

# Firewheel Senior Golf Association

## Local Rules for 2017

### Playing Rules:

#### 1. Putts:

- A. All putts must be holed during official FSGA Tournaments, events, and optional competitions.
- B. The practice of conceding putts is discouraged during normal play days and informal rounds. However, casual play, putts *may* be conceded. There is no official FSGA standard for the length of putt that may be conceded; it is a matter of cordiality between playing companions whenever *not* engaged in events described in part A of this rule.
- C. No 'putting balls' are allowed. i.e. – the ball hit to the green must also be used for putting. [Note: This is not a rule change, merely an explanation that Rules of Golf 15-1, 15-2, & 16-1b apply.]
- D. On the putting green there is no penalty if the player, his partner, his opponent, caddies, or equipment accidentally moves the ball or ball-marker. Replace the ball or ball-marker.

#### 2. Ready Golf:

'Ready golf' will be played 'tee to green'. Shots can be played when the player becomes ready and the shot (stroke) does not interfere with another player or their line of play if on the green. When putting, player should putt out when practical. No 'Honors' are required on the tee box.

#### 3. Lateral Hazards / Water Hazards:

A ball in a hazard (as marked by a series of red or yellow stakes and/or lines painted on the ground) cannot be moved, nor can you ground your club in the hazard. Additionally, *nothing* in the hazard may be touched, moved, nor removed while the player's ball remains within the hazard. Refer to Local Rule # 6.C for specific exceptions to this requirement.

If your ball cannot be hit out of the hazard, then the 'unplayable lie' rule and penalty will apply (one stroke penalty). The player may drop a ball one (1) club length back from the hazard line, no closer to the hole. 'Line of flight' will be used to mark entry into the hazard. If upon arrival at the hazard, the player's ball cannot be found within three minutes then the 'lost ball' rule will apply. All creeks and ponds are considered lateral hazards and played accordingly. [Note: The player may always proceed according to the Rules of Golf. Rules 26, 27, & 28 may be applicable.]

#### 4. Out of Bounds:

All fences separating the golf course from housing areas, fields, streets, and roads are considered out of bounds. White stakes also mark out of bounds. All streets and backyards are out of bounds. If a player's ball is thought to be out of bounds, the player may either hit a provisional ball according to the rules of golf, or advance directly to the area where the ball is likely to be found. If the original ball is found to be in bounds, then it must be played and the player incurs no penalty. If the original ball is found to be out of bounds, the player is assessed a one-stroke penalty. The player then either continues play with the provisional ball, or drops a new ball at a point within one (1) club length of where the original ball went out of bounds and continues play from that point in a manner similar to playing the hole as a lateral hazard. It is the player's responsibility to determine where the original ball first crossed over the 'out of bounds' line, and then drop at that point (no closer to the hole).

[Note: If a provisional ball is hit and the first ball is not in bounds, then the player must play the provisional ball thus incurring a stroke and distance penalty.]

#### 5. Lost Ball:

If a player's ball might be lost, the player may hit a provisional ball with a one-stroke penalty. If a provisional ball is not hit, then the player may drop as near as possible to where the ball should be and add one penalty stroke. [Note: If a provisional ball is hit and the first ball is not found, then you must play the provisional ball thus incurring a stroke and distance penalty.]

Time limit on 'lost ball' searches is three minutes. A maximum of one (1) 3-minute search per hole, per player is allowed for lost balls.

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### 6. Sand Bunkers:

- A. Bunkers will be played down, unless announced otherwise on tournament or play day. It is a one stroke penalty to ground your club whenever playing from a bunker.
- B. If a player's ball comes to rest in a footprint or poorly conditioned area within the bunker, then the player is allowed to 'Lift, Rake, & Place' their ball without penalty as near as possible to the original location (no closer to the hole).
- C. Stones in bunkers are movable obstructions (Rules of Golf 24-1 applies).
- D. Unplayable bunkers may be announced prior to the start of play. If the bunkers are deemed *officially unplayable*, then *all* bunkers must be played as '*ground under repair*'. As such, a player must drop their ball without penalty at the nearest point of relief outside the bunker (no closer to the hole). Once dropped, the ball is 'in play' and the player may then proceed in accordance with our other local rules and the Rules of Golf. [For example, a player may then choose to improve their lie (where permitted) in accordance with our local rules.]

### 7. Improving the Lie of a Ball in Play:

Ball may be moved one club length (no closer to the hole) anywhere except for hazards, bunkers, and adjacent to/on the green. When moving a ball in accordance with this rule, the ball must not be moved from rough to fairway or fairway to rough. This rule may also be used to provide relief (within one club length) from naturally occurring obstacles such as trees, shrubs, rocks, etc. that are not within a hazard. Such relief does not necessarily guarantee that a player will have a clear shot or be free of interference to stance or swing. This rule does not apply to a ball on the green or within three feet of the putting surface of a green. A ball adjacent to/or on the putting surface as described above must be played from its resting position (down). [The ball may be cleaned any time you are allowed to move it in accordance with this rule. A ball in a hazard may not be touched or cleaned unless specifically allowed by The Rules of Golf.]

### 8. Immoveable Obstructions:

A ball in play may be moved away from man-made objects that interfere with a player's stance or swing. Without penalty, a ball may be moved a maximum of one club length (no closer to the hole) from staked trees, hydrants, bridges, cart paths, sprinkler heads, control boxes, utility towers / guy wires, and other, similar man-made objects, including fences that are not part of the course boundary. This rule applies only to areas of the course that are through the green and not areas marked as hazards, or out-of-bounds.

### 9. Unplayable Ball:

Firewheel has a number of dense briar-type patches of undergrowth on the course. Additionally, there are drainage/marshy areas that often collect and retain water. These areas are to be treated as 'lateral hazards' and played accordingly.

### 10. Maximum Number of Strokes per Hole:

The maximum score on any given hole is double par. [If your score is already one less than double par, then you may pick up your ball and proceed to the next tee in order to speed up play.]

### 11. Pace of Play:

Any group which falls more than one full hole behind the pace-of-play must skip the open hole and resume play behind the preceding group to restore pace of play. Players will then record the maximum number of strokes for the open hole. This rule may be invoked by the Firewheel staff such as the course *marshals* or by the group that is being delayed [see Disputes and Decisions rule]. Alternatively, the overtaking group can be allowed to 'play through'. The exception to this rule is if the group in front has less than three (3) playing members while the group being overtaken is playing 'on pace'. The overtaking group should then be allowed to 'play through' at the next available opportunity.

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**12. Ball Striking Electrical Power Line:**

Balls striking an electrical power line (not tower or guy wires), must be replayed from origin of stroke, without penalty.

**13. Casual Water:**

There is no penalty for a ball in casual water. (Casual water is any temporary water on the course, which is visible before or after a player takes their stance.) The player is entitled to relief from casual water, within one club length of the point of nearest relief (no nearer the hole). Don't waste excessive time looking for a ball in casual water. Remember, a ball cannot be lost in casual water. If a ball is known to have gone into casual water and cannot be found, a new ball may be played without penalty. [Note: This is not a rule change, merely an explanation of the Rules of Golf for the purpose of speeding play.]

**14. Leaf Rule / Ground Under Repair:**

If there is reasonable evidence that a player's ball entered an area of accumulated leaves, either naturally occurring or man-made as when leaves are piled for removal, then the area can be treated as ground under repair / casual water and the player is entitled to relief. Such an area must be through the green – not in a bunker or hazard. If the ball is found, then the player can place their ball within one club length of the nearest point of relief (no nearer the hole). If the ball cannot be found, then a new ball can be placed within one club length of the probable entry point into the area without penalty (no nearer the hole).

**15. Crossing Hazards / Drop Areas:**

If a player's ball does not clear the crossing hazard on certain designated holes, then the player incurs a one-stroke penalty and must either replay the shot according to the rules of golf or proceed to the opposite side of the hazard. If the player chooses to play from the opposite (green) side of the hazard, then the ball is to be dropped within one (1) club length of a specified FSGA dropping point or where the original line of play would have crossed the hazard boundary. The player will then play subsequent shots from that point.

Designated holes are:

Old Course hole number 14	(par 4)
Lakes Course hole number 10	(par 4/5)

[This rule is specifically intended to speed play by allowing the player the option of not returning to the previous (tee) side of the hazard after crossing it in a 'good faith' effort to locate said player's ball.]

**16. Teeing Ground:**

The FSGA uses the following tees for tournaments:

Men play from the white tee markers;

Women play from the red tee markers.

Players 80 years of age or older may move forward by one tee to the next *rated tee*. Players turning 80 within the calendar year may also move forward. Rated tees vary from course to course; consult with the 'Committee' governing play or the Firewheel staff for information specific to each course.

**17. Mulligan:**

No 'mulligans' are permitted in official FSGA tournaments or optional competitions. In the interest of pace of play, 'mulligans' are discouraged during normal play days.

**18. Distance - Measuring Devices:**

A player may obtain distance information by using a device that measures or gauges distance only (Rules of Golf 14-3, notes).

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### 19. Disputes and Decisions:

The FSGA does not appoint a *referee* or other *rules officials* for actual on-the-course play. As such, the members are expected to be self-officiating and conduct play in accordance with the Rules of Golf. If during play a player has doubts as to procedure, said player should follow the Rules of Golf (Rules of Golf 3-3 for stroke play). Any dispute or doubtful point on the rules must then be referred to the 'Committee' governing play (Rules of Golf 34-3 for stroke play). The 'Committee' will decide any dispute at the conclusion of on-the-course play.

Course *marshals* employed by the Firewheel staff are empowered to monitor/enforce pace of play, ready golf, lost ball time limit, mulligan, and other similar issues.

### Non-Playing Rules:

#### 1. Tournament Participation:

In order to participate in official FSGA Tournaments (Association Tournaments), all players must meet the following requirements:

- A. Player must be a member in good standing.
- B. Player must have an official FSGA handicap.
- C. Player must have played with the FSGA at least once during the 4 weeks immediately prior to the specific tournament. Such play shall be other than in an official Association Tournament.

#### 2. Signed Score Cards:

All members are required to turn in an official, signed score card after each round played with the FSGA. Each scorecard must include the player's signature, the date, the scores for each player, the tees played, plus printed first & last names. All players are required to sign their score card for the round. If a player is entered in an optional competition (unofficial weekly pot), then such entry *must* be indicated on the scorecard. Duplicate score cards must not be submitted. Each scorecard must include at least two signatures; therefore no card from a member playing alone is acceptable.

It is recommended that when more than two play as a group, the scores of all players should be recorded on a single card with the corresponding signatures of all the players. (This is a courtesy to the staff and the handicap committee that greatly simplifies the scoring process.)

#### 3. Handicaps:

All FSGA handicaps are based upon player's scores in the GHIN handicap system maintained by Firewheel. (A portion of league dues is allocated to this purpose.) Scores from official, signed scorecards are entered into the system on a periodic basis. (Other official scores may also be entered.) An official GHIN Handicap Index will be used for all tournaments. Until sufficient scorecards are accumulated, a manually calculated FSGA handicap will be used based upon the player's scores to date. No retroactive handicapping system will be used for official tournaments (i.e. – Callaway, Peoria, etc.).

#### 4. Deciding Ties:

The FSGA uses a scorecard playoff system to break ties. Unless announced otherwise on tournament or optional competition day, replaying the scorecard in reverse order beginning with the 18th hole breaks ties. Gross scores are used in tie-breaking situations.

#### 5. Course Rating:

For equitable tournament play, each individual player's *course handicap* will be used according to USGA recommendations. Determination of the player's course handicap includes the player's Handicap Index, USGA Course Rating, and USGA Slope Rating. (Individual course ratings are specific for each gender, different course, and different tee.)