



## TEMPORARY MODIFICATIONS TO THE RULES OF GOLF

Dear Member Clubs and Districts,

The Royal & Ancient has announced a series of temporary measures that will enable clubs to reduce any hygiene implications related to complying with the Rules of Golf.

The temporary measures are effective immediately and allow the Rules of Golf, and Model Local Rules to be modified as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

## EXAMPLES OF NEW LOCAL RULE OPTIONS

### SCORING

In view of concerns about handling and exchanging scorecards, on a temporary basis, Committees **MAY CHOOSE** to allow methods of scoring in stroke play, Stableford, Par, and Maximum Score that do not strictly comply with Rule 3.3b or do not comply with the normal methods used under Rule 3.3b. For example:

1. Players may enter their own hole scores on the scorecard (it is not necessary for a marker to do it).
2. It is not necessary to have a marker physically certify the player's hole scores, but some form of verbal certification should take place.
3. It is not necessary to physically return a scorecard to the Committee provided the Committee can accept the scores in another way.



## FLAGSTICKS

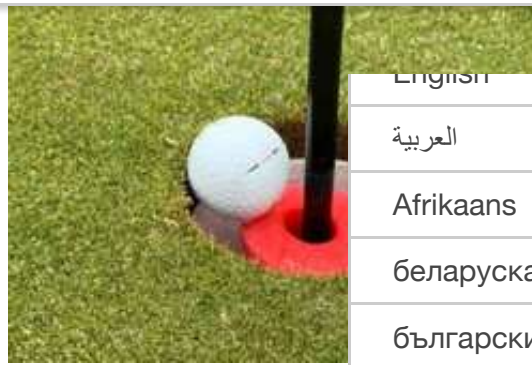
Committees **MAY CHOOSE** to adopt the following policies:

1. Requiring players to leave the flagstick in the hole at all times. It is a matter for the Committee to decide whether it establishes this policy by Local Rule and provides a penalty for a breach of the Local Rule.
2. Not have flagsticks at all.

## HOLE

Committees **MAY CHOOSE** to adopt the following policies:

1. Have course staff position the hole liner at a very shallow level so that a ball can easily be extracted without touching the sides. A ball at rest in the hole will be considered to be holed even if it is not entirely below the level of the hole.
2. Whilst discouraged, it would also be permissible for course staff to position the hole liner upside down in the hole so that a part of the liner is above the surface of the hole. The ball would be considered to be holed if it hits the liner (we emphasise that whilst this second option is permissible, it should only be pursued as a last resort).



English

العربية

Afrikaans

беларуская мова

български

català

中文 (简体)



## BUNKERS

If rakes have been removed from the course, or if the Committee has requested that rakes not be used, it is recognised that bunkers may not be smoothed as effectively as when rakes are on the course. But it is recommended that no modification be made to the Rules of Golf in such circumstances and that players be requested to smooth bunkers using their feet or a club. However, if this guidance to your members does not prove to be effective, Committees **MAY CHOOSE** to introduce either of the following Local Rule options:

1. Treat all bunkers as ground under repair and in the general area, or
2. Allow preferred lies in bunkers.



In response to the R&A's announcement, the Chairman of Golf Australia, Andrew Newbold, said: "The game of golf can offer a level of social engagement which will become increasingly important for many Australians. We want to do what we can to enable people to be provided with a recreational outlet, especially as concerns around mental and physical health will become more prominent. Golf Australia encourages every club to take advantage of this temporary flexibility that has been announced by the R&A, and to consider options which will ensure the Rules are not acting as a barrier to people getting out and enjoying the game."

When considering these new options, clubs should be mindful of the following:

- In order to take advantage of these new Local Rule options, your club will need to announce which options it is bringing into effect for play at your facility – these options do not automatically come into effect at your facility as a result of the R&A announcement.
- Scores returned from competitions with any of the new Local Rules in effect must be processed through GOLF Link unless your club has been instructed otherwise by Golf Australia or your State Association.
- These Local Rule options are temporary and are related to Covid-19 concerns. They will be available to clubs until Golf Australia advises otherwise.
- If you have a query about any of the Local Rule options, or if there are any other Local Rules you believe should be introduced at your Club to manage concerns around COVID-19, please contact [Andrew Robb](#), or e-mail [rules&handicapping@golf.org.au](mailto:rules&handicapping@golf.org.au).

We hope this information is useful to your Club.

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