

The Overweight Ball

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A purpose of the United States Golf Association is to make and interpret rules to promote the best interests and true spirit of the game. To this end, it adopted in November, 1931, a rule that the weight of the ball shall be not greater than 1.620 ounces avoirdupois and the size not less than 1.680 inches in diameter, effective January 1, 1932.

The specifications were reached only after five years of study, largely under the direction of Herbert Jaques, then Chairman of the Implements and Ball Committee and later President of the Association, and one year of experimentation with a ball of the same size but weighing not more than 1.550 ounces.

Co-operation Fortright

Ball manufacturers have given the Association their complete co-operation, and enforcement never presented any sort of a problem until last season. Even in that one case, the manufacturer's co-operation was so forthright that the problem, when brought to his attention, was easily solved to the satisfaction of all concerned. The case is reported here only to keep the record straight.

During the golf season the Implements and Ball Committee became aware of rumors that the Dunlop Maxfli ball seemed heavier than other balls and was attaining unusually long distances.

Since the weight of the ball has a direct bearing on distance, the Committee procured from golf shops random samples of various brands of balls and tested them. A torsion scale of the type which pharmacists use to determine weight accurately down to grams and grains was purchased and used for these tests.

The Dunlop Maxfli was shown to weigh consistently more than .6 of a gram, or more than one per cent, above the maximum. The other brands tested were consistently at or below the maximum.

The Committee at once brought its findings to the attention of the Association and the Dunlop Tire and Rubber Corporation. Both reacted immediately.

The Association informed contestants in the Amateur, Girls' Junior and Women's Amateur Championships and in the Walker Cup Match: "Dunlop Maxfli balls tested by the USGA weigh more than USGA rules permit. A player using such a ball disqualifies himself unless he can prove it is within the regulations on page 56 of the Rules of Golf booklet."

E. B. Germain, president of the Dunlop Tire and Rubber Corporation, responded: "The figures you give check very closely with our own. The average of our ball is slightly heavy . . . The present plan is to start [correcting] this right after Labor Day."

A more recent letter from Mr. Germain announced that the mechanical problem had been solved and that balls now being produced are within the maximum weight. Accordingly, the USGA has notified all Associations:

"USGA tests indicate that the Dunlop Maxfli golf ball now being produced with the *number* printed in *black* and the other markings printed in red conforms with USGA Rules.

"Such balls in which the number is printed in *red* have not conformed with USGA tests, having weighed more than USGA Rules permit.

"The *color* in which the *number* is printed is the distinguishing feature."

Mercury in a Clubhead

A putter with a movable insertion of mercury in its head has been disapproved by the Implements and Ball Committee.

In two respects the club does not conform to the Rules Governing Form and Make of Golf Clubs and Ball. It contains a movable material which changes the balance of the club, and it is not in one piece.