

# 2024 Rules of Golf

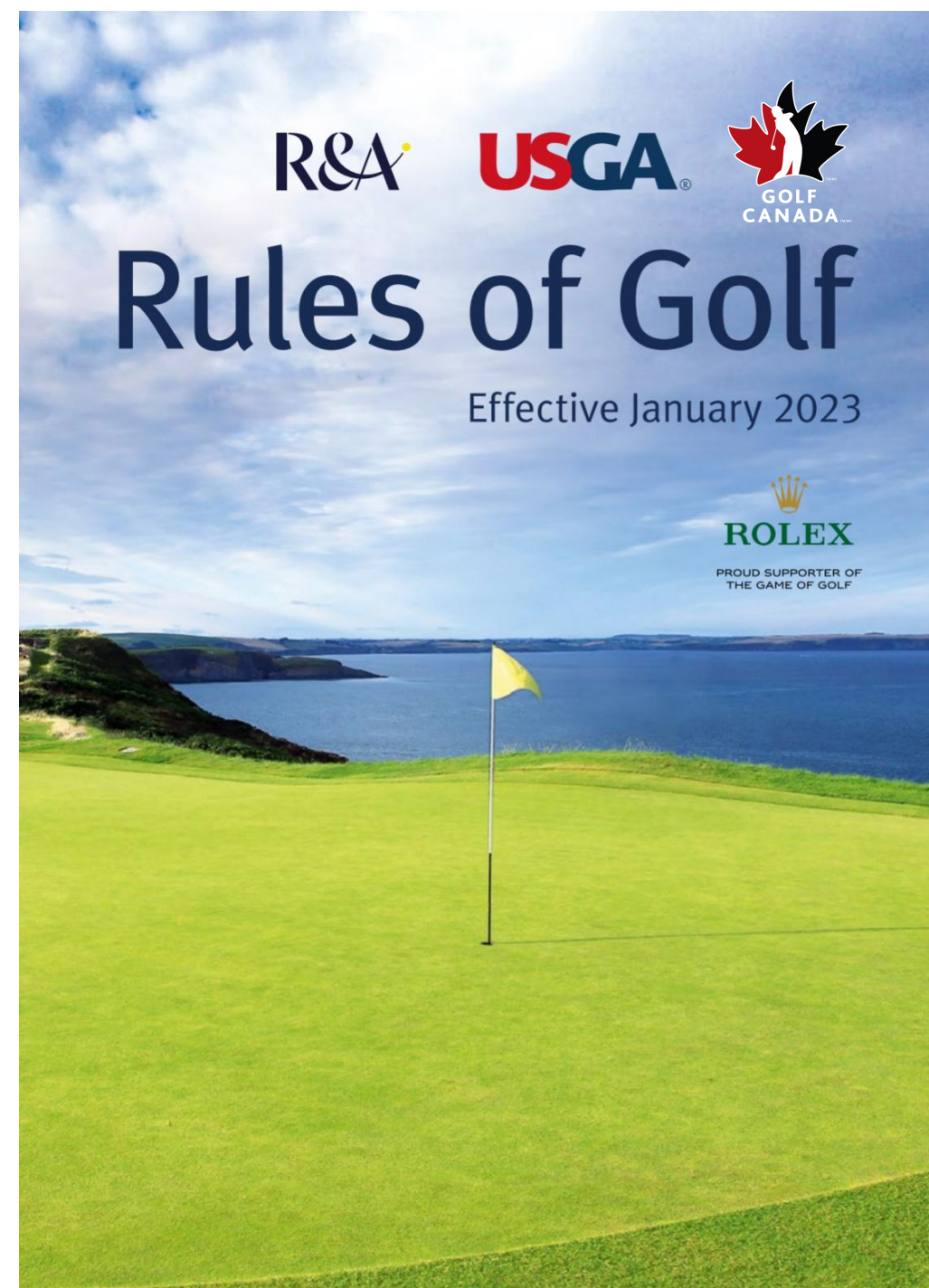
## Club Presentation





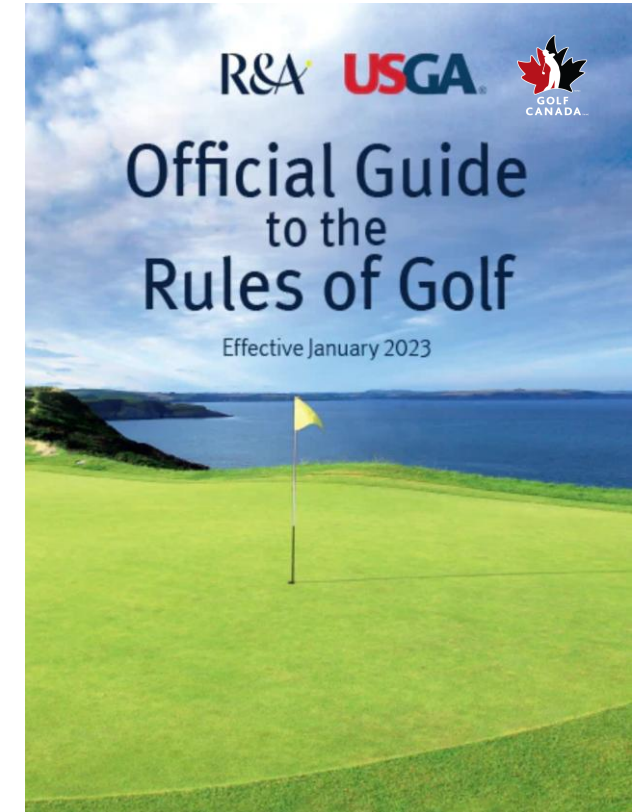
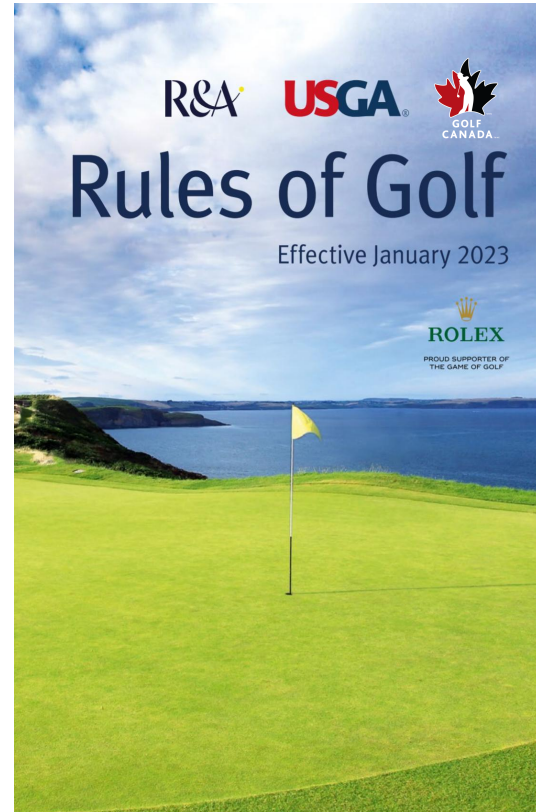
# Club Presentation Overview

- 1) Resources
- 2) Defined Areas of the Course
- 3) Dropping Procedures
- 4) Playing the Course as You Find It
- 5) Free Relief & Penalty Relief
- 6) Match Play vs Stroke Play
- 7) Conclusion



# Resources

1. Rule Book
2. Official Guide
3. USGA and R&A apps



# Defined Areas of the Course

- General Area
- Four Specific Areas (Rule 2.2b)
  - Teeing Area
  - Penalty Areas
  - Bunkers
  - Putting Green



The **general area** covers the entire area of the course except for the following:

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| ① The teeing area | ③ Penalty areas     |
| ② Bunkers         | ④ The putting green |



# Loose Impediments - Definition



## Loose Impediments – Rule 15.1

- May be removed anywhere on or off the course without penalty
- Can be removed by any means
- Includes loose impediments in:
  - Bunkers
  - Penalty areas

## Movable Obstructions – Rule 15.2

- Anywhere on or off the course, may be removed without penalty
- If the ball moves when a movable obstruction is removed, **no penalty and must replace ball**
- Two exceptions:

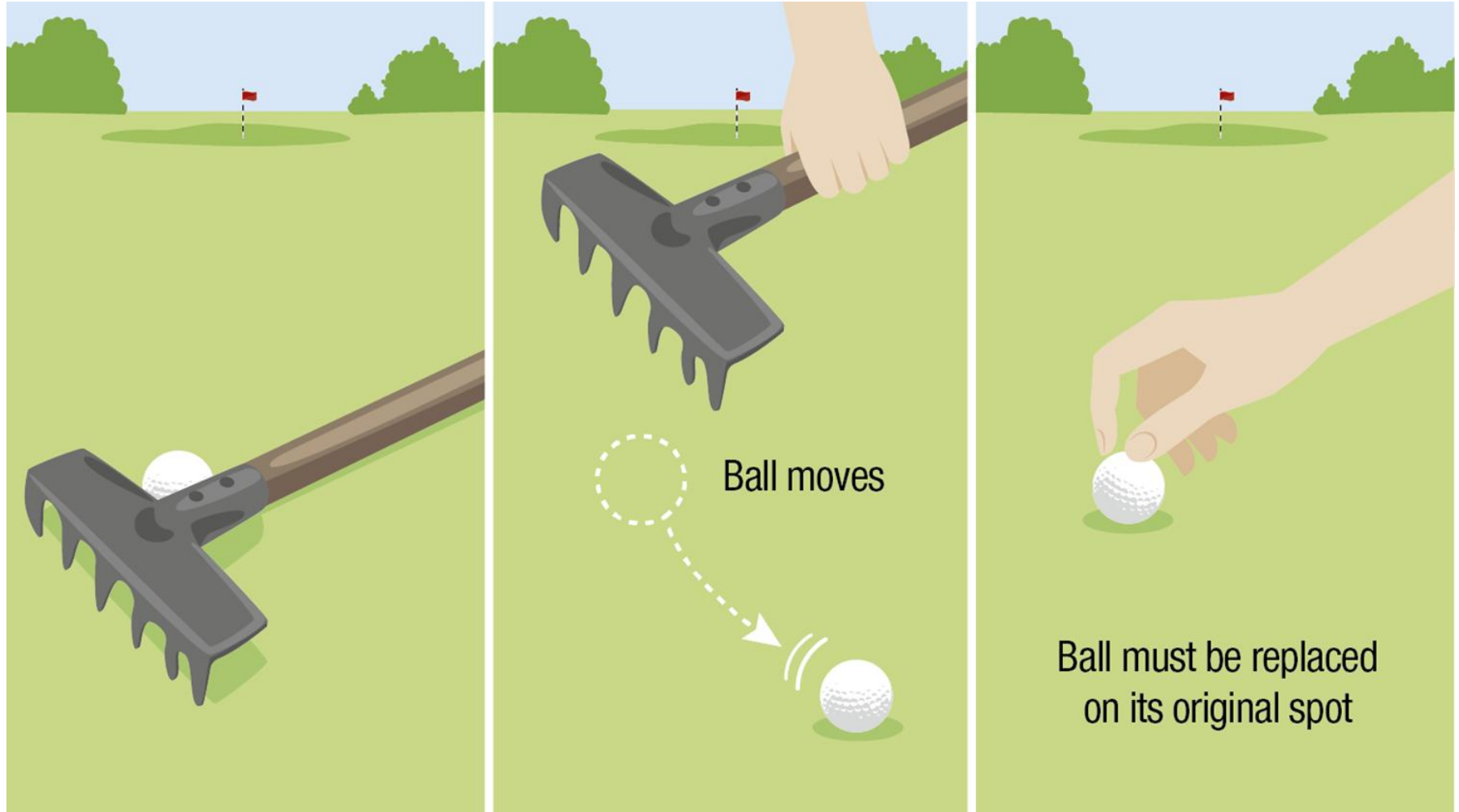
Tee markers when playing from the Teeing Area

Deliberately moving a movable obstruction that will influence a ball in motion



# General Area – Movable Obstruction

**Diagram #1 15.2a:**  
Ball Moves When  
Movable Obstruction  
Removed

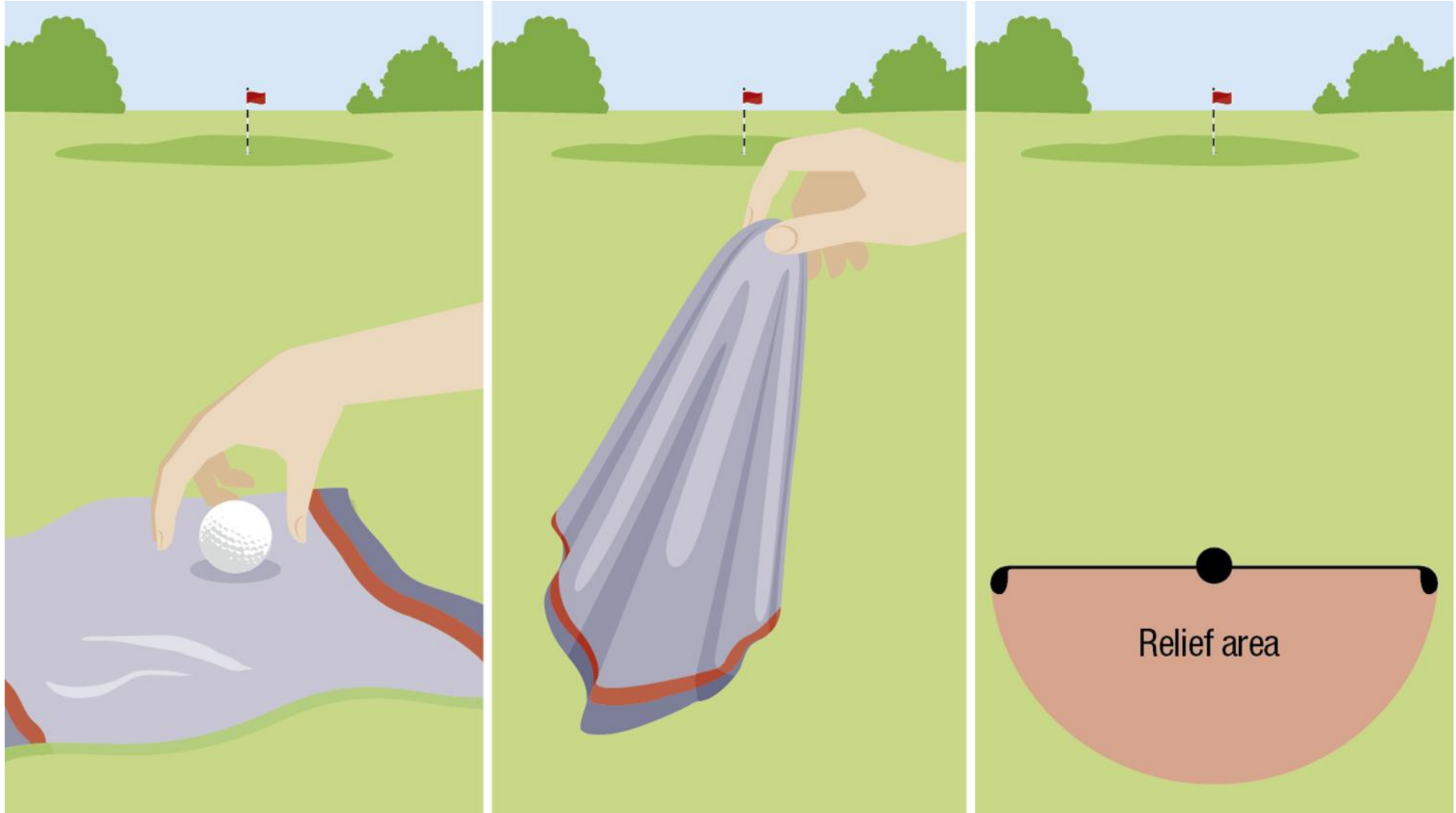




# General Area – Movable Obstruction

**Diagram #2 15.2a:**

Ball in or on  
Movable  
Obstruction  
Removed





# Dropping Procedures

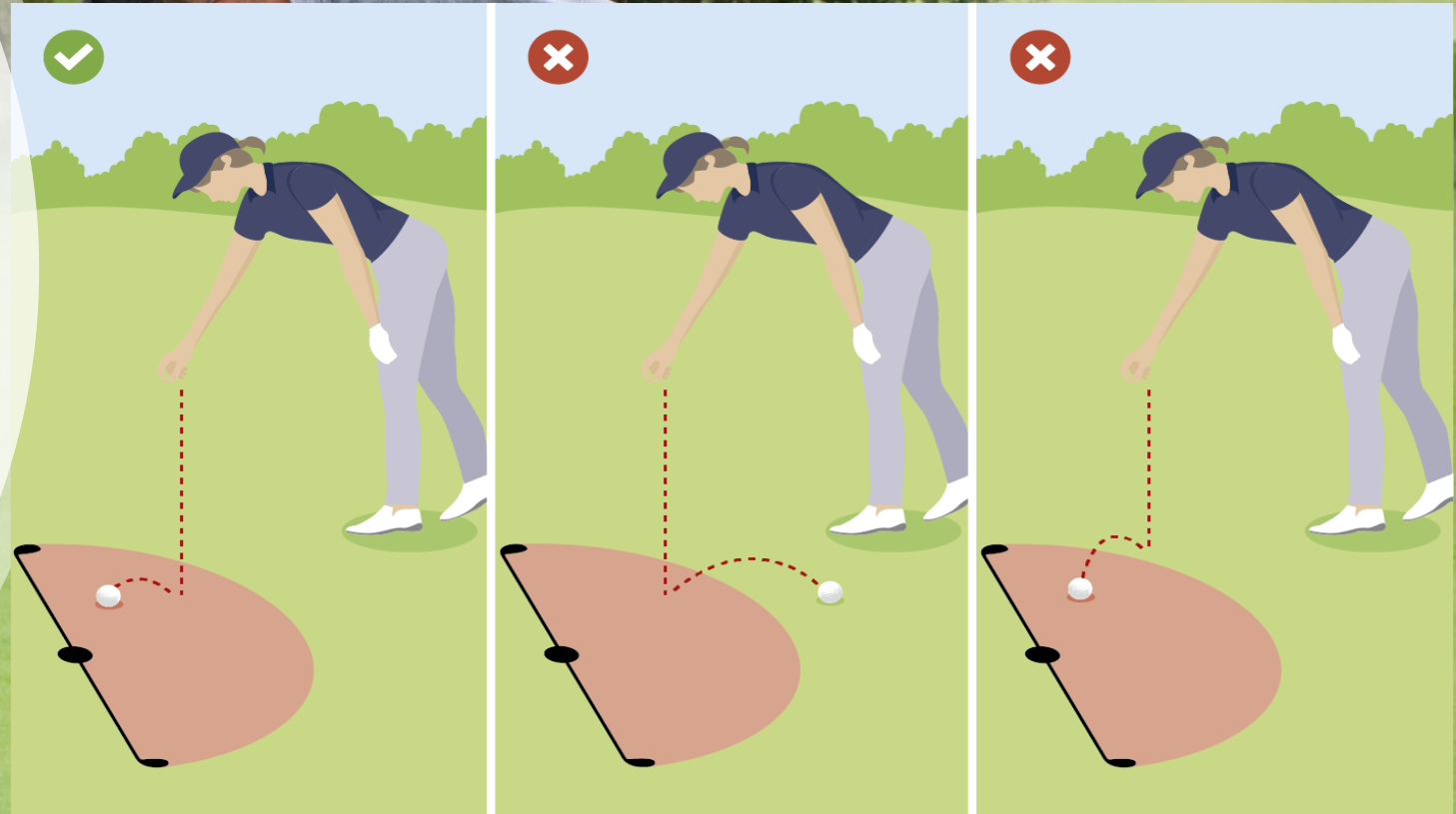
- Player **must** drop ball
- **Must** be dropped from knee height





# Dropping Procedures

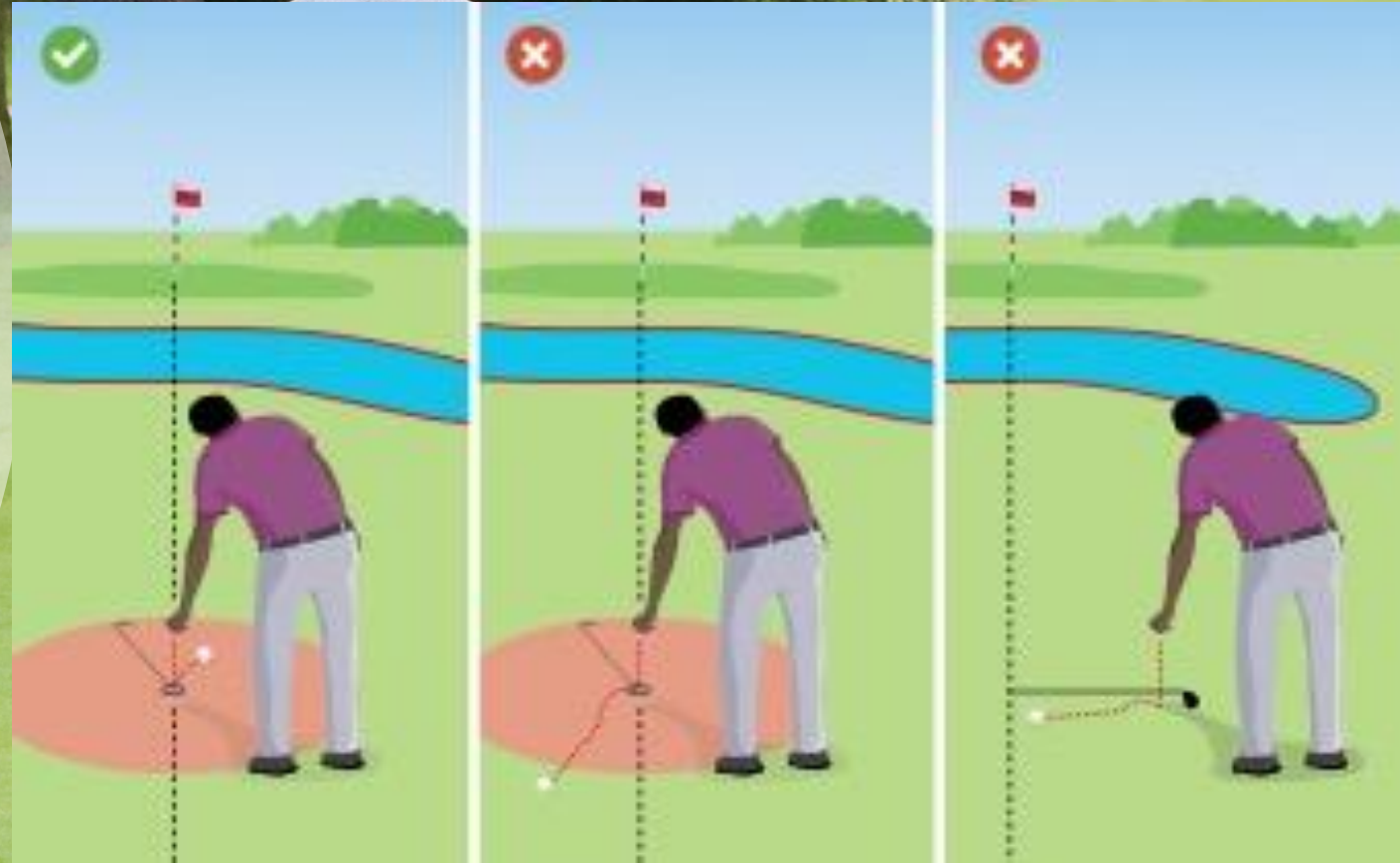
- Player **must** drop ball
- **Must** be dropped from knee height
- **Must** be dropped in relief area
- **Must** stay in that relief area





# Back-on-the-Line Relief

- **Must** be dropped **On** the line
- Creates a relief area one clublength in any direction
- **Must** stay in that relief area





# Dropping Procedures – Relief Areas

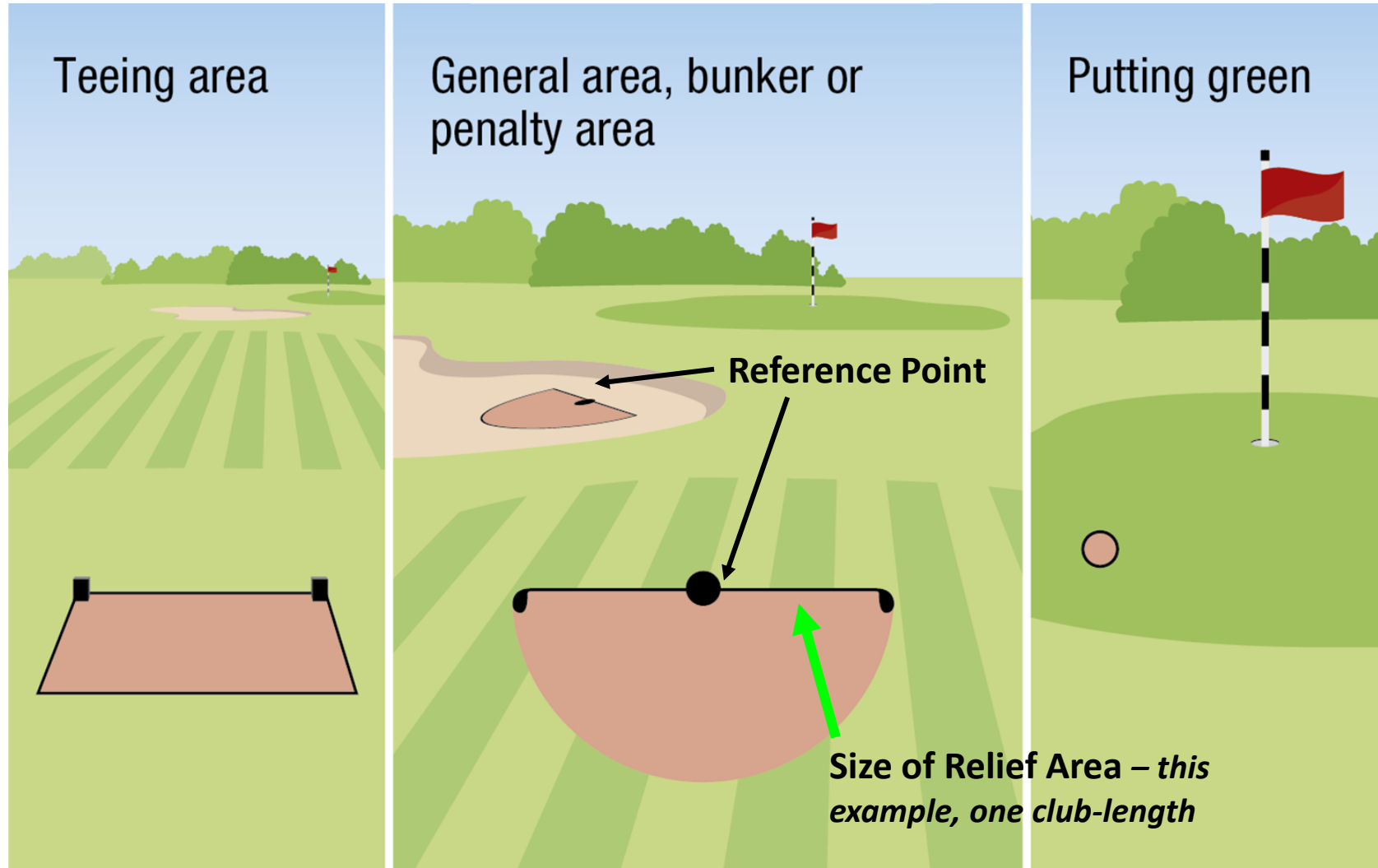


Diagram 14.6



# General Area – Searching for the Ball





# Ball Search: Finding and Identifying Ball (Rule 7)

- **How to Fairly Search for Ball (Rule 7.1)**
  - May fairly search including taking reasonable actions
    - Move sand and water
    - Move or bend grass, bushes, tree branches and other growing or attached natural objects
  - Okay if some improvement in conditions, if reasonable actions
  - If actions exceed what is reasonable, general penalty
- **Ball Accidentally Moved in Finding or Identifying Ball (Rule 7.4)**
  - No penalty if the ball is accidentally moved while trying to find it
  - The ball must be replaced on its original spot
  - If the ball was on, under or against objects, the ball must be replaced on, under or against the objects
  - If the ball was covered by sand, the original lie must be re-created



# Ball Moved

- Moved – only if “known or virtually certain”
- If not known or virtually certain, ball played as it lies







# 2023 RULES OF GOLF CHANGE



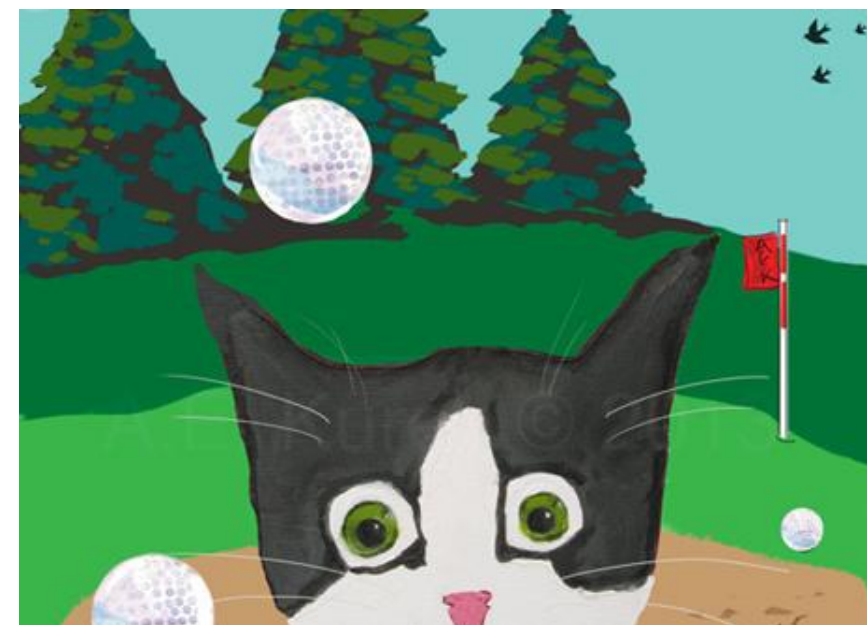


## General principles

Play the course as you  
find it  
and  
play the ball as it lies.

# Conditions Affecting the Stroke (CATS) . . . Don't Improve

- ☐ The lie of your ball at rest
- ☐ The area of your intended stance
- ☐ The area of your intended swing
- ☐ Your line of play
- ☐ The relief area where you will drop or place your ball

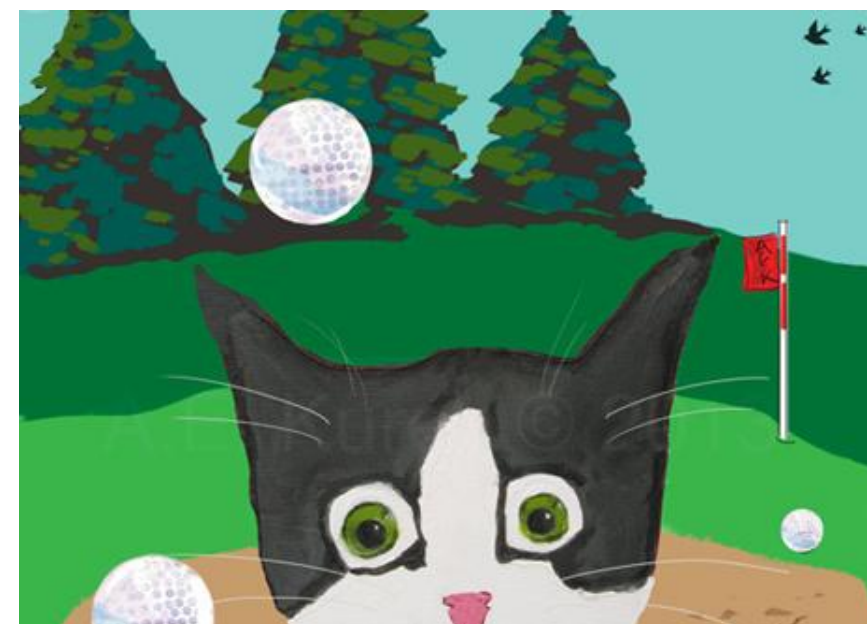


*Refer to Rule 8.1*



# Prohibited Actions – Rule 8.1a

- Move, bend or break
  - Any growing or attached natural object
  - Any immovable obstruction, integral object or boundary object
- Move a loose impediment or obstruction to build a stance or affect line of play
- Alter the surface of the ground by:
  - Replacing divots in a divot hole
  - Removing or pressing down divots
  - Creating or eliminating holes, indents or uneven surfaces
- Remove or press down sand or soil
- Remove dew, frost or water



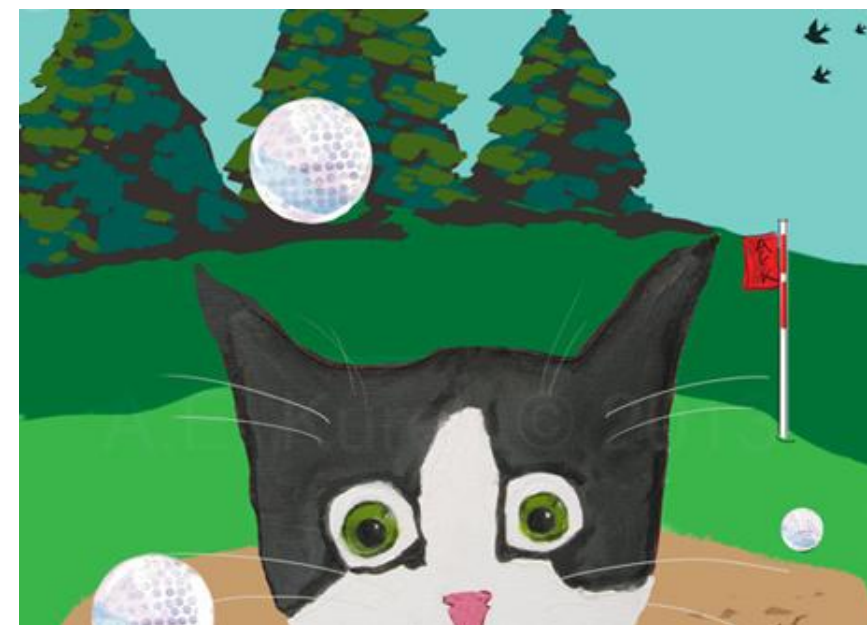


## Prohibited Actions Rule 8.1a



# Actions That Are Allowed – Rule 8.1b

- Reasonable actions to find and identify a ball
- Reasonable actions to remove loose impediments and movable obstructions
- Reasonable actions to mark the spot of a ball and to lift and replace the ball under the rules
- Ground the club lightly right in front or behind the ball, *but not in the bunker*
- Firmly placing the feet for stance
- Fairly taking a stance
- Making a stroke or the backswing for a stroke which is then made – *but, in a bunker may not touch the sand on backswing*







## Actions That Are Allowed

Rule 8.1ab



# Defined Areas of the Course

- General Area
- Four Specific Areas (Rule 2.2b)
  - Teeing Area
  - Penalty Areas
  - Bunkers
  - Putting Green

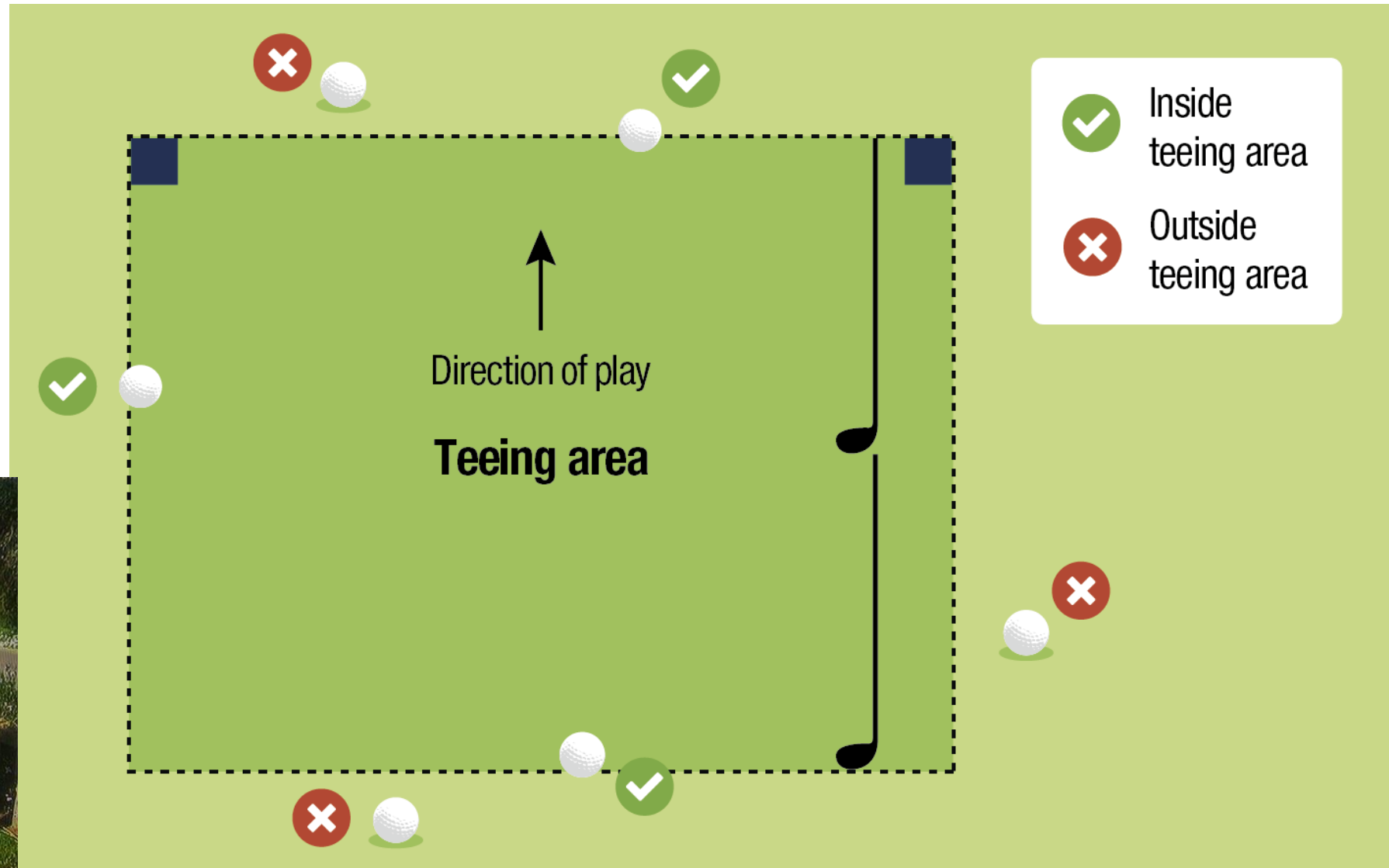


The **general area** covers the entire area of the course except for the following:

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| ① The teeing area | ③ Penalty areas     |
| ② Bunkers         | ④ The putting green |

# Teeing Area

## Definition





# Rule 17.1 - Penalty Areas

- Two types
  - Yellow penalty areas
  - Red penalty areas







# Penalty Areas

- Players may take same actions as in general area



May ground club



Can touch and remove loose impediments

- Default to red penalty areas
  - “dry” penalty areas
  - Committee discretion





# Definition: Known or Virtually Certain

The standard for deciding what happened to a player's ball.

Means more than just possible or probable.

It means that either:

- There is **conclusive evidence** that the event in question happened to the player's ball, such as when the player or other witnesses saw it happen, or
- Although there is a very small degree of doubt, all reasonably available information shows that it is **at least 95% likely** that the event in question happened
- "All reasonably available information" includes all information the player knows and all other information he or she can get with reasonable effort and without unreasonable delay.

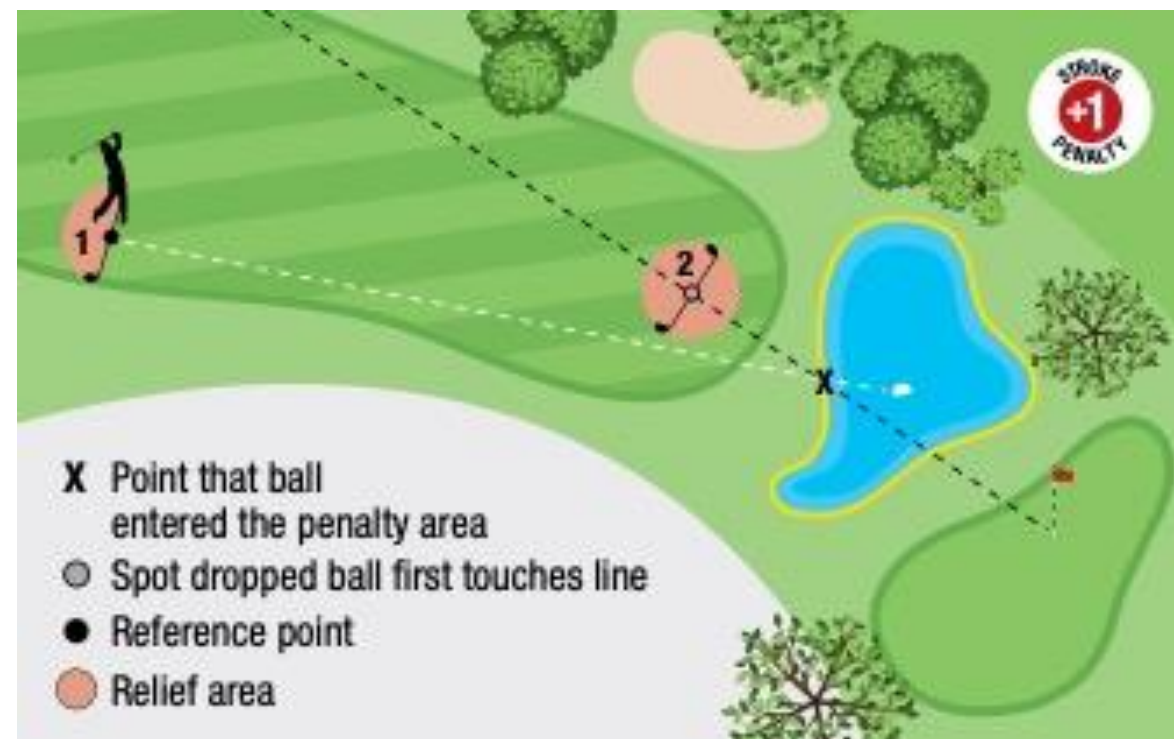




# Rule 17.1d - Relief for Ball in Penalty Area

## Applying **one penalty stroke**:

- 1) Stroke and distance relief (*return to #1*)
- 2) Back-on-the-line relief outside penalty area, keeping the estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area between the hole and the spot where the ball is dropped. The spot on the line where the ball first touches the ground when dropped creates a relief area that is one club-length in any direction from that point, but with these limits:
  - Not nearer the hole than the estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area, and
  - May be in any area of the course except the same penalty area, but
  - Must be in the same area of the course that the ball first touched when dropped.



**DIAGRAM #1 17.1d**

**Relief for Ball in Yellow Penalty Area**

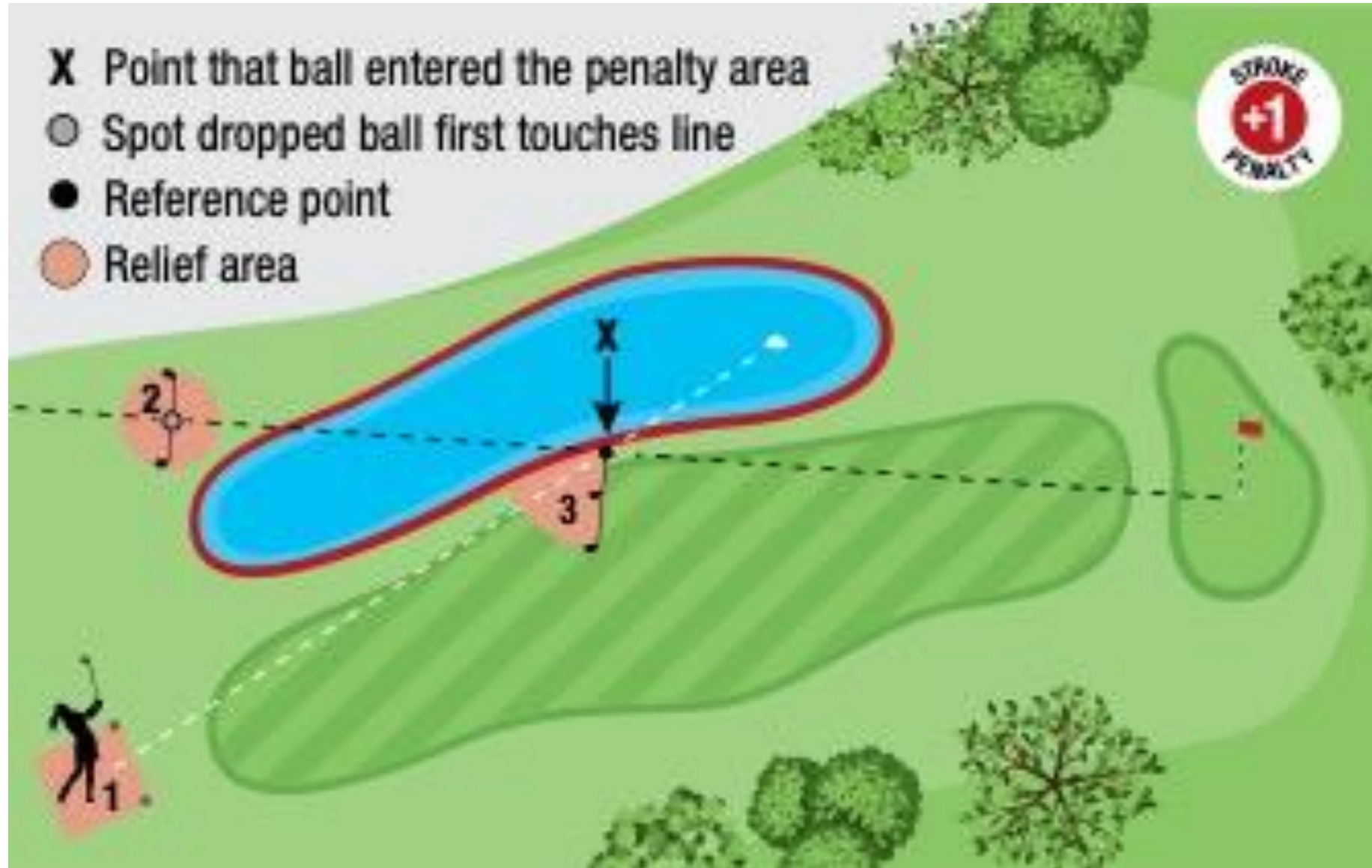


DIAGRAM #2  
17.1d

## Relief for Ball in Red Penalty Area



# BUNKERS





Ball in bunker



Ball not in bunker

Wall or face





# Restrictions on Touching Sand in Bunker

- ❌ Deliberately touching sand with hand, club or rake **to test**
- ❌ Touch sand with club right in front of or behind ball
- ❌ In making a practice swing in same bunker
- ❌ In making backswing for stroke



# Putting Green – Rule 13





# Repairing Damage on Putting Green



- Ball marks, old hole plugs, turf plugs
- Shoe damage (spike marks or scrapes)
- Indents caused by equipment or flagstick
- Incidents caused by maintenance tools or vehicles
- Animal tracks or hoof marks
- Embedded objects





# Repairing Damage on Putting Green



- Normal practices for maintaining the overall condition of the putting green
- Irrigation or rain or other natural forces
- Natural surface imperfections
- Natural wear of the hole





# Rule 19 - Unplayable Ball

- Player is the only person who may decide if his or her ball is unplayable
- *Does not apply in a penalty area*
- With **one penalty stroke** the player's relief options are:
  - 1) Stroke-and-Distance Relief;
  - 2) Back-on-the-line Relief;
  - 3) Lateral Relief.



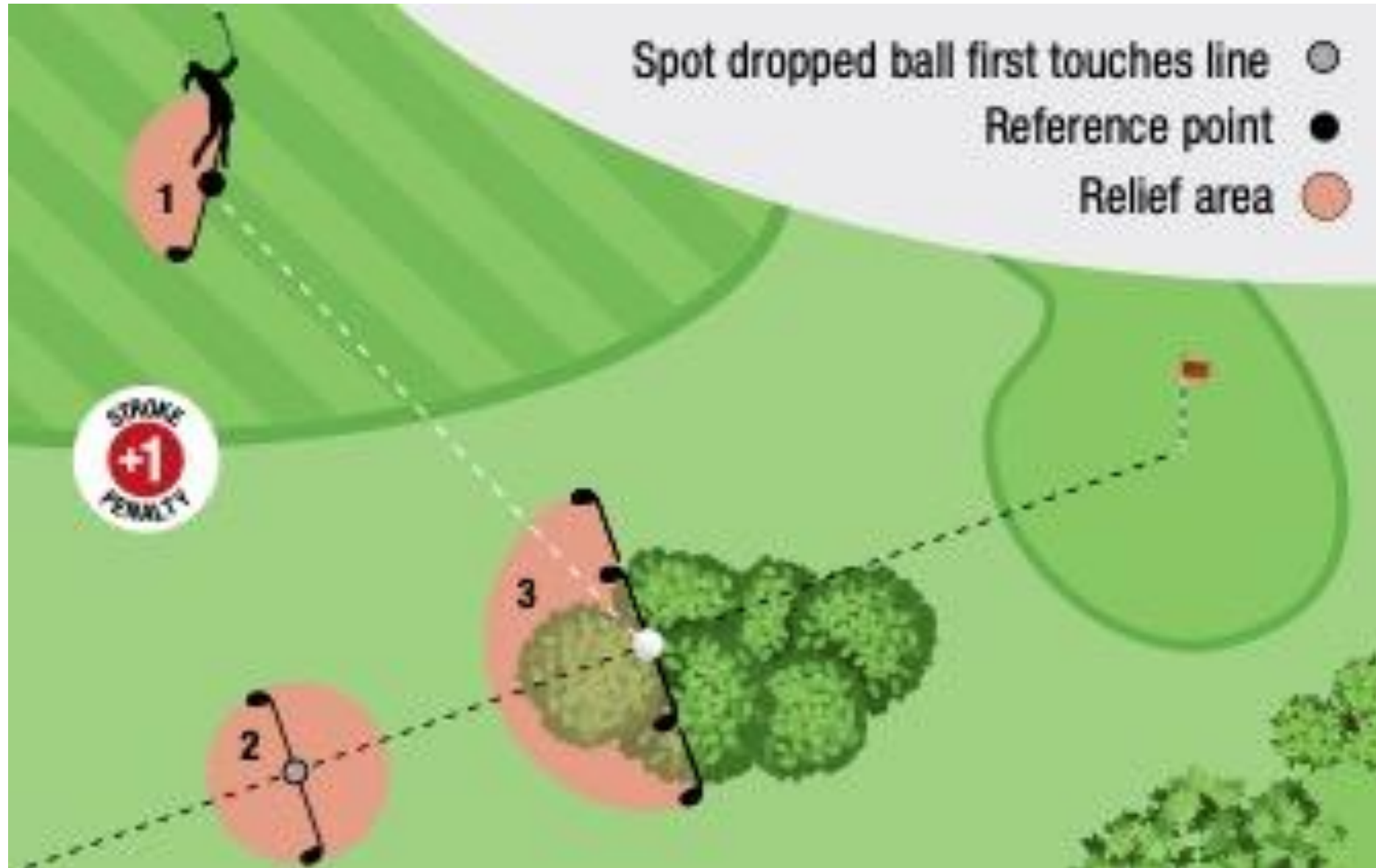


DIAGRAM 19.2

Relief Options  
for a Ball  
Unplayable in  
the General Area



# Unplayable Ball - Bunker





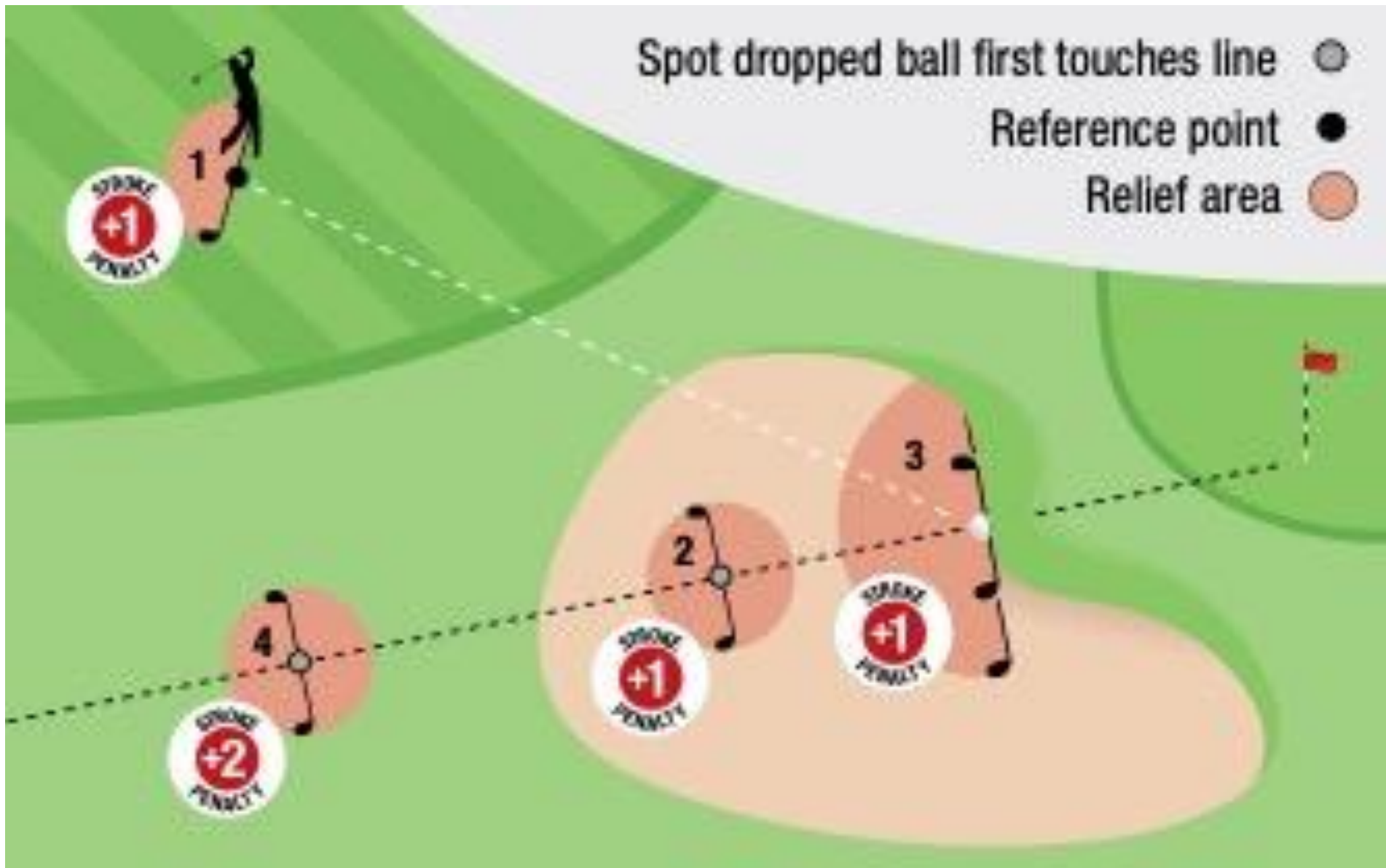


DIAGRAM 19.3:

Relief Options  
for a Ball  
Unplayable in  
Bunker



# Abnormal Course Conditions

- Animal Hole
- Ground Under Repair
- Immovable Obstructions
- Temporary Water



Spring 2024



Golf Ontario - Club Presentation



42



# Relief for Interference from Abnormal Course Condition in General Area

- Procedure in the General Area –
  - Find **Reference Point** = nearest point of complete relief in general area
  - Measure the size of the Relief Area
    - One club-length from the reference point
  - Determine if any limits on the Relief Area
    - Must be in general area
    - Must not be nearer the hole than reference point
    - Complete relief



**Nearest point of complete relief, not nicest!**



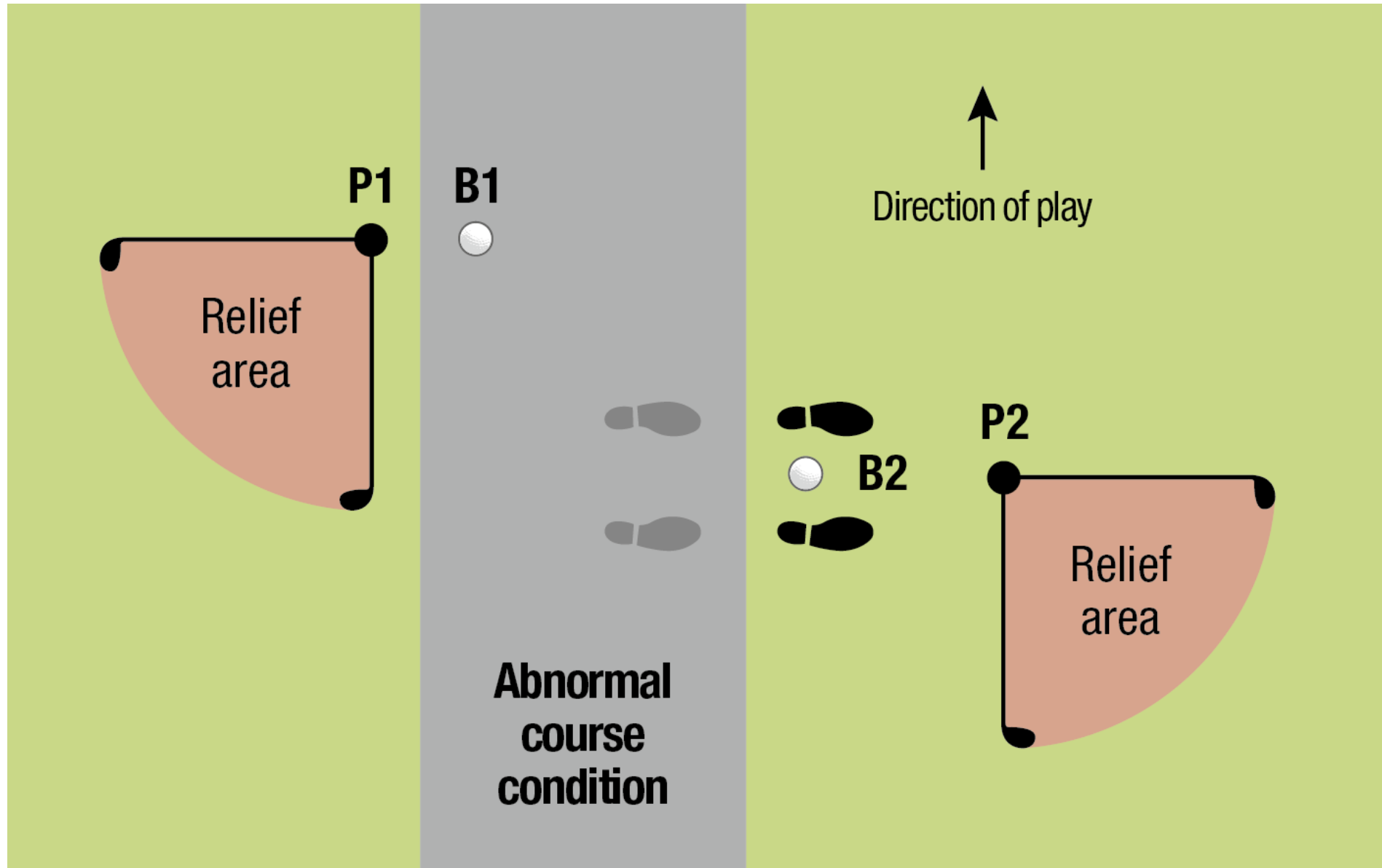


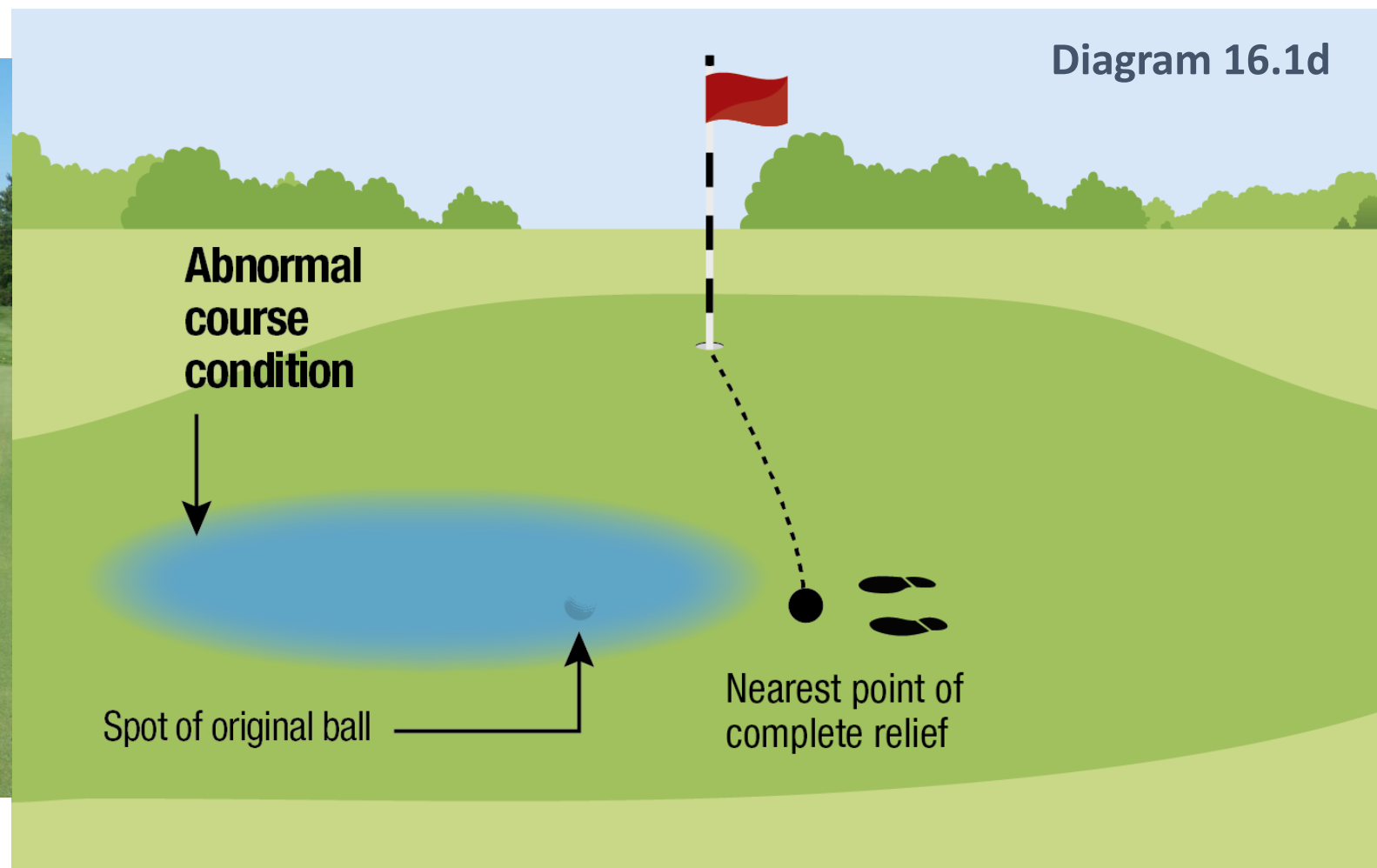
Diagram 16.1a:

When Relief is  
Allowed for  
Abnormal Course  
Condition





# Relief for Interference from Abnormal Course Condition On the Putting Green – Rule 16.1d



# Rule 16.3: Embedded Ball in the General Area

**Diagram 16.3a:**  
When a Ball is  
Embedded



## Ball is embedded

Part of the ball (embedded in its own pitch-mark) is below the level of the ground.

← **Level of Ground**



## Ball is embedded

Despite the fact that the ball is not touching the soil, part of the ball (embedded in its own pitch-mark) is below the level of the ground.



## Ball is NOT embedded

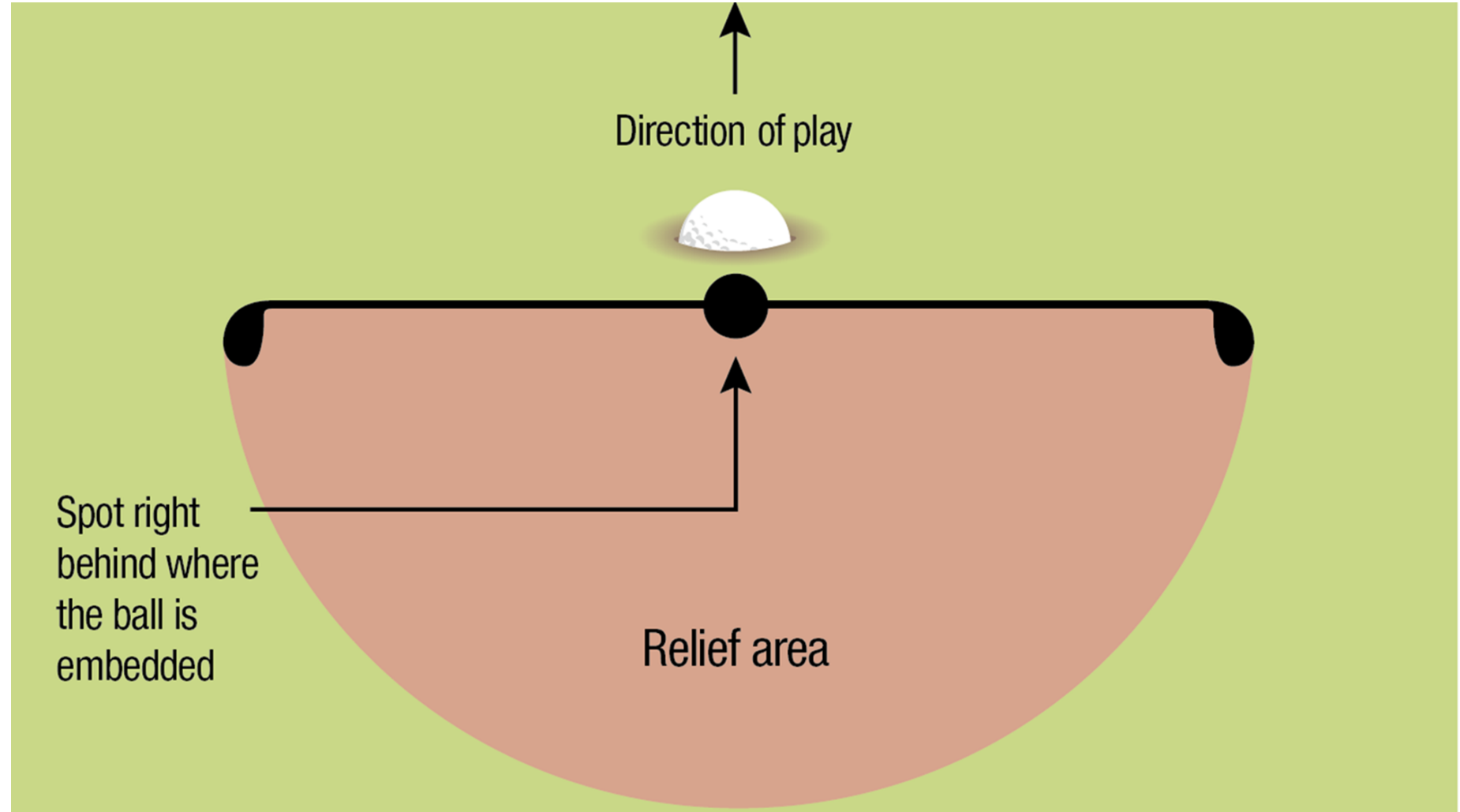
Even though the ball is sitting down in the grass, relief is not available because no part of the ball is below the level of the ground.



# Rule 16.3: Embedded Ball in the General Area

## Diagram 16.3a:

Free Relief for  
Embedded Ball



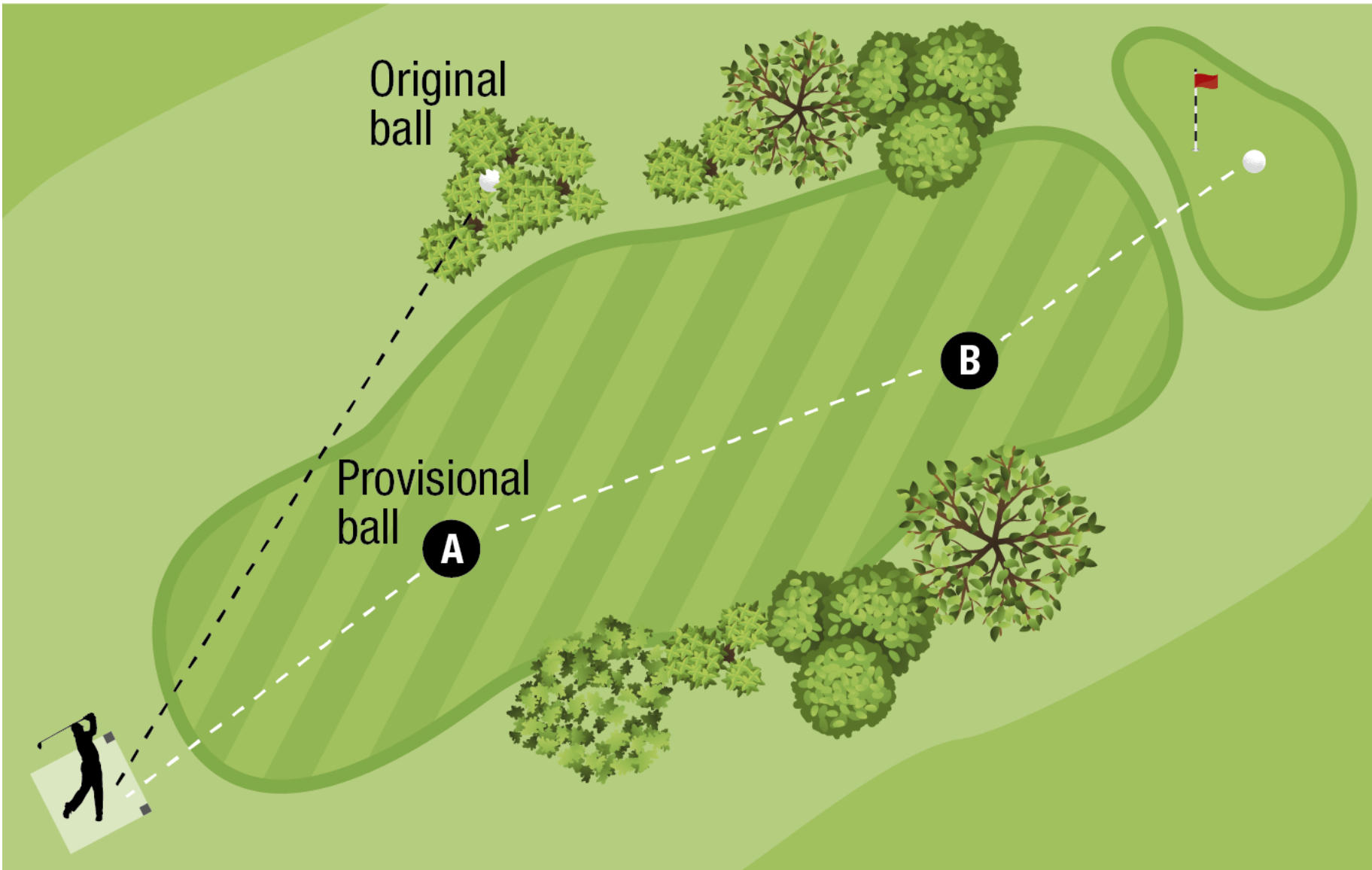
# Rule 18.1 – Relief Under Penalty of Stroke and Distance Allowed at Any Time

## Rule 18.2a – When Ball is Lost or Out of Bounds

- 1) **When Ball is Lost** – ball is not found within 3 minutes of beginning to search for it
- 2) **When Ball is Out of Bounds** – all of it is outside the boundary edge of the course







## DIAGRAM 18.3c:

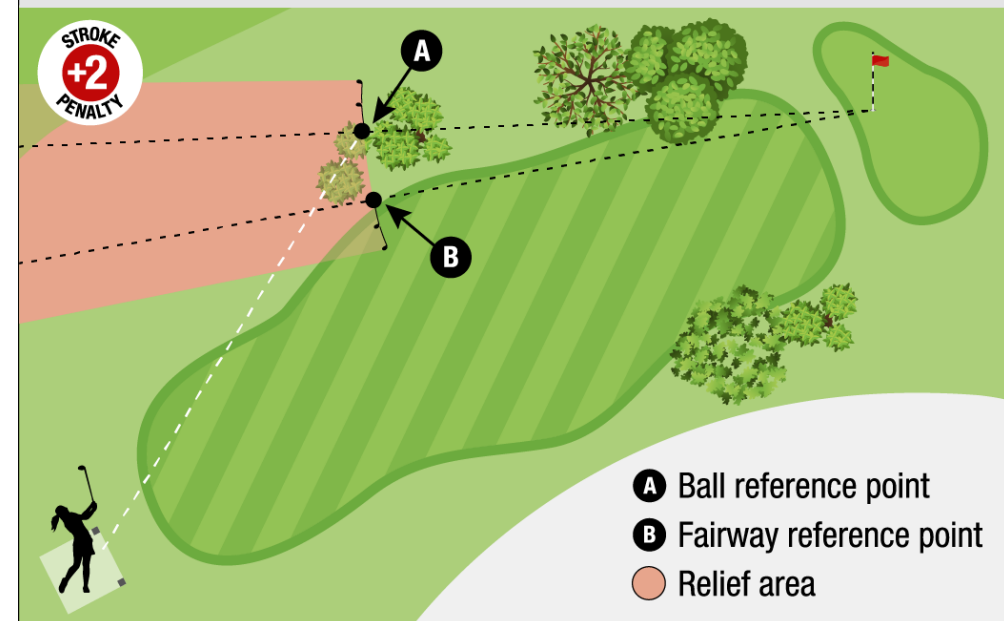
Provisional ball  
played from spot  
nearer hole than  
where original ball  
is estimated to be

# Local Rule

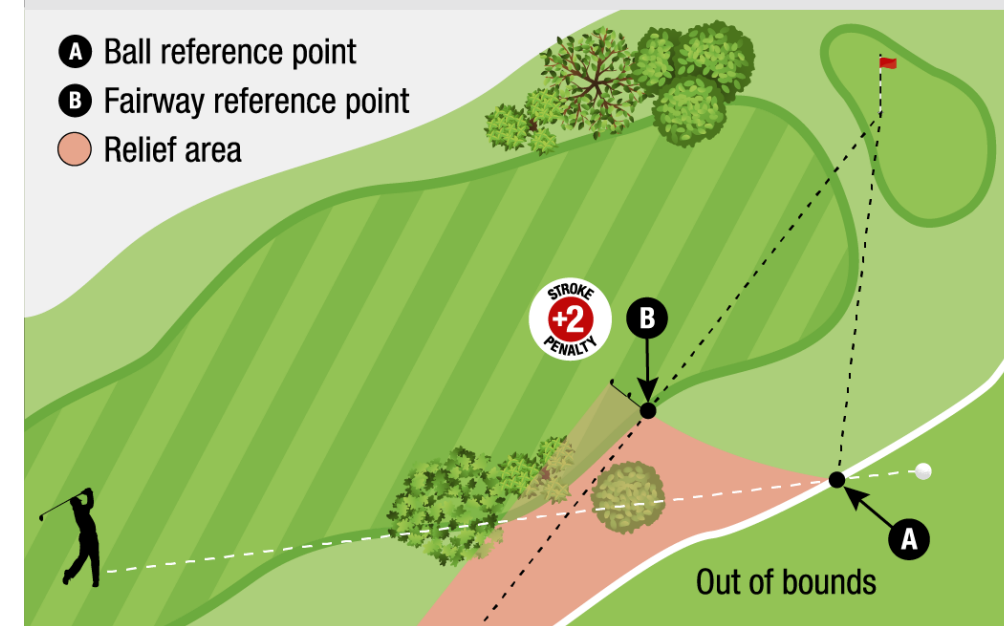
## Alternative to Stroke and Distance

- Additional option for ball lost outside penalty area or out of bounds
  - Two stroke penalty
  - Determining spot (at A) where ball might be lost or where might have gone out of bounds
  - Find the nearest fairway edge (at B)
  - Drop ball in relief area (*all the shaded area*)
- This Local Rule is **appropriate for general play** where golfers are playing casual rounds or playing in their own competitions.
- The Local Rules is not appropriate for competitions limited to highly skilled players.

MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 1: BALL NOT FOUND



MLR E-5 DIAGRAM 2: BALL OUT OF BOUNDS





# DIFFERENCES: Match Play or Stroke Play

## Match Play

- **Order of play** - is fundamental; if a player plays out of turn, the opponent MAY cancel that stroke and make the player play in the proper order
- **Playing a ball outside the teeing area** – no penalty, but the opponent MAY cancel that stroke and allow the player to play from within the teeing area
- **Ignoring an opponent's breach of a rule** - player *may act on the breach or choose to ignore it; but* if player and opponent deliberately agree to ignore a breach or penalty, both players are **disqualified** under Rule 1.3b.
- **Unsure of procedure or ruling** – may request help from Committee, or continue play as wish and wait until after for ruling (*note – may not play a second ball*)
- **On the putting green when player putts and ball hits another ball at rest** - there is no penalty and player will play the ball as it lies, the ball that was hit/moved must be replaced.

Spring 2024

## Stroke Play

- **Order of play** - there is no penalty for playing out of turn and both players are allowed and encouraged to play “ready golf” by playing out of turn in a safe and responsible way
- **Playing a ball outside the teeing area** – player gets the general penalty of 2 strokes and MUST correct the mistake by playing another ball from within the teeing area
- There are scoring protocols for recording scores and attesting a scorecard and **ignoring a known or possible breach of a rule** by another player can result in **disqualification** of both the player and marker
- **Unsure of procedure or ruling** – may play a second ball and MUST report to Committee for their ruling
- **On the putting green when player putts and hits another ball at rest** – if both balls were on the putting green before the stroke, the player gets the **general penalty (2 penalty strokes)**. The ball that was hit/moved must be replaced.