming a little farther to the left, what do I do?

The rules governing these two situations are quite different. DeBell has 2 types of fences, perimeter fences and interior protective fences. Perimeter fences define the boundaries of the course and are treated as out of bounds markers. A ball coming to rest on or near the fence is in play, there is no free relief from any perimeter fence. If you can't play the shot you may take unplayable ball relief, which we discussed last month (2 club lengths no closer to the hole, or replay the prior shot (stroke and distance), either of which would entail a 1-stroke penalty). Because your shot on 1 lies next to a perimeter fence, you must either play it as it lies or treat it as unplayable.

On the other hand, interior protective fences are immovable obstructions and therefore you are allowed free relief, if the obstruction interferes with your stance or swing (mark the nearest point of relief and drop within 1 club length). Keep in mind that you get relief on 2 only if the fence interferes with your swing or stance. You do not get relief if you are not obstructed, even if the ball is only an inch from the fence.

And just a reminder – relief is allowed only for obstructed stance or swing, not simply because your line of sight is obstructed. If you hit your tee shot on 7 behind the protective fence, you do not get relief simply because the fence stands between you and the green.

Just my luck – my second shot on 3 goes over the green, and once again, I'm up against a fence. This is a perimeter fence, so I take a 1-stroke penalty and drop within 2 club lengths right?

Well, you can do that. But keep in mind that your drop must be no closer to the hole (so you will probably be moving sideways), and that you must play the ball as it lies after the drop (provided it has not rolled outside of the 2-club length area). If you drop the ball and it rolls back to the fence, you must either play it from that bad lie or take a second unplayable lie with a second penalty. You'll have to decide whether it makes more sense to go back to the site of your previous shot and re-hit.

The Rules Applied – July 2022

“Rub of the green.” Four words golfers use regularly. These words are not to be found in the current edition of the rules of golf (they were edited out in 2019), but they have a well-established meaning – play the ball as it lies, with no free relief. The following are a few examples of how these words may be used at DeBell – the good, the bad and the ugly.

The good: *I hit my tee shot way left on 16. It hits a rock on the mountain, bounces down to the cart path, and then rolls downhill all the way onto 17 tee. Rub of the green, that ball is in play.*

The bad: *I hit my approach on 15 a little left, just short of the left bunker. The ball kicks left, onto the cart path, and then rolls backwards, down the cart path, gaining speed until it's past the 200 yard mark. Sorry, this is rub of the green. Wherever the ball comes to rest, it is in play.*

The ugly: *I hit my approach through the green on 2. The ball gets onto the cart path where it proceeds to roll to the right all the way down the cart path on hole 3. Seriously, you're telling me to play from the fairway on 3? Again, sorry, but wherever your ball comes to rest, it is in play (although you may get relief from the cart path – stance and swing, plus one club length, no closer to the hole). Rub of the green.*

You may also hear the pronouncement “rub of the green” if you find your ball in a divot on hole 3, or on a root on hole 9, or on a bare spot on hole 2. Unless the area has been designated as “ground under repair” by the tournament committee, it must be played as it lies.

There is not much comfort to be taken when you have to deal with bad luck and get no relief. But when your playing partner looks at you with that pitiful look of a man cursed by the golf gods and asks for relief, you'll have a ready answer – sorry, rub of the green.

The Rules Applied - August 2022

Today's discussion relates to a subject so big, we can't address it all in one month. So we'll call this, "It Moved – part 1".

So there I am, on hole 15, on the green in regulation with a legit shot at birdie, and maybe even win a skin. But while I'm lining up my putt, the ball moves. I don't really know if it was my tapping down the ground around the ball or the wind. OK, it really wasn't that windy. So are you going to tell me I have to take a penalty?

Relax. Not everything is a penalty. There is never a penalty when the wind causes a ball to move. But even more important, there is no penalty for accidentally moving your ball on the green. (Rule 13.1d.) This is one of the rule changes made in 2019. (This rule change applies only when your ball is on the green.) So whether the ball moves as a result of wind or gravity, or even because of an inadvertent practice stroke, there is no penalty.

Yea! Finally some good news. What do I do now? Put the ball back where it was before it moved?

Ah. That depends. If you did not mark your ball, and you did not cause it to move, then you play from the new spot.

But if the ball moves after you have marked and re-placed it, then you must move it back to its original spot. If you're at the crest of the hill on 15 green, you will probably want to mark your ball, so that you can maintain your spot even if a gust of wind sends the ball backwards, off the front of the green.

Even if it has not been marked, your ball must be returned to its original spot if you accidentally caused it to move (even though there is no penalty).

And as you probably know, if the ball moves due to an outside agency – like being struck by another player's golf ball – your ball must also be moved back to its original spot.

And one more situation – if the ball comes to rest at the edge of the hole, you can only wait the time necessary to walk to the ball plus 10 seconds, to see if it falls in. After that time expires, if the ball falls into the hole, it must be re-placed in its original spot (at the edge of the hole), and you will need to take another stroke to tap it in.

So what if I accidentally forget to mark my ball and I pick it up?

That's not an accident. That's just a mental breakdown. Sorry, 1-stroke penalty for picking up the ball without properly marking it. (Rule 14.1a)

The Rules Applied - September 2022

Because there are so many scenarios for last month's topic, we continue with it again this month in "It Moved – part 2".

So I'm lying in the rough on 13, and I take a practice swing, and the ball moves. 1-stroke penalty right? I learned this from Bagger Vance.

Amazingly, that's right. You can learn all kinds of things from that movie, like finding your place in the field and looking for your own authentic shot and getting yourself out of your own way. But again the standard is whether you know or are virtually certain that the ball moved and you caused it to move (Rule 9.2 a and b.) If you dug up the grass or moved a stick an inch from your ball, well, yeah, sorry. But if you were 3 feet away, maybe not. Also, remember that "move" means change position. So if the ball shakes but ends up in the same place, it has not moved. If the ball rotates, you can be certain that it moved. All that being said, if you are not on the putting green (see last month's discussion) and you caused your ball to move, you must replace it in its original spot and take a 1-stroke penalty (Rule 9.4). If the ball moved independent of you, there is no penalty, and you play from the new location (Rule 9.3).

What if I accidentally kick the ball while I'm looking for it?

One of the 2019 changes to the rules of golf made clear that this is not a penalty. (Rule 7.4.) However, the ball must be replaced in its original location and lie. If the ball was at the bottom of a thick clump of grass when you kicked it, it must be placed back at the bottom of the thick clump of grass. You may not improve your lie.

What if I accidentally knock the ball off the tee? It happens, you know.

Yes, it happens. And fortunately, there is no penalty for this. (Rule 6.2b/5.) The ball is not in play until you make your first stroke on a hole. A stroke is an intentional movement made for the purpose of causing the ball to move forward. So if you tap the ball with your club while setting up, or accidentally hit it while taking a warm up swing, there is neither a stroke nor a penalty. However, if your playing partners spend the rest of the round laughing at you, there's nothing we can do about it.

The Rules Applied - October 2022

Rule 6.3a states the player should put an identifying mark on the ball to be played. According to this rule the mark must be unique to the player and shown to his playing partners before they tee off. Company logos and/or golf course logos are not considered to be unique in and of themselves. The following are a few situations to emphasize this rule.

I take my favorite ball, a Titleist 3 with no identifying marks, and hit my tee shot slightly left on hole 1. We see the ball land in the fairway and gently roll into the rough. I drive down the left rough and lo and behold I find a Titleist 3 with no marks. I tell my playing partners that I found my ball. Before I hit it, I notice another ball 10 feet further up the rough and see that it too is a Titleist 3 with no marks. Wow, what are the odds and what do I do? Unfortunately, since you cannot positively identify which ball is yours, you must declare your tee shot lost and proceed back to the tee to hit your third shot.

I hit my unmarked Callaway 1 right on hole 3, possibly lost on the hillside. I declare a provisional and hit another unmarked Callaway 1 into some heavy rough on the left. We search the hillside and find my first ball, and so I bang it out, only to have it roll into the left rough, within a few feet of my provisional. I can't really tell which ball is which, and neither ball has an identifying mark. OK, you're not going to like this – but in clear conscience, you cannot identify either your provisional (which you therefore must deem lost), or your second shot from the hillside (which must also be deemed lost). Accordingly, you must now go back to the hillside, where you hit your second shot and take a penalty drop. With your first tee shot, your shot from the hillside, and a lost ball penalty, you're now hitting your 4th shot.

So that you do not think these scenarios too far-fetched, we must disclose that the first scenario actually happened to a long standing member, who will remain anonymous. (Editor's Note: It was Don Pell.) As this was not in a tournament, the member in question simply Xed the hole, and deemed himself a bit wiser for the experience.

The Rules Applied - November 2022

As a general rule, we love cart paths. Cart paths are immovable obstructions, and therefore you get free relief if they interfere with your stance or swing. And who doesn't love to get something for free. But there are a load of issues that arise with cart paths – so many that we will need more than one rules discussion to address them.

OK, so this happens all the time. My tee shot on hole 11 leaves my ball in the center of the asphalt spillway/cart path to the right of the fairway (between holes 11 and 12). I know I get free relief, but where?

First (and always) mark the spot where the ball came to rest. Next, determine the nearest point of full relief. The nearest point of relief is defined as the nearest point on the course which is no nearer the hole and which allows the player complete relief (stance and swing) from the cause for relief. In determining the nearest point of relief, the player excludes penalty areas and bunkers.

Because you must take complete relief for both stance and swing, the nearest point of relief will often be different for left-handed and right-handed players. But for each player, it will always be a clearly defined point – you do not get to choose between different possible points of relief.

In this case, a right-handed player will take relief on the fairway side of the path, as he can stand on the grass, with his ball lying just off the path. If he were to go the opposite side (toward the 12th hole), he would have to place the ball farther away, so that he could take a stance with his heels off the path. (In taking your stance, use the club you intend to hit – not your longest club – and stand as if you were ready to hit a ball.) The place where the ball would lie is the nearest point of relief. Unfortunately, using the same process, the nearest point of relief for a left-handed player would be on the slope, on the hole 12 side of the path. The lefty may not want to use cart path relief, and may just want to hit the ball off the path, which he is certainly allowed to do.

As a reminder, once you have determined the nearest point of relief, mark the point and measure 1 club length (this time using your longest club), to determine the drop zone. If the dropped ball exits the drop zone, drop again. If the ball rolls to an area in which the player does not get complete relief (either because the ball or the player's stance is on the path), drop again. If the second drop does not leave the ball in a proper area, then place it on the spot where it landed on the second drop. The drop area is within 1 club length of the nearest point of relief, not within 1 club length of the cart path. So first determine your nearest point of relief, and then measure 1 club length.

So the left-handed player is screwed? Well, in this case, yes. But if the ball is in the center of the cart path on 15, the nearest point would be on the fairway side (on grass) for the lefty and the barranca side (probably on dirt) for the righty. So it goes.

3) *Now suppose my tee shot on 16 careens of the mountain and comes to rest in the middle of the cart path.* In this case, both right and left-handed players get to drop on the fairway side of the path, because the mountain side of the path is a penalty area. However, the nearest point of relief would be different. The right-handed player takes a stance, with his heels just off the path, using the club he intends to hit. The point where the clubhead hits the ground – the point where the ball would be placed to take a shot – is the nearest point of relief. (And, of course, the drop may occur within 1 club length of the nearest point of relief.) On the other hand, the nearest point of relief for the left-handed player would be just off the path, and his 1 club length would measure from there.

4) *Suppose my tee shot on 15 stayed up on the mountain. That's a red-tipped penalty area, so I get 2-club lengths from point of entry, right?* Yes, you are correct about that rule, but the application here does not help you. The penalty area is defined by red stakes running along the left edge of the cart path. Determine the point of entry and mark that spot with a tee. Measure 2 club lengths, mark the spot and take a drop. You will almost certainly be dropping your ball on the cart path, and you may then take cart path relief as described above. If the ball rolls across the cart path onto the fairway side, and it is still within 2 club lengths of the point of entry, then it is in play. This would be a tough break for a left-handed player, who would then get no relief. But a righty would still be standing the path when he takes his stance, and therefore would be entitled to cart path relief, as described above.

5) *And if my tee shot on 1 goes left into the penalty area? Same result?* Yes. You may take 2 club lengths from point of entry (a point on the left side of the path), and then cart path relief, if your drop leaves your ball on the cart path, or if the cart path interferes with your stance or swing.

6) *Finally, what if my approach shot on 18 ends up hole high against the fence left of the cart path?* Here, you do not get relief from the fence. If your ball is so tight against the fence that you cannot get a club on it, you'll have to take a penalty for an unplayable lie. But if, in good faith, you believe you would have hit the shot but for the cart path (you might have played it sideways, rather than take a penalty), then you get cart path relief, which may well differ for right and left handers. First mark your ball and, depending on where the flag is, walk at an angle from the ball maintaining the distance from the flag to determine where the point of stance and swing relief is. Maintaining the distance from the flag may make for different points of relief for right-handed and left-handed players.

The Rules Applied - December 2022

Rules are rules, however different formats have different rules. With team play approaching we should discuss some differences in rules for match play versus stroke play.

Concessions. Stroke play requires all holes be completed by holing out. However in match play, holes can be completed by a concession. A concession is made only when it is clearly communicated, either verbally or by an action that clearly shows the player's intent to concede the stroke or the hole. If a player lifts his ball because of a reasonable misunderstanding that the stroke or hole was conceded, there is no penalty, and the ball must be replaced on its original spot. A concession is final – once it is made, it cannot be withdrawn, and it cannot be declined (rule 3.2b(2).) Thus, if your putt has been conceded, you may not putt it, even if you would like to show your partner the line.

Practice. In stroke play a player is not allowed to practice on the course (except for designated practice areas) before a round. Violation of this is the general penalty (2 strokes) which would be applied to the player's score on the first hole (rule 5.2b). But in match play, a player may practice on the course before a round without any penalty (rule 5.2a). As a reminder, in both stroke play and match play, you may putt or chip for practice after the hole is determined (both individual and partner), as long as this does not unreasonably delay play.

Teeing outside the tee box. In stroke play, a player who plays his tee shot from outside the teeing area, is assessed the general penalty (2 strokes) and must correct the mistake by re-hitting from inside the teeing area; the ball played from outside the teeing area is not in play (rule 6.1b/2). But in match play there is no penalty; instead, the opponent may (at his option) cancel the stroke. This must be done promptly and before either player makes another stroke. If a stroke is cancelled the player must re-hit from the teeing area (with no penalty) and it is still his turn to play. But if the opponent does not cancel the stroke, the stroke counts and the ball is in play (rule 6.1b/1). One unusual situation is this: suppose a player hits from outside the tee box and hits out of bounds; his opponent, of course, does not cancel the shot. In this case, the player must take the stroke and a penalty and then re-hit from the point of his last shot. But since the last shot was not within the teeing area (and was not cancelled), the second ball must be hit from the same spot (outside the teeing area) and may not be re-teeed.

Order of play. In stroke play, it is simply a matter of courtesy that the player farthest from the hole plays first. But in match play, the rule requires that ball farthest from the hole must play first. There is no penalty for hitting out of order, but the opponent may cancel a shot which is hit out of order and require that the ball be re-hit, from the original spot, in the correct order. However, where there is a partner match, it is the partnership with the ball farthest from the hole that must go first. The partners may decide to let the closer ball go first (perhaps to give a line on the putting green), even if the player going first is closer to the hole than the opponents. Again, this only applies where one of the partners is farthest from the hole.

Playing two balls. In stroke play, where a player is uncertain as to the rules, he may play two balls and obtain a ruling after the match. But in match play, this option is not available. If there is a dispute as to the correct ruling, the players should try to come to an agreement and their

agreement will be binding (even if incorrect). (Rule 20.1b(1).) However, the players may not deliberately agree to a breach of rules. (Rule 3.2d.) If the parties cannot reach an agreement, a player may take whatever action he believes is correct; BUT the opponent may then notify the player that he intends to seek a ruling. This notice must be given by the opponent before the player begins the next hole (that is, the next hole after he learns the relevant facts). (Rule 20.1b(2).) The ruling must be obtained before the result is recorded or reported. (Rule 3.2a(5).) If the player's action was incorrect, and the ruling goes against him, he loses the hole.

Penalty/Loss of hole. In many situations, violation of the rules will result in a general penalty of 2 strokes in stroke play. However, the general penalty in match play is loss of hole. This applies, for example, where a player plays his ball from the wrong place (e.g., after causing the ball to move and not replacing it when required to do so) (9.2, 9.3), or where a player improperly cleans his ball or improves his lie (9.4, 8.1a), or if a player plays the wrong ball (6.3c).