



## Rules, Policies & Clarifications Governing VGA Events

1. The VGA Board requires that only VGA members with established handicaps may participate in pots and/or prize money. Guests are welcome to play but are only eligible to win CLOSEST TO THE PIN (CTP) money on Par 3 holes at a fee of \$5.00.

2. **New Members Policy:** New members who have not established an official handicap, can participate in the birdie and Closest to the Pin (CTP) pots, but not the tournament prize pot. Non-members may not get into the prize pot or birdie pot, but are automatically entered into the CTP pot with their \$5.00 entry fee.

3. **VGA GUEST POLICY CLARIFIED:** 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. If there are any questions regarding this policy please feel free to contact any Board Member for clarification.

4a. **Tee Placements @ a VGA Event:** 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.

5. **Prize Money Distribution Policy for a Sanctioned VGA Event Due to Inclement Weather Policy:** An official event is any scheduled round of golf sponsored by The Valley Golfers Association played to completion of 18 holes by 50% or more of the VGA member participants in the event. All prize money collected prior to the event shall be disbursed to member participants who win the event by virtue of their low scores over all 18 holes regardless of the weather conditions or other circumstances which may prevent or hinder other member participants from completing the round. Pot money collected for scoring birdies or better, or for being closest to the pin on Par 3s, or for any purpose other than winning the overall event shall be paid to individual winners of those items whether or not the winners actually complete the round.

**6. Prize Money Policy:** The maximum time prize funds are held by a tournament director won by a player will be 30 days. After the 30-day period the uncollected prize money will be deposited into the VGA Treasury.

**7. Hole in One Awards:** Anyone making a hole in one will receive \$100 from the VGA plus the VGA will pay a maximum of \$100 for beverages after the tournament to be paid immediately. In addition, player(s) will also receive the pro-rata share of the annual hole-in-one pot from membership dues. If no one makes a hole-in-one over a fiscal year period (November 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>), the unclaimed monies will carry over to the next fiscal year, and so on until a hole-in-one is made. Member payouts will be distributed at the annual banquet held annually in November.

**8.** VGA operates its business on a fiscal year basis beginning November 1<sup>st</sup> and ending October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**9.** Scorecard playoffs will be done per the USGA recommendations, detailed in "The USGA Handicap System".

**10. The Half-Hour Check-In Rule:** You must check-in at least one half hour before the event's first tee time. Event coordinator will have the option to except or not except a player's prize money with less than 30 minutes prior to the first tee time and that player may not be eligible for prize money.

**11. No Show Policy:** If a player does not cancel 48 hours in advance of the scheduled event, after signing up to play in a VGA event, that player will be responsible for paying the greens fee if the golf club for that event charges the VGA. No exceptions. This policy preserves our reputation and ability to continue playing at all courses throughout the Valley.

**12. USGA's Stroke and Distance:** If a player's ball is hit out of bounds or lost, drop a ball two club lengths in the fairway from the point the player believes the ball was lost. The drop is not supposed to be any closer to the hole. The player must take a two-stroke penalty. You may not use this rule if you have hit a provisional ball, unless your provisional ball is also lost or out of bounds, or your ball is lost in a penalty area (formerly known as a hazard). The rule has been recommended by the USGA and R&A to speed-up play. For more information, refer to this video. [View Lost or OB ball Stoke & Distance Video click here](#). *You may also use the Desert Rule as defined below effective 1/1/2020.*

**13. The Desert Rule:** The board voted to reinstate the VGA Desert rule starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

**Desert Rule:** For VGA weekly events, if a ball comes to rest in a natural desert area or in an area of the course landscaped to resemble natural desert, the player may abandon the ball and drop another ball within two club lengths of the point where the original ball last crossed the margin of the desert with a one stroke penalty

Points to consider relative to the Desert Rule:

1. The player may find and play the original ball from the desert area so long as the course permits entry in and play from the area.

2. The margin of the desert is the line clearly established by the end of grass and the beginning of desert.

3. The player need not find his original ball in order to apply the Desert Rule when there is reasonable certainty that the ball did in fact come to rest in the desert area and a search for the ball would more than likely delay play beyond the three minute limit. If there is a possibility that the ball proceeded out of bounds after passing through or over a desert area, the player and his fellow competitors should agree by \*consensus opinion to abandon the ball and declare the ball out of bounds." The player has the option to take stroke and distance relief, and play the ball from where the previous stroke was made. The player also has the option to invoke the E-5 rule.

4. If the player chooses to apply the Desert Rule, and the point of entry is in question, then the player and his fellow competitors should agree by consensus upon the point of entry to drop another ball with a one stroke penalty.

5. If the ball does not clearly pass over a desert margin or the playing group cannot reach a consensus about the ball's point of entry into the desert, and the ball cannot be found, then the player may return to the point from which the ball was last hit, and apply the penalty prescribed by the USGA lost ball rule or invoke the E-5 rule.

\*Consensus, as used herein, means: "A majority agreement by the playing group of which the player is a part. **Please note you cannot use the USGA Rule 5 if you have played a provisional ball or your ball is lost in a penalty area.**

**14. Local Rule Recommended by the USGA - Rule 21-2 and adopted by VGA:** A player's score for each hole is capped at a maximum of 10 strokes without disqualification. A player who does not complete a hole (referred to as picking up) is not disqualified, but gets the maximum score of 10 for the hole. Rev: 3/5/2019

**14. Clarifications of the X-Out Policy:** (a) if a player Xs out, the player is not eliminated from all prize funds, only the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place prize money. (b) If a player Xs out, the USGA recommends inputting a score that he/she thinks they would make on that hole. If the player doesn't input a score, the player will receive a score of par plus handicap stroke. The Board recommends that players always post a score for each hole and to not leave any score blank. (c) Addition to the X-Out Rule: Members and guests must play at least 13 holes in order to qualify for C-T-P or Birdie prize money. The X-out may occur on the first hole or 13th hole, but the player must play and score a minimum of 13 holes to be eligible for CTP and/or Birdie prize money.

**15. Range finders and GPS devices** are authorized for use in any VGA event.

~~16. The VGA Board adopted a local rule allowing the replacement of the ball in play with a clean "putting ball" upon reaching the green.~~ This rule has been rescinded at the December 2019 Board meeting. You must use the same ball you started the hole with. You may lift and clean it once reaching the green per USGA rules.

17. 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.