

FHGC Local Rules -What's new in 2019

The club's local rules have been revised to reflect the changes in the Rules of Golf for 2019. Some of these changes are just terminology, but there are some new or changed local rules you need to know about.

Penalty Areas – formerly Hazards

All Penalty areas will be “Red” penalty areas. This means that for a ball in the 18th pond, lateral relief up to 2 club-lengths from the point of entry is now available.

7th hole options

The “Garden” rule remains, with the area between the southern tee block and the red tee block being a “No-play zone”, with relief from the drop zone, which will now comprise the whole closely mown area of the red tee block (instead of the orange bricks on the tee block behind the red tees). If you hit into the no play zone you get a free drop in the drop zone. You cannot tee the ball up.

In addition, if you hit a ball into the lake, in addition to relief under new rule 17.1d, you can choose to drop a ball in the drop zone for a penalty of 1 stroke. The drop zone is also available if you wish to play a provisional ball.

16th Environmentally Sensitive Area

The rule for this area, recently revised, is essentially unchanged – the ESA is a “no play zone” that is out of bounds, and if your ball is not OOB, but the no play zone interferes with your stance or swing, you must take relief.

Ball deflected by power lines

A compulsory replay of the stroke for no penalty now also applies if the ball is deflected by a supporting structure.

Immovable Obstructions

The local rule has been extended to include all paths and roadways regardless of whether they are artificially surfaced. This includes tracks worn by maintenance vehicles and carts. For example the worn area at the 4th creek crossover and the worn track along the fence RHS of 1st would qualify.

Ground Under Repair

Some major changes here include relief from exposed tree roots and rocks on the fairway or within 4 club-lengths of a closely mown area. Relief is available if the tree root or rock interferes with your stance or swing as for other GUR areas.

A fallen tree branch is also GUR, or a movable obstruction at the discretion of the player. This caters for the not uncommon case where a tree branch falls and there has not been an opportunity to mark it as GUR.

All garden beds adjoining tee blocks and the practice green are no play zones and GUR.

Alternative to Stroke and Distance

If your ball may be lost or out of bounds you should always play a provisional ball. With the time to find your ball being reduced from 5 to 3 minutes, this is even more important.

However, there may be cases where you are sure your ball will be found or is in bounds, but when you get there, the ball is out of bounds or cannot be found within 3 minutes. Previously your only option was to return to where you last hit the ball. Now you can drop a ball in a defined area near where your ball was lost or went OOB, for a penalty of 2 strokes. This area is fairly generous and even allows you to drop a ball on the fairway. Please read the full local rule and the graphic, as well as the on-line videos, to fully understand the range of options available.

More information governing local rules is available on the R&A website at

<https://www.randa.org/en/rog/2019/pages/committee-procedures>