

February 10, 2015

Dear Ladies:

This month I thought I'd present a rules scenario that we encounter fairly often.

You'll see in the attached diagrams, the hole is a par 4 with a pond on the left, cart path on the right, "extreme rough" to the right of the cart path, and out of bounds to the right of the extreme rough.

Some key points to keep in mind as you review the attached sheets:

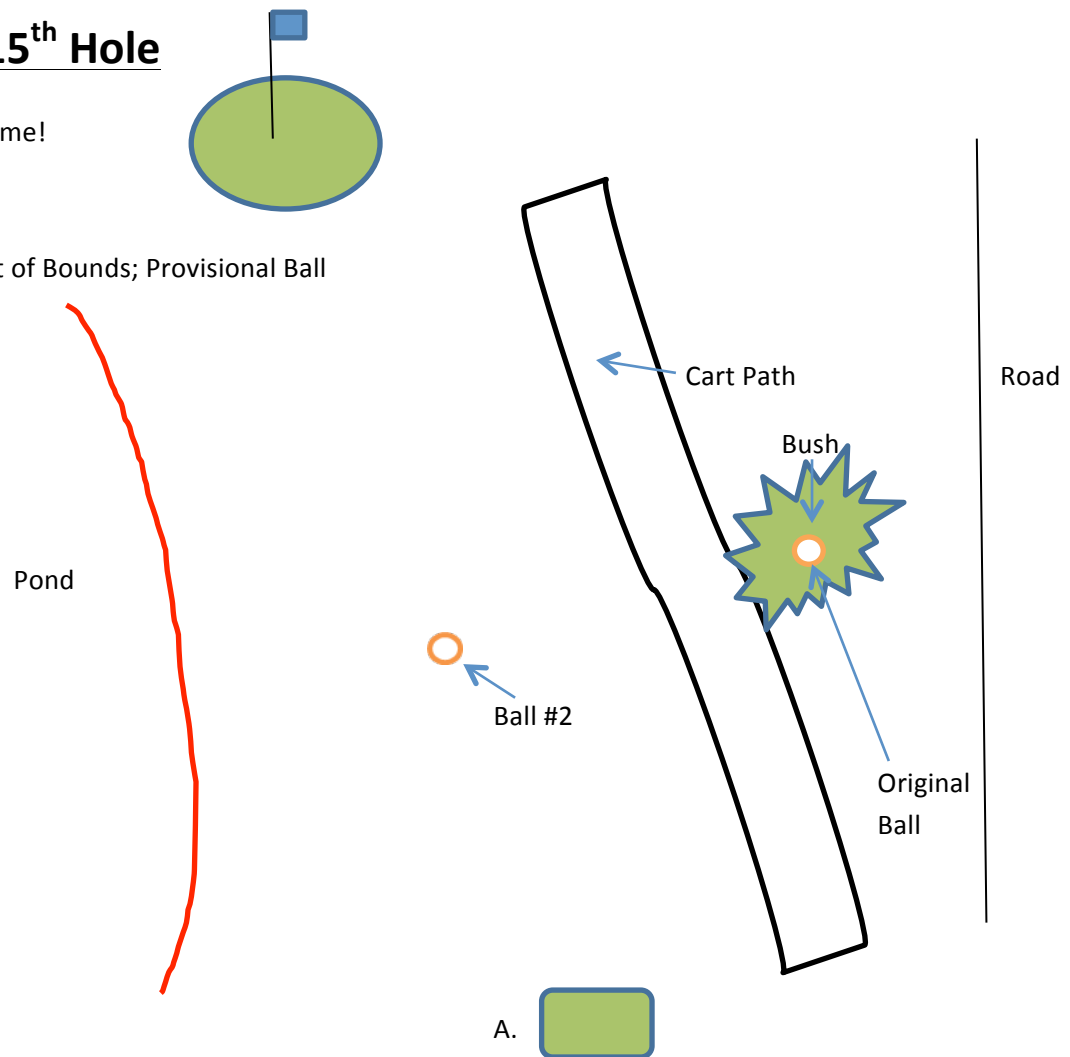
- You can only apply one rule at a time.
- Never lift your ball before you know for sure where you are going with it. Otherwise you risk additional penalties.
- The words in the rules are very specific, such as "a" and "the". "The" means there is only one, as in "the" ball or "the" nearest point of relief. The rules do not allow "a" nearest point of relief.
- If your ball is positioned so that you are standing on the cart path, you are not required to take relief. It might be better than dropping it so you have complete relief (you may not stand at all on the path).

# SWTGA 15<sup>th</sup> Hole

One rule at a time!

## Rule 27

Ball Lost or Out of Bounds; Provisional Ball



Ball hit from teeing ground A. lands right of cart path, which may be out of bounds (in road) or unplayable in a bush. Before going forward to look for the original ball under Rule 27, you have 2 options to re-tee which may result in ball #2 on fairway:

27-1a. the player may put another ball in play (**abandoning** the original ball). Count both strokes & add 1 penalty stroke. The player's ball #2 is lying 3 and he proceeds to play with it to the hole. This option may not sound attractive but it eliminates a multitude of potential problems, as you'll see.

### **OR**

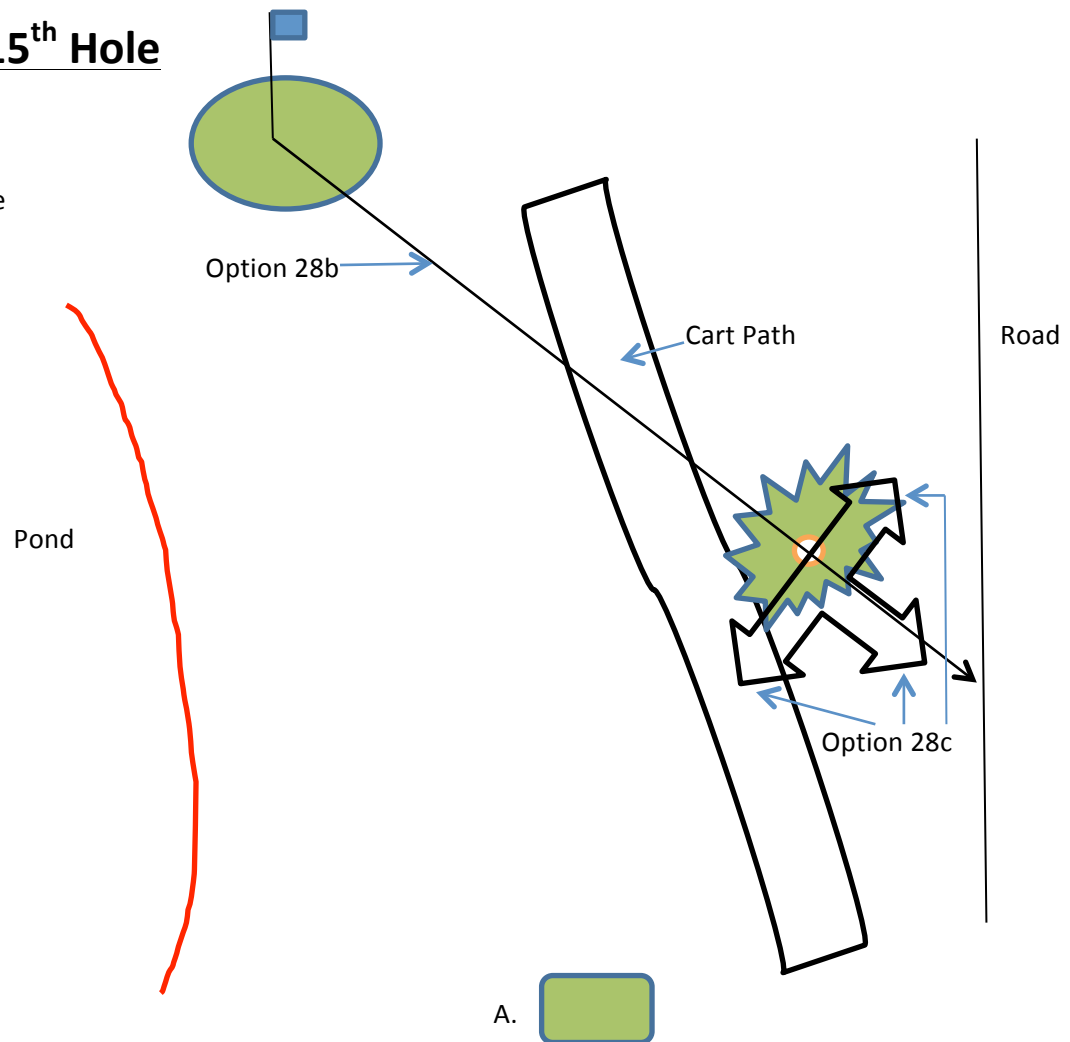
27-2a. the player may announce & hit a **Provisional** ball from A. Proceed forward to look for the original ball. However, there are 2 possible outcomes:

- Under the Provisional ball rule, if the original ball is found out of bounds or not found within 5 minutes of search (ball is lost), proceed with the provisional ball. Again, the player's ball #2 is lying 3.
- If the player's original ball is found in the bush, the provisional ball **must be abandoned**. Maybe you're lucky and it's playable, but maybe you're not lucky and it's unplayable.

# SWTGA 15<sup>th</sup> Hole

## Rule 28

Ball Unplayable



Now, for the ball found unplayable in the bush, we use Rule 28 which permits 3 options. Keep in mind that if you are standing on the cart path to address your ball in the bush, you may not take a free drop for the obstruction (Rule 24-2 Exception) because the bush interferes with your swing. Before lifting your original ball consider these options carefully!

28a. Return to the teeing ground A. and replay the original shot. Count both strokes & add 1 penalty stroke.

28b. Drop behind the point where the ball lies, keep that point between the ball and the hole with no limit to how far behind that point the ball may be dropped (add 1 penalty stroke). This option may not be possible because the line will put you deeper into the bushes.

28c. Drop within 2 club lengths of where the **ball lies** (not the edge of the bush), not nearer the hole (add 1 penalty stroke).

Of course, you may have a reasonably good drop area (onto the mulch or grass on the right of the cart path) with room to stand and swing.

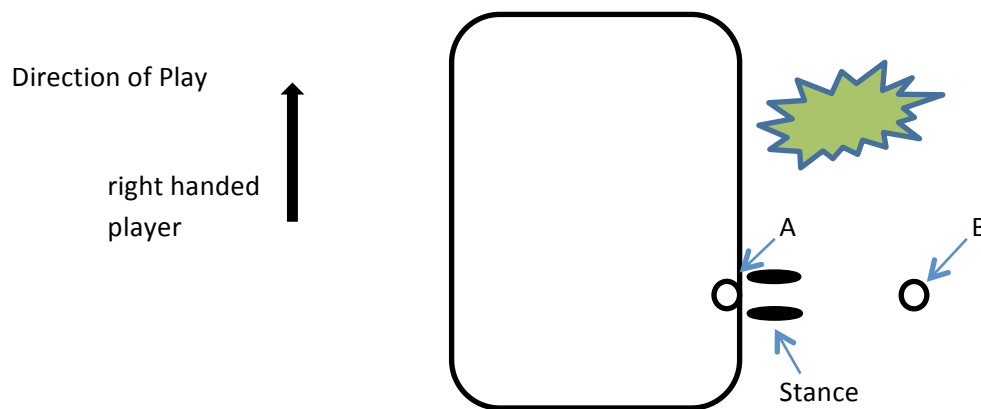
But you may have to drop on the cart path, so you may need another rule...

## **Rule 24**

### Obstructions

If 28c required a drop on the cart path you'll need the immovable obstruction rule which allows free relief. Dropping on the path may cause the ball to roll more than 2 club lengths from where it struck the ground. If so, it must be redropped. If when redropped it rolls again more than 2 club lengths, it must be placed where it 1<sup>st</sup> struck.

This rule is applied as if the bushes were not present. The key point is finding **THE** nearest point of relief which provides complete relief from the path (stance, swing and lie of the ball) & is no closer to the hole. It does not automatically allow a drop to the left of the cart path. In the example below, A is the original dropped ball's position on path & B is the nearest point of relief. Going to the left side of the path results in the ball being farther away from its original location than B and is therefore not allowed.



The ball may be dropped within 1 clublength of B taking complete relief. Obviously, this could result in another unplayable situation or you can play from the cart path.

### **IN SUMMARY:**

Considering all the potential risks and unknowns, your best option may be to put another ball in play from the start (27-1a). It avoids having to sort through all the rules and will speed play. But you can be the judge!