



# 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. "57-1" means the first decision issued in 1957. "D" means definition. "R. 37-7" refers to Section 7 of Rule 37 in the 1957 Rules of Golf.

### Ball Lifted By Opponent

USGA 56-30  
R. 23-Pre., 27-2a,  
40-3b, 40-1c

**Q1:** A and B were both on the green, A being away. No request was made to mark B's ball, so she turned her back on the play momentarily and then saw A roll her (B's) ball away from its location, after marking the ball. B claimed A should be penalized one stroke under Rule 27-2a.

**A1:** B was within her rights in making the claim.

The preamble to Rule 23 provides: "A ball to be lifted under the Rules or Local Rules should be lifted by the owner or his partner or either of their caddies. For ball lifted by opponent or fellow-competitor, see Rule 27-2a or 27-3."

A player may authorize some one other than himself or one of his side to lift his ball, but the player must take the responsibility.

### "Equipment" Does Not Include Ball

**Q2:** In a mixed four-ball match, a player's ball played from just off the green struck the ball of the player's partner on the green; the ball when played was with-

in twenty yards of the other ball. Does the ball come under the heading of equipment under Rule 40-3b, and is any other rule involved?

**A2:** Rule 40-1c applies; there is no penalty. In Rule 40-3b the term "other equipment" does not include a ball.

Questions by: HARRY L. MOFFITT  
Heather Downs Country Club  
Toledo, Ohio

### Touching Sand in Bunker

USGA 56-31  
D. 14a, R. 33-1

**Q:** During the Mississippi Open Tournament, a professional requested a ruling. He stated that in the backward movement of the club for the stroke, the clubhead touched the sand in a hazard.

The Rules Committee ruled that he had incurred a two-stroke penalty in accordance with Rule 33-1b.

The player took the penalty in stride, but requested that I write you, telling you the details. His clubhead touched the sand on the backward movement of the club about twenty to thirty inches from the ball. He claims that he did not actually sole the club. Under Definition 14a which reads in part: "A 'bunker' is an area of bare ground,

often a depression, which is usually covered with sand," player claims that he did not touch the ground but the sand covering same.

Player also wants to know if he would be penalized if, in making the backward movement of the club, the wind blows sand that touches the clubhead.

**Q1:** Was the Rules Committee in order by invoking a two-stroke penalty?

**Q2:** Is the sand in a bunker considered part of the hazard?

**Q3:** Would wind-blown sand touching the clubhead in a hazard be a penalty?

Questions by: C. H. STEWART  
Great Southern Golf Club  
Gulfport, Miss.

**A1:** Yes, under Rule 33-1.

**A2:** Yes.

**A3:** No.

### ***Teeing Ground Precisely Defined***

USGA 56-32

D. 32

**Q:** In interpreting Definition 32, is the rectangle two club-lengths in depth measured from the line of the nearest inside points of two tee marks lengthwise at ground level?

How about widthwise? Is it the line from the inside or outside edge points of the two marks?

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

**A:** The outside line, from the front of each mark, is the front boundary of the teeing ground. The outside lines, from the outer points of each mark, are the side boundaries.

In at least two USGA Championships, players have been permitted to tee on the tee marks and have been considered to have teed within the teeing ground.

### ***Weighted Head Cover Does Not Violate Rules***

USGA 56-33

Misc.

**Q:** My driver, instead of having a normal head cover, was equipped with a

weighted cover which I swung on each tee prior to addressing the ball. It was, of course, removed and was not employed when I actually took my stance. It is my opponent's contention that this constitutes an artificial aid, whereas it is my contention that inasmuch as it is not used in actual play, it has no relevance to any equipment rule.

Question by: FREDERIC M. COMINS  
Newark, N. J.

**A:** Your contention is correct.

### ***Referee Handling Ball And Placing Before Dropping***

USGA 56-36

D. 26, R. 22-2, 31-2

**Q:** In the final of the 1956 Spokane city championship the following occurred:

On the second extra hole one player's second shot rolled off the back righthand side of the green and came to rest in a coil of hose on top of a retaining wall behind the slightly elevated green.

The referee ruled the ball could be lifted out of the hose and within two club-lengths away from the retaining wall, which he ruled was an immovable obstruction.

The referee picked up the ball and placed it within the two club-lengths. The player on order from the referee picked up the ball again and placed it once more at a spot designated by the referee. The player then played the ball onto the green.

We would like answers to the following questions:

**1.** Did the referee break a Rule by lifting and placing the ball?

**2.** Can the referee arbitrarily rule that a ball may be placed before it is first dropped in the prescribed manner to determine whether it would roll into a hazard or out of bounds?

**3.** Is it permissible, under any circumstances, for a ball being played through the green to be placed before it has first been dropped in a manner prescribed by the Rules?

Question by: BOB JOHNSON  
Spokane Daily Chronicle  
Spokane, Wash.

**A: 1.** A referee should not handle a ball in play. See the last paragraph of Definition 26. However, no penalty can attach to the player because of the referee's action; the referee's decision is final, under Rule 11-2.

**2 and 3.** Although referees are allowed some discretion, there was no justification for ruling that the ball should be placed in this case. Apparently the referee felt that Rule 31-2 applied. However, Rule 31-2 requires that the ball be dropped (through the green). Dropping is necessary to resolve any doubt as to whether it is impossible to prevent it from rolling into a hazard, out of bounds or nearer the hole, before permitting it to be placed under Rule 22-2.

Since a retaining wall is an obstruction, if artificial, by Definition 20, the referee would appear to have been acting in accordance with Rule 31-2 in granting the player relief. A hose, however, is normally a movable obstruction, and relief from that alone would have been governed by Rule 31-1.

### ***Ball Moved Off Tee By Stroke and Re-Tee***

USGA 56-35  
R. 16

**Q:** A group of women were playing in a match. One of the women teed up her ball, executed her stroke and in doing so tipped the ball off the tee onto the ground. She insisted on reteeing the ball over the protest of her companions and finished the play of that particular hole.

In match play, was she disqualified for that hole?

In stroke play, would she be disqualified?

Also, in stroke play, if she played her original ball as it lay on the ground and teed and played a second ball under Rule 11-5, what would be her score for the hole?

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

**A:** Since the woman made a stroke, the ball was in play (Definition 5). When she then moved it purposely, she violated Rule 16 and lost the hole in match play.

If the same circumstances had occurred in stroke play, she would have incurred a penalty of two strokes.

If, in stroke play, she had played her original ball as it lay on the ground and also had teed and played a second ball under Rule 11-5, her score with the original ball would be her score for the hole.

### ***"Outside" As Used In Obstruction Rule***

USGA 56-37  
R. 31-2

**Q:** The rule says that if an obstruction interferes with your stance or the backward or forward movement of your swing in the direction you are going, and you are within two club-lengths of the obstruction, you drop the ball within two club-lengths of that point on the *outside* of the obstruction nearest which the ball originally lay, not nearer the hole.

Some argue that the word *outside* means *to the side of* this particular screen or obstruction so that you get a free shot at the green without interference of the screen.

I tell them that the screen is not in the direction of their swing, as they have a shot to the side on the fairway and the screen will not interfere with their swing. If they go back ten club-lengths they still can't clear the screen and have to shoot to the side for the fairway. I say they can't move their ball.

Question by: B. CHESNEY  
Carnegie, Pa.

**A:** The word "outside", as it is used in Rule 31-2, means the vertical plane which would form the outer limit of an obstruction such as a shed. It is not used in a sense which would permit a player to drop his ball to one side of an obstruction so that he will necessarily have a clear line of flight to the hole.

Rule 31-2 provides that a player shall have relief from an immovable obstruction if his ball touch it or if it is within two club-lengths of his ball and interferes with his swing in the direction he wishes to play.

In the diagram you submitted, the ball lies four feet behind the center of the pro-

tective screen, and it is assumed that the screen would interfere with his swing in the direction of the hole. Therefore, the owner is entitled to limited relief. He must drop the ball, however, behind the screen, within two club-lengths of the point on the back of the screen nearest which the ball originally lay.

Therefore, in his particular circumstance, the Rule would afford him very little practical relief. He would, presumably, still be unable to play toward the hole.

### ***Recall Does Not Affect Order of Play***

USGA 56-44  
R. 12-2, 13-1

**Q.:** A and B are partners against C and D in a four-ball match. If player A plays a ball from outside the teeing ground, what action may C and D take?

**A.:** Under Rule 13-1, they may immediately require A to replay the stroke, without penalty; "immediately" here means that the opponents, if they wish to recall the stroke, must so state before anyone else has teed off. Thereafter Rule 12-2 applies, and A's second ball is played after the opponents have played their first strokes.

### ***Caddie May Demonstrate If Play Not Delayed***

USGA 56-46  
D. 2, R. 9

**Q.:** One player in a match permitted her caddie to take one of her clubs and swing it to show her how to make a certain shot. I feel, as do others, that "counsel or suggestion" as the words are used in Definition 2 should be limited. It does not seem right that a person may be given a playing lesson by his caddie during a match.

Question by: MRS. D. T. ROGERS  
Summit, N. J.

**A.:** Neither Definition 2, which defines advice, nor Rule 9 limit the type of advice which a caddie may give. The Rule would, however, prohibit physical assistance in the play of a stroke, as distinguished from "counsel or suggestion."

If a caddie takes an undue amount of time in giving advice to his player during

a competition, the opponent or fellow-competitor would be within his rights in invoking Rule 37-7, which stipulates a penalty of loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play for undue delay. In case of repeated offense, the penalty is disqualification.

### ***Recalling Caddie To Lift Flagstick***

R & A 56-79  
R. 34

**Q.:** Is a player putting with the flag unattended in the hole allowed to recall the caddie to lift the flag after he has played his stroke and before the ball has come to rest.

**A.:** The player may have the flagstick removed at any time if he considers that it interferes with his play. Rule 34-1. The player is entitled to recall the caddie to lift the flagstick as indicated in your letter.

### ***Ball Enters Water From Back of Green***

R & A. 56-52-12  
R. 33

**Q:** It often happens that a player pitches over the green. On playing his second shot the ball rolls over the green and into the water hazard. From where should he play his next shot?

**A:** In the circumstances which you describe, assuming that the player does not elect to play from the water hazard (which he may do without penalty), he may either:

- (a) Proceed under Rule 33-2a, dropping a ball on the side of the water hazard *further* from the hole, keeping the spot at which the ball crossed the margin of the hazard between himself and the hole (so that in his next stroke he must play over the hazard); or
- (b) proceed under Rule 33-2b, dropping a ball as near as possible to the spot from which the original ball was played.

Under either (a) or (b) a penalty of one stroke is incurred.