

# Special Rules for Australian Sand Greens Golf Courses

(version 1/1/2019)

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The following Local Rules issued by Golf Australia will apply throughout Australia from 1 January 2019. The Rules of Golf, so far as they are not at variance with these Local Rules, will apply, and they are to be read in conjunction with these Special Rules for Sand Greens.

## ETIQUETTE

1. The last player to hole their ball on the putting green should empty the hole of sand and ensure the flagstick is centred in the hole.
2. Someone other than the last player to hole out will smooth or rake the sand within three smoother-widths of the hole.

## DEFINITIONS

**Putting Green.** The putting green is the sanded portion specially prepared for putting. The Committee will define the perimeter of the putting green. The term “sand” in these rules means sand and any other material used for this purpose on the area that is specially prepared for putting.

**Smoother.** The smoother is the implement provided or approved by the Committee for use by players smoothing the putting green in preparation for putting. The blade of the smoother must not be less than 60cm in length.

**Hole.** For the purpose of the definition of “hole” in the Rules of Golf, a lining having an inner diameter of 108mm (4¼ inches) may be used provided that, when sunk, its upper edge is not more than 6mm (¼ inch) below the putting green surface.

## RULES

### 1. SMOOTHING

When the ball lies on the putting green, or within one club-length of the putting green, the line from the player's ball to the hole may be smoothed subject to the following considerations:

- 1.1 The smoother must be DRAWN and not pushed.
- 1.2 The player is allowed a maximum of two smoothes per putt. Where a rake and smoother are provided, the rake is permitted to be used only for the first smooth, provided the final smooth is made with the smoother.

### **1.2.1 Ball on Putting Green**

The putting green must be smoothed in this order (or in the reverse order at the option of the player) and in this way:

- in one consistently weighted and continuous action from a point beyond the spot where the player's ball was lifted to the hole, and
- in the same line at least one club-length beyond the hole.

If the player elects to make a second smooth, the second smooth must be in the reverse direction of the first smooth.

### **1.2.2 Ball within One Club-Length of Putting Green**

If the player's ball lies within one club-length of the putting green, they may smooth in one consistently weighted and continuous action once from the defined perimeter of the putting green on a line from the ball to the hole, to at least one club-length beyond the hole, or in the reverse order at the option of the player. If the player elects to make a second smooth, the second smooth must be in the reverse direction of the first smooth.

### **1.2.3 Use of Rake and Smoother**

If a rake and a smoother are provided by the club, the rake may only be used for the first smooth, and may be used from the near side of the hole (not from beyond the hole, so as to avoid damage). A second smooth, with the smooth edge, must then be made back in the opposite direction, beyond the hole as in 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 above.

### **1.2.4 Ball on Putting Green and Near Edge of Green**

If a player's ball lies on the putting green, and their area of intended swing is interfered with by the grass edge, they may take a preferred lie as follows:

- the ball must be preferred to a spot that is off the putting green, and
- is within one club-length of the ball's original position, and
- is no nearer the hole than the ball's original position.

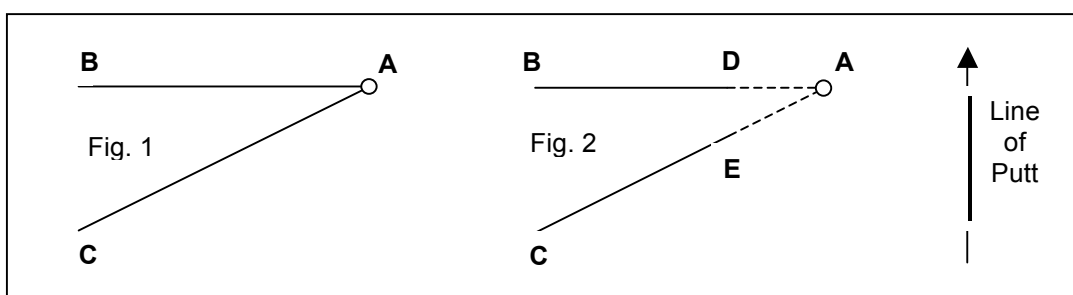
- 1.3 When using a smoother, a ridge or heaping of sand must not be created that could operate to a player's advantage.
- 1.4 The player may be required by another player to remove any ridge or heap of sand without penalty.
- 1.5 If the player's ball is deflected by a ridge of sand at the edge of the smoothed portion, there is no penalty for the ball being deflected and the stroke must not be replayed. However, the player may still be subject to a penalty if they have breached Local Rule 1.3 or 1.4.
- 1.6 The smoother may be used by the player, or any person authorized by them, but the player is responsible at all times for any breach of the Rules or Local Rules.
- 1.7 During the play of a hole, the player is permitted to remove weeds growing on the putting green.

- 1.8 When smoothing sand, if a loose impediment causes a mark to be made on the surface of the sand that:
- 1.8.1. in the opinion of another player will be of assistance to the player, the loose impediment may be removed and the surface re-smoothed once only;
  - 1.8.2 in the opinion of the player, may negatively impact their play, the loose impediment may be removed and the surface re-smoothed once only.

## 2. LIFTING, MARKING AND REPLACING THE BALL

- 2.1 In preparation for smoothing, the ball must be marked and lifted in accordance with Rule 14.1 of the Rules of Golf.
- 2.2 If the player does not wish to smooth the putting surface prior to playing a ball at rest on the green after any stroke, the ball may be lifted and placed within 5 centimetres of where it last came to rest but not nearer the hole.

The recommended method of marking the ball is illustrated in the diagrams reproduced below:



Before lifting the ball, two straight lines AB and AC are scratched in the sand as shown in Fig. 1. These lines should extend sideways from the ball. "A" is the marked position of the ball. When the smooth is completed, those portions of the lines represented by AD and AE in Fig. 2 will be obliterated. "A" can readily be located by projecting the lines BD and CE until they meet. The point of intersection will be "A" and the ball must be replaced on that spot.

## 3. BALL HOLED

The definition of "holed" in the Rules of Golf is extended to include where a ball is at rest entirely within the circumference of the hole – even if the entire ball is not below the surface of the putting green because of sand left within the hole. (See also Rule 13.2c for ball resting against the flagstick in the hole.)

## 4. EXCESS SAND IN CUP

Players are permitted to empty the hole of excess sand at any time subject to sand green Rule 1-3 above.

**Unless otherwise noted, the penalty for a breach of a Local Rule is the general penalty (stroke play – two strokes, match play – loss of hole).**