

WINTER RULES

The following rules reference the USGA Rules of Golf and the Decisions on the Rules of Golf.
These were Adopted by the MGA Board of Directors February 10, 2010

Winter Rule # 1 – Relief From Temporary Conditions

(Ref: Decisions on the Rules of Golf, Appendix 1, Part B, Specimen Local Rules)

Temporary conditions such as mud, extreme wetness, and poor conditions may call for “preferred lies”.

1. Relief for embedded ball; cleaning ball: (Ref: USGA Rule 25-2)

USGA 25-2, Embedded Ball reads as such:

A ball embedded in its own pitch-mark in the ground in any closely mown area *through the green* may be lifted, cleaned and dropped, without penalty, as near as possible to the spot where it lay but not nearer the *hole*. The ball when dropped must first strike a part of the *course through the green*. “Closely mown area” means any area of the *course*, including paths through the rough, cut to fairway height or less.

Exception: A player may not take relief under this Local Rule if it is clearly unreasonable for the player to play a stroke because of interference by anything other than the condition covered by this Local Rule.

USGA Rule 24 (Obstructions); and USGA Rule 28 (Ball Unplayable), apply.

2. “Preferred Lies”:
 - a) If a player’s ball lies on a closely mown area (Fairway) through the green the player may mark, lift and clean his ball without penalty. BEFORE lifting, he must MARK the position of the ball, the player must then place the ball on a spot within one club length of and not nearer the hole than where it originally lay that is not in a hazard, or on a putting green.
 - b) A ball in any area “through the green” other than the closely mown area (Fairway) may be cleaned and dropped, without penalty, as near as possible to the spot where it lay, no nearer the hole.

Exception: A player may not take relief under this Local Rule if it is clearly unreasonable for the player to play a stroke because of interference by anything other than the condition covered by this Local Rule.

USGA Rule 24 (Obstructions); and USGA Rule 28 (Ball Unplayable), apply.
 - c) A player may place his ball only once, and it is in play when it has been placed (USGA Rule 20-4). If the ball fails to come to rest on the spot on which it was placed, USGA Rule 20-3d applies. If the ball subsequently moves, there is no penalty and the ball must be played as it lies unless the provisions of any other Rule apply.
 - d) If the player fails to mark the position of the ball before lifting it, or moves the ball in ANY OTHER MANNER, such as rolling it with a club, a one stroke penalty is incurred.
 - e) A physical (medical) condition that precludes compliance with Winter Rule #1 is covered under Winter Play #5, listed above.