

Rulings in the Open

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Several incidents involving the Rules of Golf arose in the 1950 Open Championship. Most attention was focused on Lloyd Mangrum's handling a ball in play on Merion's 16th green during the play-off with Ben Hogan and George Fazio.

Mangrum was 15 feet from the hole in 3. Fazio was away, off the green. To keep his ball from interfering with or assisting Fazio's, Mangrum lifted his ball, under Rule 11 (3 and 3a).

When it came his turn, Mangrum replaced his ball, restoring it to play. He addressed it and was about to putt. Suddenly he stopped. He reached down, picked up the ball, blew on it (to remove an insect), replaced it again, and then holed the 15-foot putt for a seeming par 4. Apparently that kept him just one stroke from Ben Hogan, with two holes to go.

But in picking up the ball when in play, Mangrum infringed a primary Rule. If there is one Rule which best expresses the whole idea of the game, it is the one which provides, in effect, that once you tee your ball you should not touch it again until you have holed it out. There are certain exceptions, but that is primary. Rule 10(2) provides:

Ball Played Wherever It Lies and not Touched. A ball may not be touched and must be played wherever it lies except as otherwise provided for in the Rules or local rules. Except in a hazard, the player may, without penalty, touch his ball with his club in the act of addressing it, provided he does not move the ball."

Mangrum's action, although an inadvertence, cost him a two-stroke penalty. There is no statement of penalty directly connected to Rule 10(2), but, in the absence of any such statement in any Rule, the general penalty applies, as stated in Rule 2(1):

"The penalty for the breach of a Rule or local rule is the loss of the hole in match play and two strokes in stroke play, except when otherwise specifically provided in the Rules."

On Merion's first hole Fred Haas, Jr., drove into a bunker. His recovery was too strong and went out of bounds. What to do? Should he place a ball in the bunker, or drop one? Rule 9(1) provides that in a hazard a ball shall be dropped in such a case.

Incidentally, suppose that before dropping the second ball the player were to smooth the hazard soil displaced by his first stroke, at the place where he must drop the second ball. He would then violate Rule 17(1), and a penalty of two strokes would result in stroke play. The exception in Rule 17(1e) would not apply.

Skip Alexander's ball hopped into the moving caddie bag of a preceding player. Rule 15(2) governed:

"If the ball lodge in anything moving, a ball shall be dropped, or if on the putting green placed, as near as possible to the spot where the object was when the ball lodged in it, without penalty."

Alexander's approach shot on the 18th in his first round came to rest on a tent flap lying on the ground. A little gust of wind blew it off the flap before Alexander arrived at the ball. Wind is not an outside agency under Rule 15, and so Rule 15(3) did not apply.

The ball then came to rest on a path, and Alexander's stance and stroke were interfered with by a radio cable when lying on the ground and by a tent rope. Both are artificial obstructions and were moved without penalty (see Rule 7(4a)). Whereupon Alexander played a magnificent shot from the hard-surfaced path, across a bunker and onto the green, eventually holing out for a 68. Had the tent interfered, Alexander could have had relief without penalty under Rule 7(4c).

Cary Middlecoff, the defending Champion, and Sam Snead were involved in separate questions whether a ball were unfit for play. Rule 14(1b) provides

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When Caddies Carry Double

One premise of the Rules of Golf is that each player has a separate caddie and that the caddie is, in a working sense, a partner of the player. But the game since the war has developed differently. At nearly every club there are more active players than caddies.

Thus, out of necessity, boys began to carry two bags instead of one, and situations were created for which the Rules of Golf do not provide.

Basically, a player always has been held responsible for the actions of his caddie. If a caddie interferes with a ball in a match, for instance, the effect is the same as if the player himself interfered.

Yet when a boy caddies for two opponents and, for example, interferes with a ball, takes a flagstick, causes a ball to move by picking up a loose impediment, or provides wrong information on the ownership of a ball, whose caddie is he deemed to be, and who is penalized?

Questions of this nature were submitted so frequently to the Rules of Golf Committee that the Association has recommended local rules for use when it is necessary to assign a caddie to two players.

Whenever possible, each player should have his own caddie and the Rules of Golf should have full effect. When this is impossible, it is recommended that the local committee adopt the following local rules to cover contingencies:

Match Play Singles

The caddie is an agency outside the match within the meaning of Rule 15 except when he acts upon specific directions of a player, in which case he is considered to be that player's caddie.

Instances in which he could be considered a player's caddie could arise under the following Rules:

- 4(1)—Advice.
- 7(1)—Irregularities of surface.
- 7(2a)—Removal of loose impediments.
- 7(3)—Fixed or growing impediments.
- 7(7)—Attending flagstick. The cad-

die should be specifically advised what to do. If he attends the flagstick without receiving instruction from either side, he is an agency outside the match. If he receives conflicting instructions from the two opponents, the wishes of the player who is about to play the stroke shall control.

12(1)—Accidentally moving ball. This applies only when the caddie is specifically doing a direction of the player affected.

13(1b)—Wrong information.

18(4)—Direction for putting.

18(5)—Exerting an influence upon the ball.

Best-Ball and Four-Ball Matches

A caddie carrying double should be assigned to the members of one side.

Stroke Play

The caddie is always deemed to be employed by the player affected.

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that if a ball be so damaged as to be unfit for play, the player in stroke play may replace it with another ball upon informing his fellow competitor or marker of his intention. It is a simple procedure. The job of the fellow competitor or the marker is to protect the rest of the field.

But Middlecoff and Snead each asked a USGA official to determine whether the ball were unfit for play. The answer in each instance was no. Strictly, it was not necessary to appeal to an official. But by so doing each player protected himself from any future question about the ball's status. If he had simply changed the ball in accordance with Rule 14(1b) and had informed his fellow competitor or marker, but if another competitor had later questioned whether the ball were actually unfit for play, Middlecoff and Snead each would have had to submit the ball to the committee for decision. By getting official decisions immediately, they closed the question then and there.