

Every Golfer His Own Referee

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A time comes in everyone's life when the strenuous sports no longer may be followed with physical safety. What, then, can one do for a recreation?

Golf seems to offer the best outlet because it combines physical exercise in proportion to the need of the individual, social contacts, pure air and sunshine. Moreover, golf is almost the only recreation in which all persons may participate. It may literally be said that golf can be played from the cradle to the grave, and by both sexes. It plays no favorites.

Like every other sport, golf flourishes best under proper organization and direction. The great function of the USGA has been to develop a code of Rules and Etiquette governing the game. The persistence of our national organization in refusing to be stampeded into various changes due to sectional whims has finally bloomed. The PGA voted to adhere to the USGA code. The Western Golf Association differs only in the style.

A code, however, is not sufficient. It must be respected and obeyed. In almost every sport there are umpires and referees to enforce the Rules. Golf, however, always has been called a "gentleman's game," and though provisions are made for referees, there seldom is one. Golfers are their own referees for the most part. Only in the most important events are referees appointed, and then only toward the final.

The fact that golfers are generally their own referees leads to the most important part of my message. It is: the need for all golfers, young and old, whether tournament players or not, to learn the Rules and abide by them.

The idea seems to have grown prevalent in recent years to disregard the small things. It is usually due to ignorance, although betting has its influence at times. The old adage that "little



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drops of water and little grains of sand make up the mighty ocean and the pleasant land" is still good, although maybe a bit moss-covered. If one gets into the habit of teeing six inches, or maybe a foot, in front of the markers, where may the limit eventually be? The teeing ground is definitely prescribed in the Rules.

The Rules prescribe that the same ball must be played from the tee into the cup, with certain very definitely prescribed exceptions. What, then, must we think of the fellow who is constantly changing his ball on the putting green, playing a new ball each time? Visit any course and just a little observation will show you that many golfers, some of them leaders in the game, change their balls on the putting greens, tee up in

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current season, check the handicap produced by the above method with one produced by applying the average of the lowest 20% of the player's total number of scores to Table A. If there is any difference, the lower of the two handicaps should apply.

Both of the above methods assume that every player has turned in all of his scores.

How To Obtain Scores

4. Several suggestions have been received on how to induce players to turn in all their scores. Rather than recommend any particular method, the best of these suggestions are briefly outlined below:—

(a) Have the man in charge of the scoreboard collect from every player completing a round either (1) his score card, or (2) his actual score. A golf manager, starter, caddie-master, or any other employee constantly on duty near the first tee or 18th green can do this task. This plan, of course, will not work at clubs having no regular employee on duty near the course.

(b) Have the caddie-master keep a list of every member who tees off. Alongside the entrance to the locker room, keep a pad of forms on which a member can write his name, score and the date, and put it in a Handicap Box provided for the purpose. Check the scores turned in with the starter's sheets, and for anyone not turning in a score and not having a valid excuse (such as not playing a full round), use for the missing round a score equal to the lowest score already posted on the player's record. (This method will upset the accurate scoring records of the players unless these fictitious scores are circled or otherwise marked to show they are not actual scores.)

(c) Have the man in charge of the golf shop or bag-room where players keep their clubs maintain a chart on which he is to record the dates on which each player takes out his clubs. Each week-end check the

chart against the scores actually turned in and apply a penalty to players not turning in all their scores. This penalty, for use in club tournaments only, might call for a reduction of 3 strokes from the handicap of players turning in less than 75% of their scores, 2 strokes for those turning in 75% to 84% of their scores, 1 stroke for those turning in 85% to 94%, and no strokes for those turning in 95% or more of their scores. This method is a bit complicated and will not be 100% perfect if some sets of clubs are kept at players' homes or in their lockers.

None of the above suggestions are perfect, all having some "out" about them. Perhaps a combination of two or more would prove satisfactory, and probably no one system will work perfectly at all clubs. We will, however, continue to entertain ideas on how to obtain all scores and will pass along the best of them through the pages of this JOURNAL.

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front of the markers and do numerous other things that are violations of the code and which give them a definite advantage over those who will not do such things.

These are only a few instances of violations that will only lead eventually to embarrassment. Get a copy of the Rules and study them. They are easily available. Unfortunately, most professionals instruct in the mechanics of the game, not the Rules. Few players in any sport read the Rules for themselves. They depend upon their coaches, and golf professionals could render a great service here.

If one does not have the time or desire to read the Rules, follow the Golden Rule. Every person wants to be treated squarely by others. Why not try the same treatment on others?

If every golfer played the game according to his own knowledge of right and wrong, he would, when in doubt, carefully avoid doing the wrong thing, and then he could be sure he was right.

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