

ASK THE CAPTAIN

Q. MEMBER – Why do we have a drop zone on hole 9 & 18?

A. CAPTAIN – A decision was made to mark the bush on 9 & 18 as a penalty area as there is water in both cases and often golfers were not sure if they entered the lateral hazard or not. The new rules now allow clubs to mark areas that do not contain water as a penalty area. This decision was made to clear up any doubt as to whether you are in the penalty area or not. A relief option for a penalty area is lateral relief from point of entry. Due to the fact that you cannot always be virtually certain of where the ball crossed the penalty area, we decided to introduce an extra option which is the DROP ZONE. There is provision in the new rules for us to exclude the option of lateral relief, however, we were advised by the R&A to not introduce this rule as it clearly disadvantages the golfer who knows where his ball crossed the penalty area. Their feeling was that golf relies on integrity, and those golfers who do not know where their ball crossed, will use the drop zone. We will be monitoring this situation and should we get reports that golfers are choosing to take lateral relief at a point far closer to the hole than where it crossed, we may change the local rule to 'exclude' the lateral relief option.

Q. MEMBER – What has happened to the GPS System on the carts?

A. CAPTAIN – The system that we had in the carts become obsolete and our service provider informed us that we had to replace them due to a frequency licence issue. They provided us with new ones that proved to give endless faults, resulting in a decision being made to remove them. At this point in time the Council is investigated the feasibility of sourcing other units and are assessing the financial implications of the units.

Q. MEMBER – I believe that some golfers give putts in competitions. Is this allowed?

A. CAPTAIN - Before answering this question, I needed to understand if the member was referring to match-play or stroke-play. In match-play, it is allowed because it is a match between two players or two teams and the opponent can give a putt.

Stroke –Play on the other hand, is a tournament between a player or team and all the competitors in the field. It is therefore obvious that no person can give a putt on behalf of the rest of the field.

Should a putt not be holed according to rule 3.3c, the player will either be disqualified in a medal competition, receive zero points for the hole in Stableford, or receive the maximum score in a Maximum Score competition.

Q. MEMBER – Why do we not cut a path from the tee box to the fairway anymore?

A. CAPTAIN – A decision was made by council and Nicholas that this practice on a course with such high rounds will result in a path been worn due to high pedestrian traffic. If we were to continually move the path to avoid this, it would spoil the aesthetics with two or three different length paths. One member did advise me that the semi-rough causes your shoes to get wet from dew, but unless you play a whole round without searching for your ball or a fellow competitor's ball, you will get your shoes wet anyway. I trust you respect our decision.

Q. MEMBER - Why do we not have preferred lies anymore?

A. CAPTAIN - We have suspended preferred lies following recommendation from Golf RSA to play the game according to the rules of golf as per the R&A. Rule 1.1 requires you to play the course as you find it and play the ball as it lies. We have been doing this for centuries in the bunker, in hazards and in the rough, and now we need to learn to do it on the fairways as well.

Q. MEMBER – I have heard that a new Local Rule will now be available in January 2019, permitting committees to allow golfers the option to drop the ball in the vicinity of where the ball is lost or out of bounds (including the nearest fairway area), under a two-stroke penalty. Does this local rule apply at George?

A. CAPTAIN – This local rule has NOT been adopted at George. If your ball is *lost or out of bounds*, you must take *stroke-and-distance* relief by adding **one penalty stroke** and playing a ball from where the previous *stroke* was made (see Rule 14.6)

Q. MEMBER – Is there a reason why some dry areas are not marked G.U.R on the fairways?

A. CAPTAIN – G.U.R stands for Ground Under Repair and means exactly that. When the course staff undertake repairs to an area, that area becomes an abnormal course condition and is not regarded as part of the challenge of playing the course. Dry or slightly bare patches are part of the challenge. Our course staff will obviously try and maintain the fairways as best as they can.