



# 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. "58-1" means the first decision issued in 1958. "D" means definition. "R. 37-7" refers to Section 7 of Rule 37 in the 1958 Rules of Golf.

### *Water Behind Island Green A Lateral Hazard*

USGA 58-1

D. 14c; R. 33-2; 33-3; L.R.

**Q:** The ninth hole of the Ponte Vedra Club course is about 148 yards long and the green is on an island completely surrounded by water.

If a player should play a ball directly for the hole but it does not clear the water hazard, he should play 3 either from the teeing ground or from the front part of the tee in accordance with Rule 33-2a.

If a player should hit a ball to right or left and it should land on the island and bounce into the water, he should play 3 in accordance with Rule 33-2b or Rule 33-3b because the water at the sides definitely comes under the definition of a lateral hazard (Definition 14c).

Now the question is: if a ball is played directly over the green into the water on the far side, would the player have any relief under the lateral hazard definition? Although it is not practical to play the next shot in accordance with Rule 33-2a, it seems an excessive penalty for a player making a better shot to have to play his next shot from the teeing ground, 148

yards away, when a player who has played a much poorer shot (a hook or a slice) is permitted to play his next shot from 30 or 40 yards from the hole with no water in between.

Question by: SHEPARD BARNES  
Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

**A:** From the description, the committee would seem justified in defining the water hazard behind the green as a lateral water hazard.

It is suggested that large, distinctive stakes indicate where the regular water hazard begins and ends.

In order for Rule 33-3b to operate, the ball must cross the margin of a lateral water hazard.

The committee might consider establishing special areas on which a ball may be dropped in lieu of classifying certain sections of the water hazard as lateral.

### *Local Rule Required For Relief From Underground Pipe*

USGA 58-2

R. 31-2; L.R.

**Q:** If a water-pipe is just underground in some places and above ground in other places, but the covered parts raise the

ground to a point where it would make a very uncomfortable stance, and if the player spread his feet a little further apart he would be standing on exposed pipe, can this covered part be treated as an immovable obstruction?

Question by: LEON KAPLAN  
Waltham, Mass.

**A:** In the absence of a local rule, the Rules of Golf provide no relief from turf raised to cover an underground water pipe.

Two avenues of relief appear to be open to the club. The first would be to level the terrain surrounding the pipe. The second would be to draft a local rule to provide free relief, based upon the principles of Rule 31-2.

Where the pipe is exposed, Rule 31-2 would, of course, apply.

### ***Provisional Ball In Play When Original Ball Abandoned***

USGA 58-3  
R. 30

**Q.1:** If provisional ball from the teeing area is found to be in ground under repair and player elects to drop it without penalty and then decides to play the provisional ball, will he be shooting four?

That, of course, is a misquote. The Rule 30-4 states if player deem his first ball unplayable he must continue play with provisional ball.

**Q.2:** Am I correct in assuming that in abandoning his first ball it is mandatory for player to deem it unplayable in order to have the right to play the provisional ball?

**Q.3:** Does this not all add up to the fact that regardless of the rule covering the particular case the stroke and distance penalty will apply to all abandonment of original ball, if water hazard is not excepted?

Questions by: THOMAS G. McMAHON  
Los Angeles, Cal.

**A.1:** Yes.

**A.2:** No. The first ball might be lost, out of bounds or in a water hazard, and in any such case the provisional ball would become the ball in play. See Rule 30.

**A.3:** Yes.

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John P. English, Editor

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 14th day of October, 1957.

(signed) Charles H. Ward, Notary Public,  
State of New York  
(My commission expires March 30, 1959).