



THE REFEREE

Decisions by the Rules of Golf Committees

Two Penalties On One Stroke

USGA 54-33

R. 26-2, 3, 29-1

Q: A peculiar incident happened. A player played a ball which cannoned off something, hit the player and bounced out of bounds. I contend the player lost two strokes and distance for the ball out of bounds.

Can a player be penalized under two different rules for the same stroke?

Question by: HAROLD R. SIMPSON
Caracas, Venezuela

A: Yes.

Rule 26-2 or 3 governs when the player's ball strikes himself, but we cannot render a specific decision without knowing whether the competition was at match or stroke play.

However, any penalty under Rule 26 would be in addition to the penalty incurred under Rule 29-1 for a ball out of bounds.

Ball Knocked Off Tee By Practice Swing

USGA 55-7

D. 5; 30

Q. A player teed up her ball within the teeing ground, then stepped back and made a practice swing with no intention

of hitting the ball. However, this swing was taken too close to the ball and the clubhead contacted the ball so that it was knocked off the tee and into the rough.

May the ball be re-teeed without penalty, or must the stroke be counted and the ball played as it lies? Under the definition of a stroke we note "A stroke is the forward movement of the club with the *intention* of moving the ball." In this example all players and competitors agreed there was no such intention. We have also noted Rule 14 with regard to "ball falling off tee," and we can find no definition of a practice swing.

Question by: MRS. J. H. LASATER
Seattle, Wash.

A. The matter depends upon whether the player made a stroke as defined in Definition 30—that is, a forward movement of the club with the intention of moving the ball.

As it was clearly established that there was no such intention, the ball was not in play within the meaning of Definition 5, and the player was entitled to re-tee and play it without penalty.

However, where there is any question about intention in such circumstances, the player must be deemed to have played a stroke. The player can always prevent

any such question from arising, and he must accept the consequences if it does arise.

(Note — This supersedes Decision 49-176.)

Two Balls Hit Out Of Bunker

USGA 55-20

R. 21-2, 3; 27-1c, 2a, 3; 33-li; 40-3d, f

Q.: In match play, A and B, opponents, found their respective balls within a club-length of each other in a bunker. It was impossible to identify either ball. Accordingly, A hit the ball farther away without requesting the other ball to be lifted. In executing his stroke, A hit both balls out of the bunker.

1. (a) If the ball which A addressed and hit first be his own, is the other ball replaced, and, if so, is it replaced without penalty to A?

(b) Is the decision altered if it is found that the ball A addressed and hit first was B's ball?

2. Under the above circumstances, what is your decision if A and B were partners in a four-ball match?

3. Under the above circumstances, what is your decision if the game was stroke play?

Question by: CHARLES B. CLEVELAND
Miami Beach, Fla.

A.: We assume that A struck both balls with his club. In that case, the answers would be as follows:

1. (a) B's ball is dropped as near as possible to the spot from which it was moved without penalty to B (Rule 27-2a). A could have had the ball lifted (Rule 33-li). Having failed to exercise that privilege, A incurs a penalty stroke (Rule 27-2a).

(b) Yes, the situation is altered in some respects. B's ball is dropped as near as possible to the spot from which it was moved without penalty to B (Rule 27-2a). However, A has in this case played a wrong ball, and, while there is no penalty for playing a wrong ball in a hazard (Rule 21-2), A incurs a penalty stroke for accidentally moving his own ball

(Rule 27-1c), and his own ball must be played as it then lies.

2. (a) B, the partner whose ball was accidentally moved, incurs a penalty stroke and must play his ball as it then lies (Rule 40-3d). A incurs no penalty.

(b) B must drop his ball as near as possible to the spot from which it was wrongly played (Rule 40-3f). A has played a wrong ball but incurs no penalty for that because it was in a hazard (Rule 21-2). However, A does incur a penalty stroke under Rule 27-1c for accidentally moving his own ball and his own ball must be played as it then lies.

3. (a) B must drop his ball as near as possible to the spot from which it was moved without penalty to either player (Rule 27-3).

(b) B's ball must be dropped as near as possible to the spot where it originally lay (Rule 27-3). A incurs a penalty stroke for accidentally moving his own ball (Rule 27-1c) and his ball must be played as it lies. A incurs no penalty for having played a wrong ball because it was in a hazard (Rule 21-3).

Putting From Wrong Spot

USGA 55-21

R. 8, 22-4

Q.: During the 1955 Trans-Mississippi Senior Tournament, at Palm Springs, Cal., the following situation arose.

A and B marked their balls on the putting green so another putter could putt without interference. A, thinking he was away, replaced his ball and putted, making the putt for his par. Thereupon he discovered that he had putted from the spot where B had marked his ball, rather than where his had been. He replaced his ball again and sank his putt.

Being a stroke-play tournament, what rule applied and what, if any, was the penalty?

Question by: CARL E. HAYMOND
Long Beach, Cal.

A.: A violated Rule 22-4 and incurred a penalty of two strokes. His score for the hole comprised the number of strokes he

played, including the putt from the wrong spot, plus the two penalty strokes. The second putt from the correct spot was irrelevant since he had paid a penalty of two strokes for putting from the wrong spot, and it did not count in his score.

If he had putted and not holed out from the wrong spot but had subsequently holed out from the correct spot, he would have incurred a penalty of two strokes under Rule 8 for making a practice stroke during the play of the hole.

Net or Gross Prize?

USGA 55-22

R. 11-3; 36-1, 3

Q.: If a player ties for the second net prize and also the best gross prize, should he get the second net prize or the best gross prize?

It is our opinion that, this being a net competition, the net prizes should be the important ones, in which case the player with the second gross score would get the first gross prize and the player who had the best gross score should get the second net prize.

Question by: I. DELEVANTE

Kingston, Jamaica, B.W.I.

A.: It is within the province of the local committee to decide.

Rule 36-1 requires the committee to lay down the conditions under which a competition is to be played. This should include any stipulations as to which prize a player may win if he qualifies for both gross and net prizes. These conditions should be announced in advance of the competition. See also Rule 36-3 regarding ties.

Since your committee made no such stipulation, we suggest the player be given his choice.

When there is a question as to who has first choice and the players involved cannot reach an agreement, the committee must decide in the light of the objective of the tournament and equity to all, or by lot. Its decision is final under Rule 11-3.

Low Ball Determines Honor In 4-Ball Match

USGA 55-24

D. 28; R. 12-1a, 40-1a

Q. In a four-ball match, two points are involved at each hole—one for low ball and one for low aggregate of the two balls played by each side. Is the honor determined by low ball only, or is low aggregate also considered?

Question by: JULIUS GOODMAN

Atlantic Beach, N. Y.

A. The honor is determined by low ball only. The Rules of Golf do not provide for low aggregate scores in multi-ball matches. See Definition 28, Rule 12-1a and Rule 40-1a.

Bending Bush To Take Stance

R & A 54-48

R. 17-3, 2

Q. 1: When stance is interfered with by a small shrub or bush, say one foot high, is one allowed to bend bush and stand on it so long as one does not break it?

A. 1: Interference with a growing object (bending or breaking) is permitted only if this is the natural consequence of taking up a normal stance and not if the bush is bent so as to improve the line of play, the lie of the ball, or the stroke.

Taking Stance Under Tree

Q. 2: When stance is under a tree with overhanging branches, is caddie allowed to hold branch back without breaking branch?

A. 2: No. The player must make the stroke unaided. Rule 17-3 applies.

Identifying Ball

Q. 3: When ball is lying in long grass is one permitted to part the grass behind the ball without disturbing the lie, so as to obtain view of the ball?

A. 3: Only so far as is necessary to identify the ball. As laid down in Rule 17-2 "the player is not of necessity entitled to see the ball when playing a stroke."