

# THE RULES ARE THERE TO HELP YOU

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ARE you one of the many persons who look upon the Rules of Golf as a penal code, as something full of technicalities which lie in wait to penalize you? If so, your viewpoint is wrong. The Rules help, rather than hurt or restrict you.

Golfers who think the Rules are too strict and complicated should play a match under the early Rules, which were very few and simple. They would soon become satisfied and even happy with the present ones.

It is safe to say the average golfer has never read the Rules. The only thing he knows about them is what was told to him by someone who likewise never read them. The time he devotes to golf is spent in trying to improve his swing.

Golf is, of course, a game of skill. However, there are many things involved other than the ability to hit the ball.

You have many rights and privileges, which, if you know them and occasion arises to exercise them, will affect your play and score and possibly determine the outcome of a competition. Such things are not found in a smooth swing; they are in the Rule book.

### *Rules Are Logical*

The Rules may seem numerous and even frightening and formidable to some. However, with a little study they become understandable and logical.

The Rules have not always been as numerous as they now are. They have multiplied many times since the earliest known written code which contained only thirteen Rules. It was adopted about 1744 by The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers.

That code, however, was not the first

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## USGA FILM LIBRARY

The USGA Film Library has added "Play Them As They Lie" to its two previous films, "Inside Golf House" and "The Rules of Golf—Etiquette".

The latest addition, a 16 mm. color production, runs for 16½ entertaining minutes in which Johnny Farrell, the Open Champion of 1928, acts as intermediary between Wilbur Mulligan, a beginner of unimpeachable integrity, and Joshua P. Siye, a past master in the art of breaking the Rules. The film was made at the Baltusrol Golf Club, Springfield, N. J., where Farrell is professional.

"Inside Golf House" gives the viewer an opportunity to see the many interesting exhibits in "Golf House," USGA headquarters in New York, and to re-live golf triumphs of the past with many of the game's immortals. The film is a 16 mm. black and white production and runs 28 minutes.

"The Rules of Golf—Etiquette" also has proved popular. The film stresses the importance of etiquette by portrayal of various violations of the code in the course of a family four-ball match. Ben Hogan appears in several scenes, and Robert T. Jones, Jr., makes the introductory statement. A 16 mm. color production, the film has a running time of 17½ minutes.

The distribution of all three prints is handled by National Educational Films, Inc., 165 West 46th Street, New York 36, N. Y., which produced the films in cooperation with the USGA. The rental is \$15 per film, \$25 for combination of two and \$35 for all three in combination at the same time, including the cost of shipping prints to the renter.

set of Rules. Golf had been played for centuries prior to then in seaside communities of Scotland. In fact, it had become so popular in 1457 that the Scottish Parliament forbade its play because it interfered with the practice of archery which was the means of national defense.

The game having been played for so many centuries, it is certain there were

Rules prior to those of 1744, either written or unwritten.

There was no central Rules-making body in those days, as there is now. But it appears certain that each golfing community played by those principles which are naturally involved in the game.

Golf itself is a very natural game. Every person who happens to be carrying a stick has an urge to hit any small object he may see, particularly if it is round. It is natural then to make a contest out of it.

#### *Basic Principles*

The first Rules were undoubtedly just the basic principles which would naturally be involved in such a game. They may be stated as follows:

1. Play the ball from the tee into the hole by strokes.
2. Play the course as it is found and the ball as it lies.

Those fundamentals were probably the only Rules of the game at one period. If so, then no problems concerning Rules arose. A player had only one right and could do only one thing: hit the ball. If for any reason he couldn't do it, he lost the hole. (Golf then consisted entirely of match play.)

Those Rules were very few and simple, but also strict and unrelenting. The courses then were also rugged. They were just as nature made them. Holes were dug at varying distances apart and the ball played into them. There were no greens or greenkeepers. That duty was left to the sheep and rabbits.

Try playing a match under those early Rules. You would get relief from nothing. If your ball got behind a wall, hydrant, in a hole, puddle of water or became lost or unplayable, it would be just too bad.

The only thing you could do would be to hit the ball from the time you left the tee until you reached the hole. If you couldn't hit it, you lost the hole.

#### *Today's Code Is Generous*

However, today's Rules afford the player many rights and privileges other than hitting the ball. He now has the right to relief from many conditions, such as ground

#### THE ANTS HAVE IT!

It says on the score card of the Highland View Golf Course, in Plymouth, New Hampshire, "Hole yardage is marked—as the ant crawls, not as the crow flies."

under repair, holes made by burrowing animals, casual water, water hazards, ball lost, unplayable or unfit for play, obstructions, loose impediments and so forth.

Some of the relief is given free and some entails a penalty. But the player is helped even though a penalty may be involved, particularly if he is in an impossible situation. He is given the opportunity to finish the hole and obtain some sort of a score.

Other of the present Rules preserve the traditional form and make of the clubs and regulate the ball. If there were no such Rules, clubs in all sorts of weird shapes would be used, as well as clubs with a spring or explosive set in the faces. (They have been made.) If the velocity of the ball was not controlled, balls might be made which could fly many times farther than the present ones. Our courses would become obsolete. Such regulations assure that the game will remain one of skill, instead of becoming a contest of equipment.

Other Rules regulate procedure. Others assure fair play. A true sportsman does not need such Rules. He can be counted on always to act fairly. However, there are players who do not have such standards.

There is not a single Rule which hurts or unduly restricts a player. It is true that in obtaining relief he is limited to the method prescribed by the Rules, otherwise he might gain some additional advantage. Such limitation is only right.

He now plays on plush fairways and carpeted greens and is given relief from many, many conditions. His golfing grandfather played on rough and rugged courses and was given relief from practically nothing.

The Rules help you, and it seems you should devote just a little time to becoming acquainted with them. Moreover, a knowledge of them will make the game more enjoyable.