

Changes in the Rules of Golf

By ISAAC B. GRAINGER

CHAIRMAN, USGA RULES OF GOLF COMMITTEE

To the average golfer, the only noticeable change in the 1949 edition of the USGA Rules of Golf booklet probably is the color of the cover. However, a number of refinements will be detected by one who has made it a practice to carry a Rules book in his golf bag (a practice which all golfers would find most helpful).

Rule 17, probably the most often violated, has received the most attention. It will be noted that, in the definition of a hazard, "road" has been eliminated.

The classification of a road as a hazard has existed throughout the game's American history, so far as available records show, and the effect of the change is that, when a ball lies in a road, it may be dealt with in the same manner as a ball lying through the green. If you wish to sole your club or remove loose impediments, that is your privilege under this revision.

Few if any roads on American courses have been constructed with the view of purposely creating hazard conditions; hence, roads have often interfered unfairly with normal play. Likewise, much confusion has resulted from inability, in many cases, to distinguish between actual roads and tracks, such as those made by the occasional passage of vehicles or of greenkeepers' equipment.

However, under the new Rules, roads do not enjoy any other preferential treatment. For instance, there is no lifting without penalty, as is allowed on some courses.

A significant change has been made in the language of Sub-section (1) of Rule 17. One purpose of the former

Rule was to prohibit the testing of sand and grass conditions of other hazards for such benefits as might be derived for playing a ball from the hazard within which it lies. The new Rule is specific on this point and thereby eliminates the possibility of a penalty arising simply from inadvertence.

The Obstruction Rule

Rule 7 (4) also has been clarified. Artificial drains have been added to the list of artificial obstructions, and relief from all artificial obstructions in a hazard has been given.

If your ball lies within two club-lengths of any artificial obstruction within the confines of a hazard and your contemplated stroke is interfered with by such obstruction, you may now lift and place your ball in a similar lie and position as near as possible to its original location—without penalty. As an example, if your ball is in the water under a bridge, relief is granted from interference by the bridge, but in obtaining such relief the ball must be replaced in the water as near as possible to the bridge. If unplayable in the original position, the ball cannot be made playable by moving to shallow water.

You no doubt are asking yourself, "What must I do if a ball comes to rest on that portion of a bridge or other obstruction within the confines of a hazard?" Obviously, it would be impossible to find a similar lie; hence, you have only one course to follow without penalty if you do not wish to play from the obstruction. You may lift and place the ball within the hazard, not nearer the hole, but as near as possible to the obstruction without interference therefrom.

Do you ever have occasion to brush away loose impediments on the putting green? If so, be sure that the brushing takes place *across* the line of putt, which is permitted, rather than *along* the line

How to Obtain Rules Books

The 1949 edition of the USGA Rules of Golf booklet may be obtained from the Association's office, 73 East 57th St., New York 22, N. Y.

The price is 15 cents per copy, regardless of quantity.

of putt, which is prohibited under Rule 18 (2).

If your ball stops on the lip of the cup and you have an urge to influence its movement with the hope that it may drop in the hole, Rule 18 (5) admonishes you to restrain yourself if you wish to avoid the general penalty of loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke competition. The old Rule referred only to shielding the ball from wind and did not cover other methods of changing the position of the ball, such as deliberately jarring the ground around the hole.

If you are a "creeper" who thoughtlessly delays other players, new Rule 2 (3) should provide a helpful warning. This Rule formerly carried an automatic disqualification penalty for interfering with others through delay in play. The Rule now requires that "A player shall play without undue delay", and the penalty has been changed to the general penalty of loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play; but repetition or deliberate interference will result in disqualification.

Because of the severity of the former penalty, automatic disqualification, it was difficult to invoke the provisions of Rule 2 (3), with the result that some general disregard of the effect on other players has crept into the game, particularly in major competition. Under the new provisions, the committee or the referee may now give warning before applying either the general penalty or the disqualification penalty.

Do you ever have an urge to break a club over your own or your opponent's anatomy? If so, you are advised to read the new Preamble to the Rules, because you may find yourself without the use of a necessary club. A club may now be replaced only if it becomes unfit for play "in the normal course of play". There is no substitute allowed for a club which has been deliberately broken.

Can you distinguish the difference between a forecaddie and a caddie? If not, new Definition 10 will be of assistance. Actually, when employed by a player, there is no difference in status. A fore-

caddie so employed is a part of the match and, accordingly, subject to all the provisions of the Rules relating to a caddie. However, if the forecaddie is provided by the committee, he is an outside agency and, as such, can do nothing to precipitate a penalty on the player, nor may the player seek advice from him.

A major refinement of the 1949 Rules booklet appears in the index. For a long time the Rules of Golf Committee has wanted to develop an index which would be brief but sufficient to promote quick reference to the appropriate Rule. From comments which have been made to the Committee, our last previous experiment seems to have over-simplified this problem. We have, therefore, returned to an alphabetical cross-reference index, although less extensive than that which prevailed for many years prior to 1947.

"HONOR CADDIE"

(Continued from page 9)

Day", a ballad of a hopeful golfer. Hope almost steals the show with a sequence in which he takes a vicious cut at the ball while starting a foursome with Crosby, Evans, and Ben Hogan. The sound track produces a sibilant "S-s-s-w-w-i-sh", but no connecting click. Finally, Bob, after squinting into the distance as though following the flight of his alleged drive, says to his caddie, "Pick up that ball, son, and follow me!"

In addition to Crosby and Hope, the personnel of "Honor Caddie" includes Frank Faylen, Hollywood actor who portrays the caddie-master; Joe Novak, President of the Professional Golfers' Association; Hogan, Byron Nelson, Lloyd Mangrum, Jimmy Demaret, Evans, Sam Snead, Babe Zaharias, Frank Stranahan, Bud Ward, Johnny Dawson, Patty Berg, Louise Suggs, Jimmy Thomson, and Porky Oliver.

The Western Golf Association began national distribution of "Honor Caddie" on April 1. Contributions through club membership in the W.G.A. (\$35 per year) or individual memberships (\$5) will be directed to the Evans Scholars Fund. Clubs interested in securing the film for special showings may contact the Western G.A., 8 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 3.