



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. "56-1" means the first decision issued in 1956. "D" means definition. "R. 37-7" refers to Section 7 of Rule 37 in the 1956 Rules of Golf.

Player Must Drop Outside Ground Under Repair

USGA 56-9
R. 32-1a

Q.: On the Thunderbird course at Palm Springs, Cal., there is a swale on the ninth hole which has a sign posted at it, "Ground Under Repair—Drop Back".

In my game there recently, the ball of one of the members was in the swale, in a muddy spot, and since he was a short hitter, he wanted to drop back of the muddy spot onto a grassy spot in the swale, but his opponent contended that he could not do that but had to drop some ten or fifteen yards back so that his ball would be dropped out of the swale and on the regular fairway.

Question by: MALCOLM CRAVENS
San Francisco, Cal.

A.: If the player did not choose to play the ball as it lay, his only recourse without penalty was to drop his ball as near as possible to the spot where it lay, but not nearer the hole, on ground which avoided the ground under repair, i.e., on ground outside the limits of the ground under repair.

It is the purpose of rule 32-1a to offer relief from ground under repair, not to permit a player simply to play from another place in ground under repair.

Teeing When Replaying From Teeing Ground

USGA 56-16
R. 29-1a

Q.1: A player tees and plays a stroke from a teeing ground but misses the ball, leaving it on the tee. With his next stroke he hits the ball out of bounds. Can he now tee and play his fourth stroke anywhere in the teeing ground, or must he drop a ball as near as possible to the spot where the original ball was teed up?

A.1: He may tee his ball and must play his next stroke anywhere within the teeing ground, in accordance with Rule 29-1a.

Q.2: Would the same privilege apply had the original ball fallen off the tee at the first stroke but not rolled outside of the teeing ground?

A.2: Yes, under Rule 29-1a.

Questions by: J. E. CRANE
Ashiya Shi, Japan

Flagstick Attended by Player's Side

R. 34-1, 2; 37-2
USGA 56-17

Q.1: Would the player in match play be penalized if his caddie ran up and pulled the flagstick while the ball was in motion if the caddie had been instructed to attend the flagstick? Also, if the caddie had not been instructed to attend the flagstick.

A.1: No, in both cases, assuming that the ball did not strike the flagstick or the caddie. Rule 34-1 gives the player playing the stroke sole control of the flagstick, and he may have it attended, removed or not as he chooses. The player is also presumed to control members of his side, including his caddie; see Rule 37-2.

Q.2: Would the player in match play be penalized only if the flagstick, clubs, or other equipment were struck while his caddie pulled the flagstick while the ball was in motion regardless of instructions to attend or not attend the flagstick?

A.2: Yes. He would lose the hole under Rule 34-2. (A player always incurs the relative penalty for any breach of rule by his caddie; see Rule 37-2.)

Q.3: Would the player in stroke play be penalized if his caddie ran up and pulled the flagstick while his ball was in motion on the putting surface if the caddie had not been instructed to attend or not attend the flagstick?

A.3: No. See Answer 1 above.

Q.4: Would the player in stroke play be penalized if he had instructed his caddie not to run up and pull the flagstick while the ball was in motion? Would the player only be penalized if the ball struck the flagstick, clubs, or other equipment of his caddie, whether he was instructed or not instructed to pull the flagstick while the ball was in motion?

A.4: A competitor in stroke play would not incur penalty solely because his caddie attended the flagstick while the ball was in motion after the competitor had instructed him not to do so. The com-

petitor would incur a penalty of two strokes under Rule 34-2, however, if the ball struck the flagstick when it was attended by the caddie or if it struck him or his clubs or other equipment, whether or not the caddie had been instructed to attend the flagstick.

Questions by: WARREN ORLICK
Orchard Lake, Mich.

Original Ball "Lost" when Second Put in Play

USGA 56-18
R. 23-3, 29-1

Q.: Player hits his tee shot in the rough. He looked for the ball a reasonable length of time and did not find it. He went back to the tee and hit another ball, without declaring the ball lost. The other competitors in his group claim he did not look for the ball the full five minutes. After hitting the second ball, his first ball was found. He picked up his second ball and played out the hole with his first ball. The tournament was at stroke play.

Question by: HAROLD OATMAN
Norfolk, Va.

A.: The player abandoned his original ball, as lost, when he put a second ball into play under Rule 29-1; and he had no basis under the Rules for subsequently picking up his ball in play and playing out the hole with his original ball.

Unless the player proceeded as stipulated in Rule 23-3 in stroke play, replacing his ball in play (the second ball) under penalty of two strokes and completing the hole with it, he incurred a penalty of disqualification.

Provisional Ball's Status Under Water Hazard Clause

USGA 56-19
R. 30-1a

Q.: Regarding Rule 30, let us assume that it is the tee shot which comes to rest in a spot which might conceivably be out of bounds, lost, unplayable or in a water hazard. It is stated in advance that a provisional ball is being played, but it will

not apply if the ball is found in a water hazard.

If the ball is subsequently found to be in a water hazard, we have the following differences in opinion:

A says that the ball must either be played as it lies or proceed under Rule 33-2 or 3. The provisional ball may not be played since it was stated in advance that it would not apply to a ball found in a water hazard.

B says that the ball may be played as it lies or in accordance with the provisions set forth in Rule 33 and, in addition, may be declared unplayable; whereupon the provisional ball must be played and the option to proceed under Rule 29-2b does not exist.

C says that the ball may be played as it lies, in accordance with Rule 33, or as provided in Rule 29-2a and 2b, since it was stated in advance that the provisional ball was not to apply to a ball found in a water hazard and that the option prohibited in Rule 30-4 applies only to the ball found unplayable, but not in the water hazard.

Question by: MRS. EDWARD SCHULTZ
Oak Park, Ill.

A.: A is correct. When a player exercises the privilege granted to him under Rule 30-1a by stating that a provisional ball he is playing will not apply if his original ball is in a water hazard, he must abide by that statement. If the original ball is, in fact, subsequently found in a water hazard, the provisional ball cannot be put into play. The player must play it as it lies or proceed under Rule 33-2 or 3.

Ball Adhering to Club after Stroke

USGA 56-20
R. 19-2, 26-1b

Q.: An approach shot to the green fell short and landed in an unusually large hole in the sand trap next to the bank of the trap. The player executed his next shot properly and the ball went straight up in the air nicely, only to come straight

down again, settling on the face of the club which was still poised in the air. The player had naturally dug deeply to get the ball out of the hole and the wet sand glued the ball to the club.

What do you do with the ball? I suppose the penalty would be the same as Rule 19-2.

Question by: MRS. S. A. PETERS, JR.
Arcata, Cal.

A.: On the assumption that the player had completed his stroke, he is considered to have stopped his own ball and to have incurred a penalty of loss of hole in match play under Rule 26-2a or two strokes in stroke play under Rule 26-3a.

However, if the circumstance was such that it was considered the player had struck the ball twice, he incurred a penalty stroke under Rule 19-2.

The ball lodged in a thing moving, within the meaning of Rule 26-1b, and in proceeding under Rules 26-3a and 19-2 the player was required to drop it as near as possible to the spot beneath the position of the club when the ball adhered to it, without further penalty.

Hitting Opponent's Ball From Hazard

USGA 56-22
R. 21-2, 27-2a

Q.: What is the penalty, if any, when a player plays his opponent's ball, through error, from a hazard in match play? Does Rule 21-2 or Rule 27-2a govern?

A.: Rule 21-2 governs, and there is no penalty. The player must be considered only to have played a wrong ball in a hazard, but not to have touched or moved his opponent's ball within the meaning of Rule 27-2a. Rule 23-1 expressly forbids a player from lifting his ball for identification in a hazard and thus, in some situations, he would not be able to protect himself.

A player whose ball is so played, however, must drop the ball as near as possible to the spot from which it was played in accordance with the principles of Rule 27-2a.