



THE REFEREE

Decisions by the Rules of Golf Committees

Penalty Applies to Both Partners with Double Caddie

USGA 56-5
R. 40-3e

Q.: Two teams were competing in the annual interclub team matches of the Women's Southern California Golf Association. Four players of low handicap were competing hole by hole on a low-ball basis, one point per hole. Each team had a double caddie. At the moment they were playing the thirteenth hole at the Riviera Country Club. As they walked the fairway, the caddie of one team accidentally kicked the ball of one of the opposing players. It was immediately mentioned and the offended player at once restored the ball to its original lie, although she did not comply with book and drop it. The lady offended claimed a penalty had been incurred, but after a brief conversation play was resumed and the offended player ultimately won the hole without penalty being called either way. But here's the question that has evolved:

Under Section 2 of Rule 27 in the 1955 Rules appears the following: "If a player's ball be touched or moved by an opponent, his caddie, clubs or other equipment . . . the opponent shall incur a penalty stroke . . ." There were two opponents but only

one double caddie, so who gets the penalty stroke?

Question by: HARRY WINTERS
Inglewood 4, Cal.

A.: Rule 40-3e governs in four-ball matches and both opponents would incur penalties of one stroke. This Rule is the same in 1956 as it was in 1955.

When each participant has his own caddie, the opponent whose caddie moves the ball incurs a penalty of one stroke. When two opponents are sharing the caddie who moves the ball, the penalty applies to both. There is no "other opponent" in such a circumstance, and no one on the side can be relieved of penalty.

However, the player whose ball was moved disqualified herself for the hole by her failure to drop the ball as near as possible to the spot from which it had been moved (Rules 40-3e, 5 and 40-3i in the 1956 Rules of Golf).

Player Not Allowed to Clean Lime from Ball

USGA Decision 56-8

Def. 20, 28; R. 15-1, 23-2, 31-2

Q.1: During the Ryder Cup Match a player's ball picked up a gob of lime upon rolling past a limed line laid on the ground to control the gallery.

Under Rule 11-4, "Decision by Equity," could the Rules committee or the referee permit the player to clean the lime from the ball which definitely was a disadvantage to him?

A.1: No. To do so would be to violate Rule 23-2, which expressly prohibits cleaning the ball.

Ball at Rest on Limed Line

Q.2: A ball comes to rest on the limed line. Is the player allowed to lift it without penalty and drop it as provided for in Rule 31-2?

A.2: No. Such a line is not in the nature of an obstruction as defined in Definition 20.

Partners in Foursome Shall Strike Off Alternately

Q.3: In a 36-hole foursome match, may the members of a side change the order of striking alternately from the teeing grounds after the first 18 holes have been played?

A.3: No. Rule 15-1 provides that the partners in a foursome shall strike off alternately from the teeing grounds, and this pertains to the entire match.

Questions by: WARREN ORLICK
President
Michigan Section, PGA
Orchard Lake, Michigan
and

HAROLD SARGENT
Secretary
PGA of America
Atlanta, Georgia

Positioning Flagstick

USGA 56-10
R. 34-1, 35-1h

Q.: What are the player's rights about positioning the flagstick in the hole before playing with the flagstick unattended?

Question by: HORTON SMITH
Detroit Golf Club
Detroit, Michigan

A.: The flagstick is always under the control of the player about to play—Rule 34-1. A player or competitor electing to play with the flagstick in the hole is entitled to place it, or have it placed, in its

normal position in the center of the hole and as nearly upright as possible.

He may not, however, replace or adjust it in any other way which would infringe Rule 35-1h (which prohibits any action to influence the movement of the ball). If before he plays either he or his partner or caddie adjusts or replaces it in any other position, he must be deemed to have taken action to influence the movement of the ball and suffers the penalty of loss of hole or two strokes, as the case may be; if such action is taken by the partner, he also would be penalized under new Rule 37-3. Similarly, if a competitor about to play permits a fellow-competitor or his caddie to adjust or replace the flagstick into an abnormal position, he must be deemed to have given his sanction and incurs the penalty of two strokes.

In all other cases, a player or competitor is entitled to play to the flagstick as he finds it in the hole.

Penalty Is Stroke For Lifting Without Consent

USGA 56-11

R. 23 (Preamble), 27-2a

Q.: Rule 23 Preamble primarily presupposes that when a player's ball, without the player's tacit consent or open request, is lifted by his opponent's side, a penalty of one stroke is incurred by the opponent under Rule 27-2a, but if the player tacitly agrees to the opponent's lifting the player's ball or if the player openly requests his opponent to lift the player's ball to save time in match play, the Rule does not cover because the penalty clause specifically omits Rule 23 Preamble.

If so, does Rule 5 apply?

Question by: S. TAKAHATA, PRES.
Hirono Golf Club
Kobe, Japan

A.: The Preamble to Rule 23 is not a Rule in itself, so there can be no violation and no penalty. It is an advisory note designed simply to place the responsibility for lifting a ball on the owner or his side.

In match play, if the opponent lifts the player's ball without the owner's approval, the opponent is penalized one stroke under Rule 27-2a.

Ball in Drain Pipe

USGA 56-12

D. 20; R. 31-2

Q.: A player's ball goes in a drain pipe, but he cannot reach it. Some say it is a lost ball. Others say it is unplayable. I think he could drop a ball within two club-lengths, without penalty, as it is in a drain.

Question by: HAROLD LEE
New Orleans Country Club
New Orleans, La.

A.: We understand that the ball definitely touches the drain pipe, which is an obstruction under Definition 20. To obtain relief under Rule 31-2, the player must drop the ball within two club-lengths of the opening of the obstruction nearest to where the ball lay, and it must come to rest not nearer the hole than the place where the ball lay. The player may not measure through the obstruction or through the ground in obtaining relief.

"Identifying" Provisional Ball

USGA 56-13

R. 21-Pre., 21-2, 21-3,
29-1, 30-1a

Q.: A has driven his ball into woods bordering rough and out of bounds stakes. From the tee it looked to players as if it was obviously out as ball was not seen to have bounced into play. A then teed another and hit it into the rough in the same general vicinity of first ball. Players were reasonably sure it stayed in bounds.

A finds ball in bounds, claims it is first ball and not second, or provisional, and continues to play the hole without penalty. The other ball is not found in or out of bounds. A claims *both* balls were numbered the same.

What is B's recourse, in match or medal play, according to the new Rule governing a provisional ball? Does the Rule mean that a ball must be merely identified "provisional", or does it mean that it must be identified as to make, number, color, markings, etc., to distinguish it from the original ball?

Question by EDWIN B. HOPKINS, JR.
Abilene, Texas

A.: Rule 30-1a requires: "Before playing a provisional ball, the player must announce his intention to his opponent or his marker."

The preamble to Rule 21 provides: "The responsibility for playing his own ball rests with the player. Each player should put an identification mark on his ball."

It is not clear from the question whether A announced that his second ball from the tee was provisional.

(a) If A did not announce that it was provisional, it became the ball in play under Rule 29-1, and A's score was 3 after his second stroke from the tee. If the ball which A then played out was in fact his first ball, as he claimed, he played a wrong ball. B thus could have claimed the hole in match play (Rule 21-2); in stroke play, A was subject to a two-stroke penalty, and eventually to disqualification if he did not find and hole out his second ball, etc. (Rule 21-3).

(b) If A did announce that his second ball from the tee was provisional, he was not entitled to assume that the ball found was his first ball unless he could make positive identification of it by means of a mark or some other distinguishing feature. In such a case, B could have entered a claim that it was A's second ball, and the Committee would have had to determine the matter after investigation and evaluation of all available testimony.

Lifting or Playing First Without Request on Green

USGA 56-14

R. 16, 20-3, 35-1j, 35-3a,b

Q.: In stroke play on the putting green, if you do not require the other ball lifted or putted under Rule 35-3a and your fellow-competitor, regardless of the position on the green, lifts or putts, may you recall the putt or ask to have the ball replaced? Is there a penalty to fellow-competitor, unless he has acted under Rule 35-3b?

Question by: MRS. R. R. HURFORD
Tucson, Ariz.

A.: The fellow-competitor may lift only upon the competitor's request when there is possible interference, under Rule 35-3a. If he lifts for interference in the absence of such a request, he violates Rules 16 and 35-1j, and is penalized two strokes in stroke play.

The fellow-competitor may play first either (a) upon the competitor's request when there is possible interference, under Rule 35-3a, or (b) if the fellow-competitor considers that his ball might assist the competitor, under Rule 35-3b (but he may not lift). If he plays first for any other reason, he would merely be playing out of turn, and Rule 20-3 contains no penalty for playing out of turn in stroke play.

Player Must Drop Ball

USGA 56-15
R. 22-1

Q1: If a player's caddie drops a ball in place of the player himself, in violation of Rule 22-1, which clearly requires "the player himself shall drop it", can it be interpreted that the ball was dropped "in any manner other than described above" and the player is penalized one stroke as stipulated in Rule 22-1?

A1: Yes.

Q2: Is it the Rules Committee's intent to exclude specifically Rule 22-1 from the general penalty of loss of hole in match play and two strokes in stroke play?

A2: Yes. Because the penalty is otherwise provided for in the text of Rule 22-1, the general penalty stipulated in Rule 5 does not apply to breaches of that Rule.

Caddie May Place Ball

Q3: If a player's ball on the putting green is lifted and replaced by the player's caddie, rather than by the player himself, does the player incur a penalty?

A3: No. Rule 22 does not require that the player himself place the ball when it has been lifted and is being replaced under the Rules. See particularly Rule 22-4. However, the player would incur the rela-

tive penalty under Rule 37-2 if the caddie violates a Rule.

Questions by: S. TAKAHATA, PRES.
Hirono Golf Club
Kobe, Japan

Smoothing Sand Ball Returns to Spot

R & A
R. 33-1g

Q1: A player plays a stroke at his ball, lying in a sand hazard. He fails to get it out of the hazard. Before playing a second stroke, he smooths over the marks made by him in playing the first stroke, in no way improving the lie of the ball for the second stroke. So far he has incurred no penalty. He now proceeds to play a second stroke at the ball, which bounds back off the bank of the hazard, and comes to rest in the same position in which it originally lay, before he made his first stroke in the hazard. Is the player now penalized for having improved the lie of the ball?

A1: As the player's action in smoothing the sand assisted the player in his subsequent play of the hole he violated Rule 33-1g, the penalty for which is, in match play, loss of hole and stroke play, two strokes. It is suggested that a safe practice is to refrain from smoothing the sand until the ball has been played out of the hazard.

Q2: A player plays a stroke at his ball lying in a sand hazard. The ball comes to rest on the putting green, well beyond the hole. Before leaving the hazard, the player smooths over the marks made by him, as he is compelled to do by para 6 of Section 1—Etiquette. The player proceeds to putt and putts his ball off the green back into the same hazard, where it comes to rest on the spot where he has smoothed out his previous marks. Is there any penalty because the player has presumably assisted himself in his subsequent play of the hole? If there is a penalty, how is a player to comply with paragraph six of Etiquette.

A2: There is no penalty in this case as the original action in smoothing the sand could not in equity be related to the ball being subsequently played back into the hazard.