

# Organized Gambling In Golf

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Many inquiries have arisen as to the position of the United States Golf Association regarding gambling in golf, especially auction pools and sweepstakes.

Such pools are disallowed at all competitions sponsored by the Association. The reasoning behind this policy is sound. USGA tournaments are conducted for the sole purpose of determining championships. Organized auction pools at championships would almost certainly run into large figures, would lead to commercializing the game to a high degree and might well be the means for professional gamblers to take over and attempt to influence players just as they have done in other sports.

Thus, the USGA has unequivocally felt it to be in the best interests of the game to prohibit any form of organized gambling at USGA championships.

On the other hand, there are certain areas of gambling, especially of the informal sort, which are outside the scope of USGA jurisdiction unless perchance a question of amateur status is involved.

In order to clarify the Association's position, the Executive Committee adopted the following resolution at its last meeting:

"This Association does not approve organized gambling in connection with the playing of the game. Section 1 of the Rules of Amateur Status defines what constitutes an amateur golfer. Section 2 gives several examples of violations which are to be interpreted in the light of Section 1. In considering any individual case, the Committee would be guided by the intent for which an event is conducted or the purpose for which a player has competed."

The definition of an amateur golfer in Section 1 is:

"An amateur golfer is one who plays the game solely as a non-remunerative or non-profit-making sport."

Unfortunately, some golfers are suspected of making a business out of gambling on their golf skill. Much of their income apparently is dependent on their winnings and, in my opinion, such individuals violate the essence of the Rules.

There is quite a difference between this sort of gambling and friendly wagering or informal sweepstakes.



## Professional Intent

A new section dealing with professional intention has been added to the Rules of Amateur Status. Henceforth, the following will cause forfeiture of amateur status:

"Taking any action which clearly indicates the intention of becoming a professional golfer."

All cases under this category will be judged according to the facts presented. A golfer who has made definite application for a professional job or has made application to play for prize money will be deemed thereby to have forfeited amateur status.

The Committee will not attempt to interpret a state of mind—rather, a definite action by an individual which would express a professional state of mind will govern the Committee in its decision.