

OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP DECISION REVERSED

Burke
Decision
Is Reviewed

AFTER completing his first round in the 1956 Open Championship, Jack Burke, of Kiamesha Lake, N. Y., neglected to check his score for each hole and inadvertently turned in a scorecard showing a 4 on the eighteenth hole where he had taken five strokes. When he discovered the error, Burke promptly reported it to the USGA Committee.

While Rule 38-3 provides a penalty of disqualification in such a case, a Committee is authorized by Rule 36-5 to waive or modify any penalty of disqualification. In Burke's case, the Committee decided to invoke this authority and to modify the penalty to two strokes.

Subsequent Cases

Subsequently, Gil Cavanaugh, of Cedarhurst, N. Y., and Miss Betsy Rawls, of Spartanburg, S. C., committed similar inadvertencies in the Open and Women's Open Championships, respectively. Each player received similar treatment.

At the time each decision was made, the USGA announced its intention to review them.

As a result of a review and reappraisal of the effect of the foregoing cases on future interpretations of the Rules of Golf, the USGA has approved and issued Decision 57-1, reversing the interpretations made during the 1956 Championships. The Decision follows:

USGA 57-1
R. 38-2, 3; 36-5

Q: In stroke play, a marker inadvertently wrote in a 4 for a competitor on a hole where his score actually was 5. The competitor failed to check his score for each hole before signing it at the conclusion of the round, as required by Rule 38-2. The

Another Year

"Another year's rolled by," said he.

A tear dripped from his saddened eye.

"Another year of 95's, of missed short putts and crooked drives,

Another year of 'smiling' balls and thrice-curs't traps where strokes were left behind and only misery crawled without."

"But this year will be changed."

"Tee shots will soar aright
and lengthened, too.

"Irons will be crisp and sure.

"The little trouble that is found will
simply find a remedy.

"And putts will drop, and golfing foes
will fall, agog.

"With this new year's prowess."

Then happy birthday, golfer, friend . . .
and may you find it so.

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Committee thus posted the total as 75 when the competitor actually scored 76. Subsequently, the competitor saw the scoreboard, realized an error had been made and promptly reported the fact to the Committee. The Committee would not otherwise have known of the error.

Would it be appropriate, in this instance, to invoke Rule 36-5 and modify or waive the penalty of disqualification stipulated in Rule 38-3?

A:No. The penalty of disqualification may be waived or modified only under most extraordinary circumstances. Rule 38-2 makes the competitor solely responsible for the correctness of the score recorded for each hole. It is a simple matter to discharge this responsibility, and the penalty, although severe, can easily be avoided.