

Toby McGeachie on the “New Rules of Golf

Two months in to the new rules of golf that have been applied by the R&A there have been plenty of discussion amongst the members here at KGC. After hearing all your questions I have put together a document below that explain a few rule changes to the most topical matters.....

Flagstick

Many groups are finding they have differing views on whether they should keep the flagstick in the hole. While this change was aimed at speeding up play, and in most instances working well, there are times when different players within a group will want the flag left in, or removed, and this is also dependent on the length of putt. Therefore, we advise golfers to be vigilant to the needs of others.

Knee Height Drop

The biggest “habitual” change most players have encountered is dropping the ball from knee height. Many have queried as to why the initial dropping height of shoulder height was extinguished, the response is that dropping from any higher than knee height may enhance likelihood for a re-drop because of a bigger bounce, thus slowing down the process. Knee height aims to reduce the amount of drops necessary to keep the ball in the relief area.

Penalty Areas

Not only have these gone through a name change, you are also now permitted to ground your club and move loose impediments while in there. This has been a very welcome change for those new to the game and gives us the ability to feel more relaxed when entering the penalty area.

Bunkers

“What do you mean I can move loose impediments in a bunker, but I can’t ground my club when addressing the ball?” This has created the most confusion as many had heard the restriction on grounding your club had been removed. This is not the case, but it has been loosened. You are only penalised if you ground your club immediately in front of, or right behind the ball, or in a backswing or practice swing. Testing, most definitely remains a no-no

Local Rules for a ball out of bounds Not a Rule of Golf

There has been a major change in the rules with golf clubs having the ability to now to apply a local rule that, you can drop a ball adjacent to where your last ball crossed the boundary line (this is called stroke and distance) Kiama has **NOT** adopted this rule at this point in time. Please notify you’re playing partners that this is not a rule of golf and just a local rules at some certain clubs.

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