



THE REFEREE

Decisions by the
Rules of Golf Committees

Example of symbols: "USGA" indicates decision by the United States Golf Association. "R & A" indicates decision by the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland. "53-1" means the first decision issued in 1953. "R. 37-7" refers to Section 7 of Rule 37 in the 1953 Rules of Golf.

Dispute Referred to Committee

USGA 53-19
R. 4; 10-1; 11-1, 3; 25-1;
26-2a, b; 35-2d; 37-7

Q1: In match play two players came to the eighteenth hole even. On A's second shot he hit a tree and the ball caromed and hit his caddie. He told B that he had hit his own caddie and lost the hole and match. B told him to play the hole out, that he didn't want to win the match that way. They played the hole out and halved same. Then A while still on green asked the Rules Committee to give a ruling. They informed him that his opponent would have to call the infraction.

A1: The Committee should have ruled that A lost the hole under Rule 26-2a. Rule 11-3 provides in part that "in the absence of a referee, the players shall refer any dispute to the Committee, whose decision shall be final." In the case cited, the friendly dispute between the players was referred to the Committee for a decision within the time limit specified in Rule 11-1. The Committee had no basis in the Rules for limiting its action to the requirement that A call the penalty. The Rules of Golf for match play do not require a player to call a penalty on his opponent; in fact, the sportsmanship of the game obliges the player to call penalties against himself; see Rule 10-1. In the absence of a referee, a Committee has no authority to intervene in match play unless

it is requested to do so, as in this case, or has reason to believe Rule 4 is being infringed.

Ball At Rest?

Q2: Under Rule 35-2d, when is it considered "the opponent's ball has come to rest?" I ask this especially when the opponent doesn't think the ball has come to rest and claims that the ball is still in motion. What would be the time element?

How would a Rules Committee rule if player claims ball had come to rest and he knocked same away, but his opponent claims it had not come to rest, it was on the lip but he thought same was still moving and had it not been knocked away would in all probability have fallen in?

A2: Whether a ball has come to rest is a question of fact, and without agreement on the facts there is no way to interpret the Rules.

The Note under Rule 35-2d entitles a player to only a momentary delay to determine whether or not his ball is at rest. There is no specified time limit. Since the player incurs a penalty under Rule 25-1 (with certain exceptions which are not pertinent in this case) if he plays while his ball is moving, he should be given the benefit of any doubt, but he must not delay play in contravention of Rule 37-7.

In match play, when a player's ball is at rest, there is nothing in the Rules which would prevent an opponent from knocking

it away as a means of conceding the next stroke. However, if a player's ball were not at rest and an opponent knocked it away, he would violate Rule 26-2b and lose the hole.

Questions by: C. H. STEWART
GREAT SOUTHERN GOLF CLUB
GULFPORT, MISS.

**Playing Two Balls
When First Is in Water Hazard**

USGA 53-20
R. 21-2, 3; 33-2a

Q: I hit a ball that looked as if it might be on the other side of a water hazard. I walked to the water's edge, dropped a ball and hit it across. Then I walked to the other side, looked for my original ball, found it playable and played the original ball from the hazard.

After I did this, I was told that I was not to drop a ball and play across the water unless I looked to see if I could find and play the original ball first.

Must I walk all the way around this pond to see if I can find and play my original ball and then if it's in the water or unplayable walk all the way back to drop a ball?

Question by: MRS. CARL KLANDRUD
MILWAUKEE, WIS.

A: Yes. Since your first ball was in the hazard, you proceeded under Rule 33-2a when you dropped and played a ball behind the hazard. You were therefore precluded from playing your original ball as it lay or proceeding under Rule 33-2b. When you then played your original ball, you played a wrong ball.

There is no penalty for playing a wrong ball in a hazard (see Rules 21-2 and 3). However, if you played a stroke or strokes with the wrong ball outside a hazard, you lost the hole in match play (see Rule 21-2) or you incurred a penalty of two strokes in stroke play and were required to play out the hole with the ball which was properly in play (see Rule 21-3).

Determining Who Is Away

USGA 53-22
D. 26; R. 11-2, 20-1

Q: In match play, A and B drove to rough on opposite sides of the fairway. A played to the green, whereupon B questioned whether A was away (the referee had not designated who was away). The referee paced it off and found that their drives were

both 170 paces from the hole. B then played, withdrawing his question about A's procedure in having played first.

Had there been further question, would the referee have been obliged to take an exact measure in feet and inches?

Question by: HORTON SMITH
DETROIT GOLF CLUB
DETROIT, MICH.

A: No. In view of the distance of the balls from the hole, the referee had used reasonable means of measurement; he could not be expected to make a precise engineering survey. Under Definition 26 and Rule 11-2, a referee has authority to determine the means to be used in such a case, and his decision is final.

After the referee had paced the distances, if B had protested, the referee would have been justified in tossing a coin or otherwise deciding the matter by lot, as provided for in Rule 20-1.

No Measurement through Obstruction

USGA 53-23
R. 31-2

Q: A wire screen protects our 13th tee from players approaching the 12th green. Your rule on obstructions does not state clearly whether or not a ball resting within two club-lengths of this screen may be dropped either side of the screen, not nearer the hole. Can the ball be dropped through the screen, no nearer the hole? The rule is not definite as it is now written.

Question by: SAMUEL Y. BOGGS
JENKINTOWN, PA.

A: In proceeding under Rule 31-2, the player may not measure *through* an immovable obstruction in determining where to drop within two club-lengths of that point of the obstruction nearest which the ball originally lay.

Caddie Hands Player Wrong Club

USGA 53-24
R. 3, 36-5

Q: With caddies carrying double, after a player had made a shot he said, "Why, I've got the wrong club." The kid had handed him a club out of the wrong bag. Another fellow in the group from whose bag the club was taken then said, "You are disqualified as you have used fifteen clubs." The committee had a session and disqualified the fel-

low who was handed the wrong club by the caddie.

In view of the great amount of double-caddying and the great possibility that there will be clubs of the same make in both bags the kid is carrying, it seems to me that there are going to be plenty of cases of this sort. It would be possible for a fellow who is a sterling stinker to slip a caddie a little bribe to hand a club out of the wrong bag to a player, who, after using the club, would be disqualified.

What is the ruling in such a case?

Question by: HERB GRAFFIS
CHICAGO, ILL.

A: Although there was a technical violation of Rule 3, penalty for which is disqualification, the Committee would be justified under the particular circumstances in invoking Rule 36-5. Thus, the Committee could waive the penalty altogether or could modify it—for example, in stroke play the Committee might reduce the penalty to one or two strokes, and in match play to one stroke or loss of hole. It should be noted that this provision of Rule 36-5 applies only to exceptional individual cases.

Alternate in Team Match

USGA 53-25
R. 36-1

Q: Our Club is playing for a trophy with other clubs, and we abide by USGA Rules. The team is designated before each match. The teams, consisting of five members from each club, played a match (medal play). One member, through an unfortunate accident, had to discontinue on the sixth hole. She was unable to finish the match.

(1) Can the score of another member who played at the same time be used as an alternate, in place of the one who withdrew?

(2) Should the club of the member who withdrew default to the other club?

Question by: MRS. EDWARD HILL
TOWSON, MD.

A: The matter is not specifically provided for in the Rules of Golf and therefore is one for the Committee in charge to determine. Rule 36-1 provides in part: "The Committee shall lay down the conditions under which a competition is to be played".

You state that each team is designated before each match. You indicate that there was no advance provision for an alternate to substitute for a player who fails to complete the stipulated round. Therefore, we

are of opinion that an alternate's score should not be counted and that the club of the player who did not finish the round should default to the opposing club.

Defining Undue Delay

USGA 53-28
R. 11-1, 37-7

Q: Will you be kind enough to clarify Rule 37-7 on undue delay? We have several offenders, especially among the younger promising golfers. As we have only three tournaments in which referees are used (and then in only the final rounds), we do not know what procedure to use in invoking the penalty, particularly in match play.

Is the penalty invoked by an individual's complaint or by a complaint of the field at large?

In what way is it determined *when* the penalty is invoked and by *whom*?

I should judge that the penalty in stroke play is applied when the player turns in her score, but as the penalty in match play is loss of hole, the situation is a difficult one.

Question by: MRS. PETER M. CALVERT
PITTSBURGH, PA.

A: In the absence of a referee, a player who considers that another is unfairly delaying play may appeal to the committee in stroke play or, in match play, may enter claim under Rule 11-1. The player is not the sole judge, however.

Application of Rule 37-7 depends on judgment and a sense of fair play. As a general proposition, two players' testimony would be adequate. In any case, the committee must weigh all available evidence in trying to arrive at a fair decision.

Penalty for breach of Rule 37-7 should be applied to the hole or holes on which the Rule was breached, in both match play and stroke play.

Where possible, committees are advised to have representatives on the course to see that play progresses promptly, as the custom of the game and good manners dictate. Such representatives should be sure of the facts before taking action; for example, sometimes a suspiciously long gap between groups of players is due to a lost ball or other untoward circumstances rather than to delay in play.

It is considered advisable to deal with cases of undue delay in three stages—first, a warning; second, a penalty of loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play; third, for repeated offense, disqualification.