



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.

Chalk on Clubface Violates Rule

USGA 57-6
R. 2-2b,d

Q: During the 1956 Amateur Championship, I observed a few players applying chalk to the faces of their irons.

Is this permissible? If not, what is the penalty in match and stroke play?

Question by: ROBERT K. HOGARTY
Northfield, Ill.

A: It is not permissible to apply chalk or other foreign materials to a clubface during play.

Rule 2-2b provides: "The player or other agency shall not change the playing characteristics of a club during a round."

Rule 2-2d provides that: "Club faces shall not bear any type of finish made for the purpose of putting additional spin on the ball."

The penalty for violation of Rule 2 is disqualification, unless waived or modified under Rule 36-5.

Comment: Decision 57-6 represents a revision in policy. Players in past championships have applied chalk to club faces without being considered in violation of any Rule.

Knocking Ball Away Tantamount to Lifting

USGA 57-22
R. 23-3, 35-3

Q: In stroke play, Mrs. E. was on the 18th green in 3. Her first and second putts were missed, and the ball lay about two inches from the cup. In disgust she knocked the ball toward the side of the green with the back of her putter. It didn't go far and she knocked it again, off the green. She was reminded she had to hole out, so she picked up the ball and replaced it two inches from the cup and did not leave the green until she holed out.

Is she disqualified for not playing the ball back to the hole from where she knocked it? Or should she incur a two-stroke penalty, which would have applied had she only lifted the ball? Or should she incur the two-stroke penalty plus the two strokes she took in hitting the ball away from the hole?

Mrs. E. finally felt she should withdraw to be absolutely fair to the whole field.

Question by: MRS. CHARLES F. FOX,
Secretary, Women's Metropolitan
Golf Association
Highland Park, Mich.

A: The player should have been permitted to replace the ball under a two-stroke penalty as provided for in Rules 35-3 and 23-3.

The player in effect lifted the ball when it was close to the hole. The two-stroke penalty is adequate to regulate further play and to equalize any possible advantage she may have gained in moving the ball with a club rather than actually lifting it. The word "lift" in Rule 23-3 need not be interpreted too literally here.

Committee Responsible For Scoring Procedure In Team Match

USGA 57-23

R. 11-1, 3-4; 38-2, 3

Q: In an interclub team match, play was in four-ball matches, three-point Nassau, with one point for low ball on front nine, one point on second nine and one point for overall total.

When match was completed, Twaalfskill was declared winner by a 20-19 score.

A member of the Woodstock team discovered an error against his side about one-half hour after the match was over. The score had been reported by one of the Twaalfskill members playing in the four-ball match as a 3-0 victory for Twaalfskill, but the Woodstock player insisted the first nine had been halved entitling each side to $\frac{1}{2}$ point. This would have made the final result $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ in favor of Twaalfskill and thrown the final tally to a $19\frac{1}{2}$ - $19\frac{1}{2}$ tie.

A check of the scorecard revealed a halved nine.

Twaalfskill insisted the score should remain as originally posted and that, even though a Twaalfskill man turned in the erroneous score, the Woodstock players were liable and responsible for not checking. Twaalfskill claimed the 20-19 victory. Woodstock said the score should be corrected and the match declared a $19\frac{1}{2}$ - $19\frac{1}{2}$ tie. Other Woodstock players insisted that the erroneous score turned in by the Twaalfskill member of the foursome, who was serving as official scorer, invalidated the entire match, which should be

thrown out. This would create a Woodstock victory.

Efforts to settle the argument on the basis of sections 2 and 3 of Rule 38 failed to satisfy either side.

Question by: CHARLES J. TIANO
Kingston, N. Y.

A: The Committee in charge should determine the matter, as it apparently fixed a procedure for scoring and reporting results of matches. If the Committee cannot come to a conclusion, it may submit a written statement to the USGA as provided for in Rule 11-3.

The players in the match should have had an understanding as to the status before results were reported.

The issue is the status of the Nassau point for the first nine holes. If the players agreed on the status of the first nine before any player had driven from the tenth tee, no later claim was admissible, under Rule 11-1, unless wrong information were involved.

If an erroneous report of the results was made by one player in the match, without consultation with and agreement by the opponents, the error should be corrected. See Rule 11-4.

The Rules give no status to a score card in match play. However, the Committee may use a score card in a supplementary manner when it considers the card could be of assistance.

Rule 38 applies to stroke play, not match play.

Ball Struck on Backward Swing Incurs Penalty Stroke

USGA 57-24

D. 3, 30;

R. 16, 27-1a, 27-1c.

Q. 1: In a tournament, a thunderstorm came up, and the committee ordered play suspended until after the storm. One woman had driven off the tee, and all four in the group marked her ball visually; no actual marker or cover was placed over the ball or spot where the ball rested. After the storm and when play resumed, the other women drove off, but the woman who had first driven was unable to find her

ball. Someone must have removed it, accidentally or otherwise. The committee penalized her two strokes over her objections. What should the ruling be?

Q. 2: On addressing a ball on the fairway or putting green, should the face of the club touch the ball, I understand that is allowable, but suppose on the putting green the ball is jiggled, not actually moved? I've seen players double-face a ball, put the putter first behind then over the top of the ball and line the putt up from in front of the ball then place the putter behind the ball to stroke it. Any number of times I've seen the ball jiggle. Is this a stroke? I've been told that a ball must roll half a revolution to be a stroke, something which is pretty hard to define.

Q. 3: A player chipping missed his shot completely, and in swinging his club back he accidentally hit his ball, which was driven backwards some dozen feet by the back of the club. Is this considered a stroke, or does he just count the missed stroke and not the one hit as his club swung backwards?

Questions by: FRED C. CLARKE, JR.
Woodstock, Vt.

A. 1: As the player's ball was visible from the tee by all four players before play was suspended, it can be claimed in equity that the ball was moved by an outside agency, and a ball must therefore be dropped without penalty under Rule 27-1a. When play is temporarily suspended, it is permissible and advisable, but not obligatory, to lift and mark the location of a ball in play.

A. 2: A ball may be touched while being addressed provided it does not move. (Rule 16). A ball is deemed to have moved if it leaves its position and comes to rest in any other place (Definition 3).

A. 3: A "stroke" is the forward movement of the club made with the intention of fairly striking at and moving the ball (Definition 30). In addition to counting the missed stroke, the player is charged with a penalty stroke for accidentally moving the ball with his backward swing following the missed stroke (Rule 27-1c); and the ball is then played as it lies.

Testing Brake With Putter Contrary To Rules

USGA 57-27

R. 35-1c, 35-1d

Q: I have been experimenting to check the break on a green by placing my mallet-head putter flat on the green and then by lifting it at the end of the handle and checking the way it swings to determine the break.

Putter-head placed in three places—immediately behind the hole, just to the side of the line of putt, and immediately behind the ball—can give me a very definite idea of break.

In no case have I touched the line of putt or placed the putter with more than its own weight, nor has the green been rubbed with the putter to test the grain. I don't see that I have violated any rule but would like your opinion as to this procedure.

Question by: GENE ANDREWS
Beverly Hills, Cal.

A: The action violates Rule 35-1d, which prohibits testing the surface of the putting green.

Attention is also called to the provision in Rule 35-1c that "the line of the putt shall not be touched in front of, to the side of, or behind the hole".

Holes Must Be Played In Correct Sequence

R. & A. 56-75-31
D. 29

Q: Two players in an Inter-Club Match played on a neutral course, and omitted to play the fifth hole.

They were playing on a nine-hole course and found out their mistake at the 9th hole. They returned to the clubhouse and reported their mistake and the member in charge for that day told them to return to the 5th hole and replay to the 9th, cancelling 6th to 9th holes played. Was this correct?

A: In the circumstances described by you, the member in charge gave a correct ruling. The stipulated round consists of playing the nine (or eighteen holes) in their correct sequence. Definition 29.