

# The Amateur and His Expenses

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The USGA has received over the years a great many recommendations for broadening the Rules of Amateur Status to permit amateur golfers to be compensated for their expenses in various team matches and tournaments. These recommendations generally have been made in good faith, have been considered by the Executive Committee and have been deemed contrary to the best interests of the game of golf.

It is our purpose here to review the principles upon which this Rule of Amateur Status is based and to point out why we believe the game would suffer if the Rule were altered in the manner suggested. The whole subject of amateur status, however, is now being considered jointly with the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland.

The Rule governing expenses appears in Section 2 of the Rules of Amateur Status and reads:

"The following are examples of acts which violate the Definition of an Amateur Golfer and cause forfeiture of amateur status: . . .

## "B-9. Expenses

"Accepting expenses, in money or otherwise, in connection with a golf competition or exhibition (except from one on whom the player is normally dependent).

### "EXEMPTIONS:

"A reasonable amount of expenses may be accepted in the following specific instances only:

"(1) As a member of the Walker Cup Team, but such expenses may be accepted from only the USGA.

"(2) As a member of the Curtis Cup Team, but such expenses may be accepted from only the USGA.

"(3) As a qualified contestant in the USGA Amateur Public Links Championship proper, but only within limits fixed by the USGA.

"(4) As a representative of an institution of learning or of a military service in (a) team events or (b) other events which are limited to representatives of institutions of learning or of military services, respectively. In each case, expenses may be accepted from only the authority represented."

The exemptions in Section 2, B-9 are designed to cover specific cases where exemptions seem warranted. For example, the Walker Cup and the Curtis Cup Teams represent the country internationally; travel abroad is expensive, and so the USGA makes travel allowances in such cases. It should be noted, however, that travel expenses in the United States are not presently allowed to members of such teams. In the case of the exception for the Amateur Public Links Championship, it is apparent that this fine event could scarcely be held if certain allowances were not permitted; at the same time, the limits fixed are such as to require the individual to pay a substantial part of his living expenses, for he is permitted to accept only \$6 per day for such expenses. The exceptions for students and military service golfers when competing in team events or events limited to players of their own categories are made for the same general considerations. All are specific exceptions, not general ones.

A change recently suggested dealt mainly with allowing expenses to members of USGA member clubs in events sanctioned by the USGA.

As for the latter point, the USGA has purposely avoided "sanctioning" tournaments. It is considered preferable to have rules based upon principles, and then to expect each individual club and each individual golfer to operate within the spirit of those Rules, rather than to have a heavily centralized authority tending toward bureaucracy. In the last analysis,

the game is not in the keeping of a super-organization sitting in an ivory tower. Rather, it is in the keeping of the players of the game.

If acceptance of expenses were broadened to apply to representatives of any club for various kinds of events, the end result may be clearly foreseen. We see it in other sports where there have sprung up classes of players who do little else but play those sports ostensibly as amateurs but whose "play" is actually subsidized through the subterfuge of almost unlimited expenses. One end result of such a situation in golf would be that clubs would begin to compete for the services of such players. Some clubs would pay expenses, others would not. Another end result could be spoilage of the personality of some of the players.

The main reason for distinguishing between amateurs and professionals is to provide a fair basis for competition. An amateur, being one who plays a game as an avocation or hobby, cannot generally be expected to compete on level terms with a professional, who devotes himself to the game as his prime work.

Further, as the Definition of an Amateur Golfer provides, an amateur is one who plays the game as a non-remunerative or non-profit-making sport. Eugene G. Grace expressed the spirit of amateurism admirably in the article which appeared in the USGA JOURNAL of February, 1952, entitled "Amateurism Is in the Heart."

All of us have limits in life. All of us are prevented from doing certain things for want of funds with which to do them. That is the natural order. To distort the natural order in such an activity as golf is to distort both the activity and those who participate in it.

The Rules of Amateur Status have been substantially the same for many years as regards allowable expenses. The results speak for themselves. The Executive Committee feels it is incontrovertible that golf has thrived on a high standard of amateurism. The result of an opposite attitude can also be plainly seen. Commercial in-

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fluences have been injurious, almost disastrous, to many other amateur sports.