
THE REFEREE

Decisions by the USGA Rules of Golf Committee

Example of symbols: "No. 51-1" means the first decision issued in 1951. "R 7(3)" means Section 3 of Rule 7 in the 1951 Rules of Golf.

Ordering Opponent's Caddie from Flag

No. 49-30. R. 1(2a), 2(1), 7(7).

Q.: In match play, A sends his caddie to attend the flagstick while B plays. Before playing, B orders A's caddie away from the hole, leaving the flagstick unattended. B's ball strikes the flagstick. A claims the hole on the ground that B refused to allow A's caddie to attend the flagstick. Should A's claim be upheld?

Question by: HAYNES WATERS
SAVANNAH, GA.

A.: Under Rule 7(7), either side was entitled to have the flagstick removed at any time, but in the present case the right was not exercised. B then had a secondary right to have his own caddie attend the flagstick, but he did not exercise that right. A then was entitled to have his caddie attend the flagstick. But B refused to allow this. If A condoned B's action, through either inertia or ignorance of his rights, he forfeited the right to make a subsequent claim. On the other hand, if A made a real objection before B played and entered claim under Rule 1(2a), B lost the hole. See also Rule 2(1).

Editor's note: The above decision, issued in 1949, is reprinted because of the number of parallel questions received in recent months.

Lost Ball: An Unfair Local Rule

No. 51-34. R. 8(1), LR

Our club is contemplating changing the ruling on lost ball, as follows:

"If ball is deemed lost, player must drop a ball at the approximate spot where ball was lost and add one penalty stroke, with no option of returning to original spot where ball was last played."

This change is very controversial and was finally passed by bare majority.

Q. 1: If a player should play according to USGA Rules and returns and plays another ball, would he automatically be disqualified although there was no infraction of USGA Rules?

A. 1: The question is for the local committee to settle. The USGA cannot answer questions involving local rules which directly conflict with the established Rules of Golf.

Q. 2: To what extent should it be possible or permissible for a club to rewrite rules that directly contradict USGA and local course rules?

A. 2: Any local rule should be in harmony

New Rules Book Ready in December

Copies of the new Rules of Golf Code which becomes effective January 1, 1952 will be available from the USGA some time in December.

Prices will be:

1 to 1,000 copies — 25c each

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UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION
40 EAST 38TH STREET
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with the spirit of the Rules of Golf. If it is not, then the game is not golf, and it is difficult if not impossible to apply the principle of equity which underlies all the Rules of Golf.

The local rule described for a lost ball is in direct conflict with Rule 8(1). Similar local rules have been tried previously, and have been found wanting. By and large, there is simply no way to tell the approximate spot where a ball was lost—the ball either is lost, or it is not lost; and if it is lost, who is to say where it is? The local rule in question is palpably unfair and unworkable. It gives the player an undue right to exercise his discretion as to whether his ball is lost and, if so, where.

The Rules of Golf represent the accumulated experience of many people who have devoted themselves to the game's interests over many years in many lands. The Rules have been tested by time. The USGA recommends that they be uniformly observed, as being productive of the greatest good for all.

Questions by: GEORGE HAYAMOTI
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

Striking Flagstick from Bunker

No. 51-31. R. 7(8), 12(4c)

Q. 1: If your ball strikes the flagstick when playing from a bunker within 20 yards of the hole, are you penalized two strokes in stroke play?

A. 1: Yes. See Rule 7(8).

Striking Fellow-Competitor's Ball

Q. 2: When playing from a bunker within 20 yards of the hole, if your ball strikes the ball of a fellow-competitor on the putting green,

are you penalized two strokes in stroke play?

A. 2: No. A penalty is incurred only when both balls are on the putting green—see Rule 12(4c).

Questions by: MRS. R. C. LUNDAHL, PRES.

ST. LOUIS WOMEN'S DIST. GOLF ASS'N.
CLAYTON 24, Mo.

Scores May Be Cancelled

No. 51-35. R. 20(3a)

Q.: During the qualifying for our tournament, contestants could play any day of the week. On Thursday, it rained very hard and we had only four teams qualifying. Two teams quit, the other two finished.

One of the golf committee told the teams who quit they could play again. As long as the other two could replay, I told those who played out that they were entitled to replay also, as the whole play should be cancelled. Since the teams who quit were told they could replay long before the others on the course finished, I said they should have been notified, also. Did I do the right thing? Also, did the committee-man have the right to tell anyone they could replay because of weather conditions?

Question by: WILLIE KLEIN, PROFESSIONAL
WHEATLEY HILLS GOLF CLUB
EAST WILLISTON, N. Y.

A.: Under the provisions of Rule 20(3a), the committee may at any time declare play null and void and may cancel all scores for the round in question if it consider the course unplayable or that insufficient light renders proper play impossible or if it would be inequitable to order resumption of play as provided in Rule 20(3).

In the particular case, it would seem advisable to apply Rule 20(3a) and to start all over again.

Tardy Claim in Match Play

No. 51-55. R. 1(2, 2a).

Q.: X and Y played a match in the semi-final round. At the end of 17 holes, X having won the 17th, X announced that she was the winner, 2 and 1, and X and Y thereupon shook hands, declaring the match at an end.

They played the 18th hole, X scoring a 7 and Y scoring a 6. They then adjourned to the clubhouse, posted X as the winner and returned home.

Subsequently, Y telephoned X that they had made an error, that at the end of 16 holes they had been even and X not 1 up; that at the end of 17 holes X had been 1 up and not 2 up, that since Y had won the 18th, the match was even. X, an inexperienced player, consented to resume the match from the 19th hole and Y thereupon won that hole.

I would appreciate your telling me what to do under these circumstances.

Question by: MRS. CHARLES SABIN
205 BUCKINGHAM AVE.
TRENTON, N. J.

A.: Under the Rules of Golf, the match

ended when X and Y agreed that X had won by 2 and 1. Y's subsequent claim was not valid—see Rule 1(2a).

However, if the committee in charge approved re-umption of the match, its decision must stand — see Rule 1(2).

Committee Must Correct Mistake

No. 51-57. R. 1(2b, 3), 21(4b).

Q.: In a recent medal play golf match the scores of all players were signed, attested, checked and entered on the tournament record and the winning team was designated. After returning home, the losing team discovered an error in the totaling of the score of one member of the winning team. This error was brought to the attention of the winning team and without question the error was corrected, thus causing the designated winning team to lose.

Since that time we have been told by our professional that such a change is not according to USGA Rule, and that the points for this match must remain as originally posted. Will you please advise if this is the correct ruling? The scoring committee was made up of members of both teams.

Question by: MRS. L. C. SHRYVER
623 EDMONDSON AVE.
BALTIMORE 28, Md.

A.: As provided in Rule 21(4b), the committee in stroke play is responsible for addition of hole-by-hole scores. The committee is obliged to correct any mistake in addition which it may make, regardless of when the mistake be discovered. See also Rule 1(2b and 3).

Status of Player Who Defaults

No. 51-60. Tourn.

Q.: If a person defaults in the first round, is she eligible to compete in the beaten eight?

Question by: MRS MARGARET VANN
40 SHORTHILL RD.
FOREST HILLS, N. Y.

A.: As the Rules of Golf do not apply, the matter rests with the local committee.

If the player started the match and then defaulted, we would recommend that she be allowed to compete in the beaten eight.

If the player did not play and had no good reason for defaulting, we would consider that she had eliminated herself from further competition.

Wrong Information from Forecaddie

No. 51-61. R. 13(1), 15(Def.), Def. 10.

Q.: During match play A and B both drive into a water hazard. A forecaddie employed by the committee points out a ball in the hazard which he tells A is his. A plays the ball.

B then picks a ball out of the water supposing it is his. He discovers that the ball is A's.

The ball played by A belonged to B.

I ruled that A had lost the hole under Rule

13(1). Some question has been raised as to the correctness of this ruling because the mistake occurred through wrong information given by a forecaddie, as provided in Rule 13(1b). I considered that the forecaddie therein was governed by "his", and referred only to the opponent's forecaddie.

Question by: NORMAN B. BEECHER, CHAIRMAN
RULES COMMITTEE
BLTMORE FOREST COUNTRY CLUB
BLTMORE, N. C.

A.: Your decision was right.

The forecaddie mentioned in Rule 13(1b) belongs, in effect, to the opponent's side.

The forecaddie in the case described is an outside agency (see Definition 10 and Rule 15(Def.)), and information from him has no more weight than information from any other outside agency, such as a spectator. A was not relieved of the responsibility of identifying his ball before playing it.

When Obstruction Is Out of Bounds

No. 51-62. R. 7(4).

Q.: A player's ball came to rest in the rough three inches inside line of out-of-bounds stakes, but only five or six inches from front of building used as a shelter, which building is on ground out of bounds.

It was impossible to stroke ball in desired direction or even take a stance.

Under Rule 7(4b), may a player drop ball in the rough not nearer the hole without penalty? (Sketch submitted).

Question by: F. B. LUKENS
125 PARKVIEW AVE.
SYRACUSE, N. Y.

A.: Conditions beyond a boundary line do not entitle a player to relief in playing a ball lying within bounds. Rule 7(4) refers only to artificial obstructions within the limits of the course.

As is always possible, the local committee could afford relief by local rule if it were deemed advisable.

Friend Posing as Caddie

No. 51-64. Def. 10. R. 1(1), 2(1), 4(1)

Q.: In the USGA Rule Book, I find that a caddie is defined as a person who carries the golfer's clubs. Also (I am now speaking of a singles match), he is the *only one* from whom the player who hired him can accept advice.

Players A and B are engaged in a singles match. Player A has just eliminated player C. Now player B, facing A, hires himself a caddie to carry his clubs and brings player C along for consultation, and I mean consultation! Both players A and B agree mutually that player C shall hold the flagstick on all holes. Other duties of player C consist of cleaning player B's ball once in a while in order to make him the "official" caddie in the eyes of the referee. The caddie who actually carried player B's clubs kept himself discreetly in the background.

I am wondering if player C in this case would be accepted as the official caddie, permitted to give advice, or should player B have been penalized according to USGA Rules.

Question by: WILLIAM R. SCHESSLER
518 NOBLE AVE.
LAWRENCE PARK
ERIE, PA.

A.: The fact that B hired a caddie to carry his clubs establishes this person as B's caddie within the meaning of Definition 10.

If B sought advice or took any action which might have resulted in his receiving advice except from this caddie, he violated Rule 4(1), the penalty for which is loss of hole—see Rule 2(1).

As there was a referee for the match, attention is called to the fact that, under Rule 1(1), a referee's decision is final.

THE STATE OF AMATEUR GOLF

(Continued from Page 8)

Johnstone as President and Norborne Berkeley as General Chairman, did a superlative job in preparing facilities for players and spectators alike. More than that, they created an atmosphere of warm friendship which made everybody feel at home. Competitors in general have never had a happier time.

The spirit of amateurism prevailed, even to the Club's production of a handsome Championship program without advertisements. Saucon Valley received letters of praise for the program from as far away as Europe and South America.

Admissions receipts were about \$48,000, including taxes — second largest "gate" in Amateur Championship history.

A player's dinner preceded the tournament. The USGA instituted this feature last year, and it has served a splendid purpose of bringing everybody together in good fellowship and mutual understanding.

Guiding spirit in Saucon Valley's planning was Eugene G. Grace. As a maker of steel, he holds a foremost place among world industrialists. As a lover of all that is best in golf, he holds a foremost place in the affections of those who spent that bright September week at Saucon Valley.