

# Dinas Powis Golf Club

## New Rules 2019 Quick Guide

The new Rules of golf are a total re-write that are intended to make the rules shorter, easier to understand set of rules that will also lead to speed up the pace of play.

The rules have been reduced from 34 to 24 and many Definitions have changed or been removed.

It is important that a player understands the definitions. Here are some key ones:

### **The General Area**

This covers the entire course and basically covers the old expressions of 'through the green' and 'rough' except for the following four defined areas:

### **The Teeing Area.** (Rule 6.2)

This is defined as the area between the tee markers in play and a two-club length distance behind the markers of the hole the player is playing. It is not the whole teeing ground of the hole.

### **Penalty Areas** (Rule 17)

Used to be water hazards or lateral hazards

### **Bunkers** (Rule 12)

### **Putting Green** (Rule 13)

This is the putting green of the hole the player is playing. Any other putting green is defined as a '**wrong green**'.

The ball can only lie in one part of the course. If part of the ball lies both in the general area and a specified part of the course, then it is treated as lying in that specified part of the course.

If the ball is in two specified areas of the course such as a Penalty area and a green, then the ball is lying in the specified area that comes first in this order:

Penalty Area, bunker, putting green.

## **Objects or Conditions that can interfere with play.**

Certain rules may give free relief from interference by certain defined objects or conditions, such as:

Loose impediments Rule (15.1)

Moveable obstructions (Rule 15.2)

Abnormal course conditions which are animal holes, Ground under repair, immovable obstructions and temporary water.

## **No Play Zones**

These are defined by committee as an area where play must not take place and will be defined as part of an abnormal course condition or penalty area.

## **Penalties**

**One penalty stroke** - This is one shot added to the score in any format

**General penalty** - this is two shots added to the score in stroke play and loss of hole in match play.

**Disqualification** – Player is disqualified in any format

Here are a selection of the major rule changes I have picked out from various sources. This however is not the complete set of changes and players are advised to fully read and understand the rules.

## **Playing a ball from the teeing area (Rule 6)**

The ball must be played from the correct teeing area (refer to definition above) for the hole that is to be played.

If after teeing off the ball remains within that teeing area, then you may, play the ball as it lies, or lift it, and play that ball or another ball from anywhere within that teeing area, and the ball may be tee' d up again for your second stroke.

If you return to the teeing area to play a stroke after taking relief you may again tee that or any other ball up or play it from the ground.

## **Ball moved during search (Rule 7)**

If the player or his/her caddie moves the ball during a search (such as in long grass) then there is no longer a penalty. The ball should be replaced in the same position and conditions from which it was found if known or if not known estimated.

## **Double Hit (Rule 10)**

There is no longer any penalty for this. If in the process of that single shot the ball was hit twice or even three times it is a single stroke.

## **No positioning the club to help line up the shot (Rule 10)**

You cannot lay the club on the ground to help with your lining up of a shot, even if you do it and then pick it up.

### **Stance on line of play (Rule 10)**

A player must not make a stroke with a foot either side of the line of play, unless this is accidental or to avoid another player's line of play.

### **Advice or help (Rule 10)**

A player must not give advice to anyone in the competition who is playing the course, must not ask for advice from anybody other than the caddie and must not touch any other player's equipment to learn what would be advice if given or asked, such as lifting a club or touching clubs in a bag to see what club is being used.

### **No help from Caddie lining up shot (Rule 10)**

Mainly a professional rule but a caddie can no longer stand behind to help line up the club while the player has his/her stance and then walk away before the shot is played. The player must effectively line up his/her club shot themselves.

### **Ball hits player or equipment (Rule 11)**

If the ball now hits the player or his/her equipment (a club, bag, trolley, buggy etc.) there is no longer any penalty. However, this must be as a result of an accident

### **Touching sand in a bunker (Rule 12)**

You are now allowed to accidentally touch the sand, you can smooth out marks if they are not on the line of play and you can lean on a club. However, you must not:

Test the condition of the sand.

Ground the club behind or in front of the ball

Touch the sand in any way during a practice swing

### **Wrong green (Rule 13)**

When the ball is on a wrong green it must not be played, and the player must take relief from that green.

Previously the player could stand on the wrong green to play the ball which had been dropped on the fringe, but now the player must not stand on the green and must find the closest spot not on the green to stand and then find the point of reference and the relief area.

### **Ball moves on the green after being marked and put back (Rule 13)**

If after marking and then replacing your ball on a green, it moves by itself (gravity) or as a result of wind it must now be replaced and not be played from the area it finished. There is no penalty.

### **Ball on the green moved accidentally by the player (Rule 13)**

If the player accidentally causes his/her ball to move such as dropping a club or touching it when making a practice swing then there is no penalty, the ball must be replaced in its original position.

### **Repairing damage on the green (Rule 13)**

You may now repair all types of damage not just pitch marks and old hole plugs in the line of the putt to return a green as much as possible to its original condition. However, you cannot simply smooth out the whole line to the hole as natural imperfections are part of the game. It must be damage.

Damage to the green does not include things such as aeration holes, vertical mowing grooves, rain, weeds etc.

### **Hitting the flagstick (Rule 13)**

You can now hit the flagstick at any time and as a result can always leave the flag in the hole if you wish while putting.

### **Ball wedged on the flagstick. (Rule 13)**

If the ball is leaning against the flag stick and any part of the ball is below the level of the surface it is deemed as holed.

If the ball is wedged against the stick and no part of the ball is below the level of the surface it is not holed and must be played as it lies. If in the process of removing the flag to play the ball it falls into the hole, then it must be replaced on the lip and played from there.

You cannot wiggle or remove the flagstick to cause the ball to fall into the hole.

### **Dropping (Rule 14)**

There are a couple of things you must know before you can decide where to drop.

### **Reference Point (Definition)**

This is the nearest point of relief from the original position of the ball and is where the area of relief is measured, or the point from where the previous stroke was made.

### **Relief Area (definition)**

This is the area of one or two club lengths (depending on the rule used) not nearer the hole from the reference point.

### **Club-length (Definition)**

This used to be any club in the bag, it is now the players longest club excluding the putter.

You MUST now drop from knee height, and that is defined as the players knee height while standing straight. If you drop from shoulder height from habit, then you may re-drop from the correct height without penalty before you play the shot.

When you drop the ball, it must remain within the relief area identified. If the ball rolls outside this area it must be re-dropped. It may no longer roll up to a club length away. Two drops and then place it where it lands still applies.

### **Loose impediments (Rule 15)**

Loose impediments such as leaves, stones, twigs etc. can now be removed when in bunkers and penalty areas as well as the General area. However, the ball must still not move when doing so. If the ball does move it must be replaced and one penalty stroke applied unless on the green when there is no penalty.

### **Embedded ball (Rule 16)**

The general rule is that any ball embedded in the ground in the GENERAL AREA may be lifted cleaned and a free drop taken. However, there are several exceptions to this so please read the rule fully.

### **Penalty areas (Rule 17)**

Water hazards are now called penalty areas and may no longer contain water and allows a club to define other areas as penalty areas to speed up the game. These are still defined by yellow or red markings.

The rules regarding dropping from penalty areas have changed.

Red - you are no longer allowed to take relief on the opposite side of the penalty area from the point of entry.

You can still take relief on the opposite side of the penalty area as long as you are in line with the point of entry and the hole.

### **Touching the ground and water in a penalty area. (Rule 17)**

You may now touch the ground if you decide to play out of a penalty area and you can place your club behind the ball in the water if you decide to play.

### **Search time (Rule 18)**

You may now only have **3 minutes** to search for a ball. Once the search is commenced by the player or his/her caddie the clock starts. If the ball is not found within three minutes, it is deemed a lost ball.

### **Unplayable ball in the bunker (Rule 19)**

If you declare your ball unplayable in a bunker the options were a drop within the bunker or replay the ball from the original spot from which you played under penalty of one stroke.

These options are still available however there is now an extra option which is to find a reference point directly behind the bunker and in line with the pin and the spot of the unplayable lie but under penalty of two strokes.

### **Ready Golf**

There is no official definition for this however it is meant to speed up play and includes such actions as:

A player may play his/her own ball if they are ready and another player further away is not ready.

It may also include playing his/her own ball if ready before going to help another player search for a ball.

If it is safe to do so and not interfering with fellow players walk to your ball and prepare to play rather than waiting behind the player furthest away and then all walking up together to the next ball and so on.

Another player playing from the tee if the person holding the honor is not ready to play for some reason.

A shorter hitter playing from the tee if the players in front are within range of the person with the honor.

It is recommended that the maximum time to play a shot is 40 seconds.

Although ready golf is generally not recommended for Match Play the players may agree to play out of turn to speed up play.

If a player agrees to the opponent playing out of turn then they lose their right to cancel the stroke.

### **Maximum Score Competition (Rule 3 & 21)**

There is a new format of stroke play called Maximum Score where the maximum score for a hole is set by committee such as twice par, or a set number or a net double bogey. An example therefore would be our 17<sup>th</sup> where the maximum score could be 8 which would result in a net double bogey for a player off 28.

We may introduce this type of competition in the summer once the Handicap system used for entering scores is updated to reflect it.

### **Alternative to Stroke & Distance – Local rule.**

The club has an option to introduce a local rule which would provide an alternative to the stroke and distance rule when a ball is lost or out of bounds.

The option was to allow a player to drop a ball on a closely mown area estimated as the nearest point to where the ball is thought to have been lost or out of bounds and not nearer the hole under a penalty of two strokes.

Critically however CONGU have declared this local rule cannot be used in qualifying competitions. i.e. competitions where handicaps may be adjusted which are most of our competitions during the main golfing season or in supplementary Scores.

It can be used in social golf to help the pace of play; however, it is believed that having such a local rule available could lead to confusion and disqualification if used by players in qualifying competitions.

Therefore, we will not be introducing this rule at this time, but it can be reconsidered. Many clubs are taking this initial stance and are waiting to see if CONGU change their decision in the future.

Ian Hearne  
(On behalf of Match Committee)