



2026 NCAA MEN'S GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS

LIST OF MODEL LOCAL RULES ON NCAA MEN'S HARD CARD

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Complete Text of Model Local Rules on NCAA Men's Hard Card

Animal Near Ball

Model Local Rule E-13

"A player may remove an *animal*, other than those defined as a *loose impediment*, that is touching or near their ball without penalty and may do so in any way.

If the player's ball *moves* while they are removing the *animal*:

- There is no penalty, and
- The ball must be *replaced* on its original spot (which if not known must be estimated) (see Rule 14.2).

Player Has Not Played From Wrong Place When Unaware Ball Might Have Moved

Model Local Rule E-14

"If a player causes their ball at rest to move and they fail to replace it before making their next *stroke* when they were neither aware that the ball had moved nor that it might have *moved*, the player gets **one penalty stroke** under Rule 9.4b (unless any of the exceptions under that Rule apply) but has not played from a *wrong place* if it subsequently becomes known that they caused the ball to *move*.

But when a player is aware their ball at rest might have *moved* and fails to replace it before making their next *stroke*, the player gets the **general penalty** for playing from a *wrong place* under Rule 14.7a if it subsequently becomes known that they caused the ball to *move*. The **general penalty** applies even if the ball was not replaced because the player incorrectly determined that it did not *move* or that they were not the cause."

Temporary Lines and Cables

Model Local Rule F22

Temporary lines and cables for power and communications (and mats covering or poles supporting them) are obstructions:

1. If they can be moved with reasonable effort and without damaging the obstruction or the course, they are movable obstructions and a player may remove them without penalty under Rule 15.2
2. Otherwise they are immovable obstructions from which the player may take relief as follows:

(a) Ball in General Area or in Bunker. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1.

(b) Ball in Penalty Area. Rule 16.1b is modified to allow the player the extra option to take free relief from interference by these immovable obstructions in a penalty area by dropping a ball and playing it from this relief area:

- Reference Point: The nearest point of complete relief in the penalty area.
- Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: One club-length, but with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:

Must be in the penalty area in which the ball came to rest,
Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and
There must be complete relief from all interference by the immovable obstruction.

3. If it is known or virtually certain that a player's ball hits a temporary elevated line or cable, the player must replay the stroke by playing the original ball or another ball from the spot where that stroke was made (see Rule 14.6).

If the player replays the stroke but does so from a wrong place, they get the **general penalty** under Rule 14.7.

If the player does not replay the stroke, they get the **general penalty** and the stroke counts, but the player has not played from a wrong place.

4. Grass-covered trenches for temporary lines or cables in the general area are ground under repair, even if not marked. The player may take free relief under Rule 16.1.

But there are two exceptions:

- **Exception 1 – Ball Strikes Elevated Cable That Rises from the Ground:** If a ball hits an elevated section of cable rising from the ground, the stroke counts, and the ball must be played as it lies.
- **Exception 2 – Ball Strikes Wires Supporting Temporary Immovable Obstruction:** Guy wires supporting a temporary immovable obstruction (TIO) are part of the TIO and are not covered by this Local Rule, unless the Committee states that the guy wires are to be treated as temporary elevated lines or cables under this Local Rule.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.

Temporary Immovable Obstructions

Model Local Rule F-23

Definition of TIO: A temporary immovable obstruction (TIO) is a structure that is temporarily placed on or next to the course, usually for a particular competition, and is fixed or does not meet the definition of movable obstruction.

Examples of TIOs are temporary tents, scoreboards, grandstands, television towers and toilets.

TIOs include any supporting guy wires connected to them, except when the Committee decides the supporting guy wires are to be treated as immovable obstructions or as temporary elevated lines or cables using Model Local Rule F-22.

The outermost edge of the TIO is used in determining whether a ball is under the TIO or whether the TIO is on the player's line of sight between the ball and the hole.

Lines or stakes may be used to define the edges of a TIO or to connect multiple TIOs into a single, larger TIO.

A TIO is different from an immovable obstruction and this Local Rule provides additional relief from interference by a TIO. This means that the player can choose to take relief by using either:

- The procedure for taking relief from an abnormal course condition in Rule 16.1 as if the TIO were an immovable obstruction (this relief is also available when the ball lies in a penalty area or when the TIO is out of bounds), or
- The additional relief option available under this Local Rule.

a. When Relief Is Allowed

Relief from a TIO is normally allowed when there is physical interference or line of sight interference from the TIO.

Interference under this Local Rule means that the player has:

- Physical interference,
- Line of sight interference, or
- Both physical and line of sight interference.

(1) Meaning of Physical Interference by Temporary Immovable Obstruction. Physical interference exists when:

- The player's ball touches or lies in or on a TIO, or
- The TIO interferes with the player's area of intended stance or area of intended swing.

(2) Meaning of Line of Sight Interference by Temporary Immovable Obstruction. Line of sight interference exists when:

- The player's ball touches or lies in, on or under a TIO, or
- The TIO is on the player's line of sight to the hole (that is, the TIO is located on the straight line between the ball and the hole), or
- The ball is within one club-length, measured on an equidistant arc from the hole, of a spot where the TIO would be on the player's direct line of sight to the hole (this one club-length wide area is commonly referred to as the "corridor").

(3) When No Relief Is Available Despite Having Interference. If the ball touches or is in or on the TIO, relief is always available.

But when the ball neither touches nor is in or on the TIO, there is **no** relief under this Local Rule if any of the following applies:

- From either physical interference or line of sight interference:

There is no relief when playing the ball as it lies would be clearly unreasonable because of something from which the player is not allowed to take free relief (such as when the player is unable to make a stroke because of where the ball lies in a bush outside the TIO), and

There is no free relief when interference exists only because the player chooses a club, type of stance or swing or direction of play that is clearly unreasonable under the circumstances; and

- From line of sight interference:

There is no relief when it is clearly unreasonable for a player to play the ball far enough that the ball will reach the TIO, and

There is no relief when the player cannot show that there is a stroke that they could reasonably make that would both (a) have the TIO (including the corridor) on the line of that stroke, and (b) result in the ball finishing on a direct line to the hole.

b. Relief from Interference for Ball in General Area:

If the player's ball is in the general area and there is interference by a TIO (including a TIO located out of bounds), the player may take free relief by dropping the original ball or another ball in and playing it from this relief area:

- Reference Point: The nearest point of complete relief where both physical and line of sight interference no longer exist.
- Size of Relief Area from Reference Point: The entire area within one club-length from the reference point, but with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:

Must be in the general area,

Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and

There must be complete relief from both physical and line of sight interference by the TIO.

If the player has physical interference from the TIO, instead of using this relief procedure they may choose to take relief using the procedure for taking relief from an abnormal course condition in Rule 16.1, treating the TIO as if it were an immovable obstruction. The relief procedure under Rule 16.1 is also available when the ball lies in a penalty area or when the TIO is out of bounds. See Clause f of this Local Rule for how the player may proceed under other relief Rules.

c. Relief from Interference for Ball in Bunker or Penalty Area

If the player's ball is in a bunker or a penalty area and there is interference by a TIO (including a TIO located out of bounds), the player may take either free relief or penalty relief:

- (1) Free Relief: Playing from Bunker or Penalty Area. The player may take free relief as provided in Clause b, except that the nearest point of complete relief where interference no longer exists, and the relief area must be in that bunker or penalty area.

If there is no such point in that bunker or penalty area where interference no longer exists, the player may still take this relief as provided above by using the point of maximum available relief in the bunker or the penalty area as the reference point.

- (2) Penalty Relief: Playing from Outside Bunker or Penalty Area. For **one penalty stroke**, the player may drop the original ball or another ball in and play it from this relief area:

- Reference Point: The nearest point of complete relief not nearer the hole where both physical and line of sight interference no longer exist that is outside that bunker or penalty area.
- Size of Relief Area from Reference Point: The entire area one club-length from the reference point, but with these limits:
- Limits on Location of Relief Area:

Any area of the course other than in that bunker or penalty area or on any putting green,

Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and

There must be complete relief from both physical and line of sight interference by the TIO.

If the player has physical interference from the TIO, instead of using this relief procedure they may choose to take relief using the procedure for taking relief from an abnormal course condition in Rule 16.1c, treating the TIO as if it were an immovable obstruction.

The relief procedure under Rule 16.1b is also available when the TIO is out of bounds or when ball lies in a penalty area. If the ball lies in a penalty area, the reference point and relief area must be in that penalty area.

See Clause f of this Local Rule for how the player may proceed under other relief Rules.

d. Relief When Ball in TIO Not Found

If the player's ball has not been found but is known or virtually certain to have come to rest in a TIO:

- The player may take relief under this Local Rule by using the estimated point where the ball last crossed the edge of the TIO on the course as the spot of the ball for purposes of finding the nearest point of complete relief.
- Once the player puts another ball in play to take relief in this way:

The original ball is no longer in play and must not be played.

This is true even if it is then found on the course before the end of the three-minute search time (see Rule 6.3b).

But if it is not known or virtually certain that the ball came to rest in the TIO, the player must play under penalty of stroke and distance (see Rule 18.2).

e. Committee Authority to Modify TIO Relief Procedures

When adopting this Local Rule, the Committee may modify the relief procedures in Clauses b and c in either or both of the following ways:

(1) Optional or Mandatory Use of Dropping Zones. The Committee may permit or require a player to use a dropping zone as the relief area for taking relief under this Local Rule. When doing so, the Committee may add the dropping zone for relief from only physical interference or only line of sight interference or it may be used for relief from both types of interference.

(2) "Either Side" Relief Option. The Committee may permit the player the option to take relief on the other side of a TIO in addition to the relief options allowed under Clauses b and c of this Local Rule. **But** the option to take relief on either side does not apply when using the procedure in Rule 16.1.

f. Player May Proceed Under Other Relief Rules

(1) Taking Relief by Using the Procedures in Rule 16.1 or this Local Rule. If a player has physical interference from the TIO as defined in Clause a, the player may either:

- Choose to use the relief procedures in Rule 16.1 or
- Use this Local Rule.

But the player may not take relief under one of these options and then take relief under the other.

If the player chooses to use the procedure for taking relief from an abnormal course condition in Rule 16.1, they must treat the TIO as if it is an immovable obstruction and take relief based on where the ball lies:

- In the general area using the procedures in Rule 16.1b.
- In a bunker using the procedures in Rule 16.1c.
- In a penalty area using the procedures in Rule 16.1c as if the ball lies in a bunker.
- On the putting green using the procedures in Rule 16.1d.

(2) Taking Relief under Rule 17, 18 or 19. This Local Rule does not prevent the player from taking relief under Rule 17, 18 or 19 rather than taking TIO relief under this Local Rule.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a

List of Conforming Driver Heads

Model Local Rule G-1

Any driver the player uses to make a stroke must have a clubhead, identified by model and loft, which is on the current List of Conforming Driver Heads issued by the USGA.

This list is regularly updated and is found at www.USGA.org.

Exception – Pre-1999 Driver Heads: A driver with a clubhead that was made before 1999 is exempt from this Local Rule.

Penalty for Making a Stroke with Club in Breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.

There is no penalty under this Local Rule for carrying but not making a *stroke* with a driver that is not on the List of Conforming Driver Heads.

Groove and Punch Mark Specifications

Model Local Rule G-2

In making a *stroke*, the player must use clubs that conform to the groove and punch mark specifications in the *Equipment Rules* that took effect on 1 January 2010.

An Informational Club Database of fairway woods, hybrids, irons and wedges which have been tested for conformance to the current *Equipment Rules* is found at www.USGA.org.

Exception – Ping Eye2 Irons Manufactured before 31 March 1990: Ping Eye2 irons manufactured before 31 March 1990 with a groove spacing to groove width ratio of 2.3 to 1 are allowed for play under the Rules of Golf, even when this Local Rule is in effect. In using this Exception, the player is responsible for proving when the club was manufactured. If the player cannot do so, the club must conform to the groove and punch mark specifications that took effect on 1 January 2010.

Penalty for Making a Stroke with Club in Breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.

There is no penalty under this Local Rule for carrying but not making stroke with a club which does not conform to these groove and punch mark specifications.

List of Conforming Golf Balls

Model Local Rule G-3

Any ball used in making a stroke must be on the current List of Conforming Golf Balls issued by the USGA.

This list is regularly updated and is found at www.USGA.org.

If a ball that is not on the List of Conforming Golf Balls is dropped, replaced or placed but has not yet been played, the player may correct the mistake, without penalty, under Rule 14.5.

Penalty for Making a Stroke with a Ball Not on Current List in Breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.

One Ball Rule

Model Local Rule G-4

During a round, each ball at which the player makes stroke must be the same brand and model as found in a single entry on the current List of Conforming Balls.

If a different brand and/or model is *dropped*, *replaced* or placed but has not yet been played, the player may correct the mistake, without penalty, under Rule 14.5. When correcting the mistake the player must *drop*, *replace* or place a ball of the same brand and model as used at the start of the round.

When the player discovers they have played a ball in breach of this Local Rule, they must revert to using a ball of the same brand and model as used at the start of the round when they play from the next teeing; otherwise the player is **disqualified**.

If the discovery is made during the play of a hole, the player may complete play of this hole with the ball played in breach or place a ball of the correct brand and model on the spot where the ball played in breach of this Local Rule was lifted from.

Penalty for Making a Stroke at a Ball in Breach of Local Rule: The player gets **one penalty stroke** for each hole during which they are in breach of this Local Rule.

Prohibiting Use of Certain Types of Shoes

Model Local Rule G-7

Rule 4.3a is modified in this way:

During a *round*, a player must not make a stroke while wearing shoes with:

Traditional spikes – that is, spikes having single or multiple points designed to penetrate deeply into the surface of the ground (regardless of whether made of metal, ceramic, plastic or other materials); or

Spikes of any design that are entirely or partially made of metal, if such metal may come in contact with the *course*.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – see penalty statement to Rule 4.3.

Prohibiting Use of Audio or Video Devices

Model Local Rule G-8

Rule 4.3a(4) is modified in this way:

During a round, a player must not listen to or watch content of any nature on a personal or audio or video device.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – see penalty statement to Rule 4.3.

Replacing Club that is Broken or Significantly Damaged

Model Local Rule G-9

“Rule 4.1a(2) applies but is modified in these ways:

1. A club damaged by the player or their *caddie* during the *round* or while play is stopped under Rule 5.7a may only be replaced if the damage was not caused by abuse and if the club is broken or the damage is significant.

For the purposes of this Local Rule, examples of when a club is “broken or the damage is significant” include:

Shaft:

- The shaft is in pieces, or it is bent, dented, kinked or splintered.

Clubhead (except Club Face):

- The clubhead is visibly cracked or substantially deformed (but not when it is only scratched, chipped or has a minor dent),
- The clubhead is loose or no longer attached to the shaft, or
- A part inside the clubhead is loose (such as when there is an audible rattle).

Club Face:

- The club face is visibly cracked or deformed (including when it has a chip or minor dent but not when it is only scratched).

Grip:

- The grip or part of it is loose.

2. When replacing a club under this local rule:

- The replacement club must fill the gap created when the player took the broken or damaged club out of play to ensure the progression of the set is maintained.
- Rule 4.1b(4) is modified to allow a replacement club to be built from parts being carried by or for the player or any other player who is playing on the *course*. But the other restrictions of Rule 4.1b(4) continue to apply. For example, the player must not add or borrow any club being carried by or for any other player who is playing on the *course*.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – See Rule 4.1b.”

Prohibiting Use of Clubs Longer than 46 Inches

Model Local Rule G-10

In making a stroke, the player must not use a club, except for a putter, which exceeds 46 inches in length.

Penalty for Making a Stroke with a Club in Breach of this Local Rule: Disqualification.

There is no penalty under this Local Rule for carrying but not making a stroke with a club which does not conform to these length specifications.

Modification of Penalty Under Rule 3.3b(2) for Missing Player or Marker Certification.

Model Local Rule L-1

Rule 3.3b(2) is modified in this way:

If a player returns a scorecard without the hole scores being certified either by the player, the marker or both the player gets the **general penalty (two penalty strokes)**.

The penalty applies to the last hole of the player's round.

Use of Caddie Prohibited

Model Local Rule H-1.1

A player must not have a caddie during the round.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule: The player gets the **general penalty** for each hole during which they have a caddie. If the breach happens or continues between two holes, the player gets the **general penalty** for the next hole.