

Local VGA Rules, Policies & Clarifications for VGA Events



1. **Competition Policy:** Only VGA members are allowed to participate in prize money in the low net and skins competition. Only members who have an established handicap can participate in the low-net competition. All members and guests will participate in the closest to the pin (CTP) contest on all par three holes.

2. **VGA Guest Policy:** Guests are prohibited from signing up for an event 7 days prior to the event. The guest fee is \$5.00.

3. **Tee Policy:** Men are allowed to play from any men's rated tee and women are allowed to play from any woman's rated tee.

4. **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 prizemoney 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. The prize money collected for scoring birdies or better, 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 complete the round.

5. **Prize Money Policy:** The maximum time prize funds are held by an event director will be 30 days. After the 30-day period, the uncollected prize money will be deposited into the VGA Treasury.

6. **Hole-in-One Award:** 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 event to be paid immediately. In addition, the 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 (January 1st to December 31st), 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 in November.

7. **VGA operates its business on a fiscal year basis beginning January 1st and ending December 31st.**

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

9. Check-In Time Limit Rule: The event coordinator will provide a time for check-in and if a player is late, the event coordinator will have the option to not accept a player's entry fee and that player may not be eligible for prize money. The check-in time will be sent to all players participating in the tournament on the pairing sheet via email.

10. No-Show Policy: After the event coordinator submits the pairings to the golf course and the VGA is charged the green fee for a player that cancels or does not show up, that player will be responsible for reimbursing the VGA the green fee amount for the tournament he or she misses. That player will not be allowed to participate in future VGA events until the player has reimbursed the VGA. **THIS IS A NO EXCEPTION POLICY.** It preserves our reputation and ability to continue playing at all courses throughout the Valley.

11. USGA's Stroke and Distance: If a player's ball is hit out of bounds or lost, a player may invoke the local rule known as the E-5 rule. Drop a ball two club lengths in the fairway, no closer to the hole, from the point the player believes the ball was lost. The player must take a two-stroke penalty. If you have hit a provisional ball, you may not use this rule on the original ball. You may use the rule on your provisional ball if it is lost or out of bounds. You may not use this rule if 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.

12. The Desert Rule: The board voted to reinstate the VGA Desert rule starting January 1st, 2020. Revisited and clarified as of the Committee meeting on 4/19/2023.

Desert Rule: The Desert Rule (now interpreted as a red-lined penalty area) is a local VGA club rule to speed up play with a one-stroke penalty and will be designated by the tournament director prior to time of play based on the following requirements:

1. If a player hits a ball in the desert, the ball **must cross grass.**

2. The ball does **not** have to be found but must be in-bounds. If the ball is determined to be out-of-bounds by the player and the foursome, then the player has two options: a. Invoke the E-5 Rule with a 2-stroke penalty or b. Re-Tee with a 1-stroke penalty (hitting 3 off the tee).

3. If the ball is determined to be in-bounds and found, then the player has three options: a. Play with the ball where it lies. b. Drop the ball in the grass at the approximate location where it crossed the grass no closer to the hole. c. Drop the ball 2 club-lengths from where the ball came to rest, no closer to the hole.

4. If the ball does not cross grass off the tee and does not reach the fairway, then the Desert Rule cannot be invoked and USGA rules apply as follows: a. Player finds the ball in the desert area and plays it as it lies without penalty. b. The player finds the ball and determines it is unplayable. The player may drop the ball 2 club lengths from the point of the found ball, no closer to the hole with a 1-stroke penalty. c. If

the player does not find the ball, the player can re-tee the ball with a 1-stroke penalty (hitting 3 off the tee).

13. Ten-Shot Rule: The 10-shot rule has been eliminated. As a result, all players must finish each hole and record their score or be disqualified.

14. Clarifications of the X-Out Policy: (a) if a player X's out, then the player is not eliminated from all prize funds, only the low net competition prize money. (b) If a player X's out, the USGA recommends inputting a score that he/she thinks they would make on that hole. If the player does not input a score, the player will receive a score of pars plus handicap stroke. The score is for handicap purposes only. (c) 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: All devices are authorized for use in any VGA event.

16. Same Ball Rule: You must use the same ball you started the hole with. You may lift and clean it after reaching the green per USGA rules.

17. Desert Club Rule: The Board voted to allow members to carry a fifteenth club in their bag, designated as a "rock club" to be exclusively used as a rock club. The club must be a numbered iron and easily differentiated from the players' regular set of clubs.

18. Ground Under Repair Rule - Fairway: When a ball lands in a dirt patch, not declared as "ground under repair," in a fairway only, then the ball may be dropped into the grass on that fairway no closer to the hole with consensus or agreement from the other players in the foursome. This rule does not apply to a ball coming to rest in a divot.

18A. Ground Under Repair Rule - Bunker: A player is entitled to move a ball in the bunker if: 1. The bunker is not maintained by the golf course. 2. If the bunker has not been raked properly during the round. 3. If there is temporary water in the bunker. If any of these circumstances occur, the player may pick up the ball, clean it, and rake the bunker in the area where the ball came to rest and replace it in the same spot. The player's foursome must unanimously approve the request.

19. Paying Eagles/Doubles Eagles Rule Amended: A member who plays from two or more tees in front of the base tees will be eligible to win prize money for the low net event only. Any player who chooses to play from those tees will **not** be eligible for the closest-to-the-pin or skins money. Also, they will **not** be eligible for eagles and double eagles.

20. All VGA members must pay the mandatory \$10.00 tournament fee (subject to an increase to \$15.00 starting on April 1, 2024) with an exception of VGA members of 25-year+ tenures. These members may pay a tournament fee of either \$5.00 or \$7.00 at their discretion (subject to possible changes in the future).