

Some U. S. Golf Association Decisions on the Rules of Golf

Question.—On August 26 my club had a qualifying round of 36 holes for the championship of the club, and on Saturday, September 1, the first round of match play was started. Kindly advise me whether or not a player who played 9 holes of the course before starting his match is disqualified on account of playing in advance of his competitor on the day of the competition, and if so, what his standing would be, having played through the tournament and winning the championship.

ANSWER.—There is no penalty for a competitor playing over the course before the match play rounds. The penalty is imposed in medal play only.

Question.—A, engaged in match play with his opponent B, shanks a ball over the hill into the rough in a place where he believes it is out of bounds. In order to save time, he plays another ball and makes another shot with almost exactly similar results, and then repeats the performance with a third ball, whereupon he plays a fourth ball, which lands on the green. When the players reach the place where the first three balls are presumed to be, they find that all three balls are in bounds. A then proceeds to play his first ball, and picks up the second, third, and fourth balls which he has played. B claims that A has no right to play more than one shot until after it is absolutely determined that the first ball is out of bounds. Which is right?

B also claims that if A plays two shots with the provisional ball, he must continue to play the provisional ball and regard the first ball as out of bounds and consequently out of play. Which is right?

ANSWER.—Answering your first question, the rules for a provisional ball are made in order to save delay; therefore the player is entitled to play a second or a third provisional ball.

Your second question is answered by Decision No. 47 of the Rules of Golf Committee of the Royal and Ancient of St. Andrews, in which a player holed out with a provisional ball and then found his first ball, which he presumed was out of bounds, on the course. The Royal and Ancient decision is, that the provisional ball shall be disregarded and the hole played out with the first ball.

Question.—Will you kindly inform me if there is any rule, and if so the number, which penalizes a player in match play who plays at and strikes the flag-staff from within 20 yards of the flag-staff?

ANSWER.—There is no rule to penalize a player in match play who strikes a flag from any distance. This is covered by Rule No. 32 in the Rules of Golf.

Question.—The following came up in the playing of a handicap tournament at our club. A gives B one stroke on 18 holes, the stroke falling on the second hole. At the end of the 18 holes, the match is a tie. The players proceed to play, tying on the 19th hole, and on the 20th hole B claims a stroke handicap, the same as on the first 18 holes. A claims that the handicap stroke does not apply for extra strokes. The 20th hole was played, resulting in A taking 6 strokes and B seven. A claimed the match. B refused to concede the match and asked that the balance of the 18 holes be played. Which is right? Please advise us as promptly as possible what the custom is in a matter of this kind. We understand the Rules of the United States Golf Association do not recognize handicap play; but surely there is a method recognized somewhere for conducting handicap tournaments.

ANSWER.—In all cases similar to the one you describe where a handi-

cap match ends in a tie at the completion of a round, a full 18 holes must be played off in order to determine the winner.

The Green Section; Its Needs and Its Opportunities

Address of C. V. Piper, Annual Meeting of the Green Section, January 5.

Gentlemen, I will have to make my remarks very brief, and I will try to make them pertinent. We will have to take a few moments for a business session, and then we are going to see some moving pictures of Bobbie Jones in slow action, so that you can see exactly how he does it. I had intended to show a series of slides dealing with golf architecture, but our apparatus is not very satisfactory for the purpose. Golf architecture is a subject which we shall have to study more seriously. The great majority of our American golf courses are not anywhere nearly as good as they should be. Anybody can lay off a mediocre golf course, but it takes a creative artist to lay off a golf course that is a fine test of play and at the same time a thing of landscape beauty. There are not many such courses in America. I think the British are beating us here. They have published two books on golf architecture. In this country we have not published one. The Green committee is at work on one now. Practically every other technical, scientific, or commercial organization has a society, and many of them publish journals. The golf architects ought to organize. They are advancing. Many of them are doing some fine work, for which they deserve thanks; but there is altogether too much mediocre work yet. It is going to improve the more rapidly as more golfers learn to appreciate what good architecture is; and that is the reason why we should all study it. There ought to be a reason for every bit of construction on a golf course, and the architect should be able to explain that reason clearly.

Now I want to explain briefly what the Green Section is, as I find there is a great deal of misapprehension in regard to it. It is a cooperative organization of the golf clubs, who supply the funds through their annual dues. It cooperates with the United States Department of Agriculture. The United States Department of Agriculture is a public-service organization, and the study of the problem of turf as relating to parks, lawns, golf courses, and so on, is one of its functions. With the money from the Green Section, the men in the Department of Agriculture are able to do more investigational work than they would otherwise be able to do; that is, the Green Section funds, to some extent, supplement the Department's funds, although thus far the Department has been putting in more money than has the Green Section.

Now there is absolutely nothing in this for the scientific men in the Department of Agriculture, except that it gives them the opportunity to do more work along lines in which they are interested. There is not any graft in the thing; there is no possible way by which a scientist in the Department of Agriculture can get one dollar out of the Green Section. If he does, he will lose his job, and probably spend his time for a period as a guest of Uncle Sam in one of his well-known apartment houses. Now I want to make this particularly clear, because a few people made insinuations that in some way or other the men in the Department of Agriculture are profiting financially. In fact, I have had one letter in which we are absolutely accused of being grafters. I do not claim that our ethics are any higher than those of ordinary men; we are probably as susceptible to the influence of money as anybody else. I recall a story of a government official during the war who was in a very responsible position. One day he was approached by a representative of a contractor, who offered him