

# The VGA Eagle

First Quarter 2020

The Board decided to **drop the 6,000 yard minimum tees for men and the 5,000 yard minimum tees for women** in favor of allowing members to choose **any men's rated tee for men and any women's rated tee for women**. The decision is a reflection on the new handicap system's reliance on using the slope rating and the course rating to determine handicaps.

The Board voted to allow members to **carry a fifteenth club** in their bag, designated as a **“rock club” to be exclusively as a rock club**. The club has to be a **numbered iron** and easily **differentiated from the players' regular set of clubs**.

The Board decided to **drop the three-round limit that guests can play** in a VGA event in a year's time. Guests can now play as many rounds as they choose. They are still prohibited from signing up for a tournament before one week in advance of play. Also, the guest fee remains at \$5.00.

The **Champions Tournaments** were played on **Wednesday February 5 at Orange Tree** and **Saturday February 8 at San Marcos**. **Rusty Silverman (71)** placed first at Orange Tree with **Larry Burton (72)** coming in second. **Steve Richter (72)** took first at San Marcos and **Jeff Currie (74)** placed second.

The **Champion of Champions** playoff took place at **Union Hills on February 15**. **Steve Richter** took the overall **first** place by besting **Rusty Silverman**, who placed **second**, and **Larry Burton** edged Jeff Currie for **third** place. The first three places will be awarded prize money at the awards banquet in November.

The spring **four-ball tournaments** are scheduled for **Saturday April 4 at Cave Creek** and **Wednesday April 8 at Orange Tree**. **Four-ball** is a **golf format** in which two **golfers** partner with one another for 18 holes, with **each golfer playing his or her own golf ball** throughout, and the lower of the partners' net scores counting as the team score on each hole. Prize money will be allotted as follows; **first place team \$100, second place \$60, and third place \$40** to be paid at the conclusion of the tournament. **The weekly tournament will run in conjunction with the four-ball event.**

## Highlights from Fourth Quarter

### Eagles

**Rusty Silverman** eagled the **423 yard par-five number nine hole at San Marcos** on February 8. He hit a five-wood just short of the canal and ripped his four utility club 200 yards to two feet for an easy eagle. **Nice going Rusty.**

**John Leopold** had an eagle on the **305 yard-par four number nine at Kokopelli** on March 4. **Nice going John.**

### **Low net scores for the quarter**

The highlight of the first quarter was **Neal Fisel's net 59** at Ken McDonald on January 11. He had nine pars and only two double bogeys in his round to shoot a **gross score of 83. Great shooting Neal!**

**Jim Cox** – 63 at Ken McDonald on January 11

**Knial Grant** – 64 at Ken McDonald on January 11

**Dan Clark** – 60 at Pueblo El Mirage on 1/18

**Bill Heller**– 63 at Pueblo El Mirage on 1/18

**Rusty Silverman** – 64 at Pueblo El Mirage on 1/18

**Fred Baldwin** – 62 at Falcon Dunes on 1/25

**Fred Baldwin** – 61 at Falcon Golf Course on 2/1

**Larry Burton** – 64 at Falcon Golf Course on 2/1

**Donna Meehan** – 64 at Falcon Golf Course on 2/1

**Dan Delgado** – 64 at Falcon Golf Course on 2/1

**John Leopold** – 63 at Kokopelli Golf Club on 3/4

### **Low gross scores for the quarter**

**Barry Jennejahn** – 74 (62) at Falcon Dunes on 1/25

**John Adair** – 72 (68) at Falcon Golf Course on 2/1

**Dan Campos** – 67 (71) at Falcon Golf Course on 2/1

### **Big Dog Bites**

### **Standings through March 7.**

**Dave Dean** continues to lead the Wednesday race with 22 points. **Warren Meehan** is alone in second place with 12 points. **Larry Burton** and **Ken Slagle** are tied for third place with ten points each. **Dick Brooks** and **Jim Niblack** follow with nine and eight points respectively.

The Saturday race is much closer. **Ken Baca** and **Dan Clark** are tied for first with 11 points each. **Warren Meehan** is alone in third place with ten points followed by **Fred Baldwin** with nine points. **Jim Cox** and **Stephen Jordan** are next with eight points each.

### **Letters to Arnie**

**Dear Arnie,**

I accidentally hit my ball with my putter while standing next to the green. The ball moved, but did not roll at all. I thought that I should get a one-stroke penalty for striking my ball. However, one of the other players in my foursome said that, it was not a penalty if the ball didn't move. I took a one-stroke penalty to be sure that I did not turn in a lower score than I deserved. **Nailin' Knial (pronounced Nile)**

**Dear Knail,**

If a ball only wobbles (sometimes referred to as oscillating) and stays on or returns to its original spot, the ball has not moved. Therefore, if a player did not deliberately touch the ball with the club, and the ball only wobbles, but does not come to rest on a different spot after being accidentally bumped, the player would get no penalty. However, if you lift or deliberately touch your ball at rest or cause it to move, you get one penalty stroke (USGA Rule 9.4b). There are four exceptions when you get no penalty for doing so; when you are allowed to lift or move a ball (perhaps to identify your ball), accidental movement before the ball is found, accidental movement on the putting green, and accidental movement not on a putting green while applying a rule.

Your decision to take a penalty stroke is admirable. As we know, golf is a sport where you are your own referee. However, your decision also makes it clear that one needs to be fully familiar with the rules of golf so that you do not needlessly penalize yourself.

**Dear Arnie,**

Recently, I hit a ball into a red staked penalty area. I found the ball after a short search and dropped the ball at the nearest point of relief and took a one stroke penalty. One of the other players in my foursome thought I made an improper drop. Did I make a proper drop? **Wild Willie**

**Dear Willie,**

You did not take a proper drop from a penalty area. You have four options when your ball enters a red-staked penalty area; 1) take the stroke-and distance penalty and re-hit from the previous spot, 2) take the back-on-the-line relief by dropping your ball on a line from the pin to the point entry and no closer to the hole for one penalty stroke, 3) take lateral relief two club lengths from the point of entry and no closer to the hole for one penalty stroke, and 4) play the ball where it lies (USGA Rule 17.2).

It is important to note, that the **ball does not need to be found**. A player only needs to be **reasonably sure** that the ball came to rest **in the penalty area**. Also, **a player may not take relief in the penalty area**.

You clearly did not drop the ball per the above rule and should have taken **two penalty strokes**. Failure to do so should have resulted in disqualification from the tournament because your scorecard was incorrect.

As far as using the nearest point of relief, you may be thinking of when a player can take **free relief**. **USGA Rule 16.1** covers free relief that is allowed from interference by abnormal course conditions. Interference exists when any one of these is true; 1) your ball touches or is in or on an abnormal course condition, 2) an abnormal condition

physically interferes with your area of intended stance or area of intended swing, or 3) only when your ball is on the putting green, an abnormal course condition on or off the putting green intervenes on your intended line of play. There is no free relief from an abnormal course condition when the ball comes to rest out-of-bounds or in a penalty area.

Examples of abnormal course conditions – animal holes (including surrounding dirt piles), marked ground under repair, temporary water (including water that is over the penalty area line)

### **VGA Hats for Sale!**

The VGA has a selection of good quality hats with our logo. There are two styles including: white with a blue or tan trim for \$35, sand with a tan trim for \$35 (not shown in the picture), and white with a blue trim and chin tie for \$30. There are also white golf hats for \$15 and visors for \$10. See Fred Baldwin for details.

