

# PUTTING GREEN RULES REVISION PROPOSED

R&A-USGA Conference  
Recommends 1960 Amendments

**I**mportant amendments of the Rules of Golf relating to the putting green have been drafted jointly, by negotiating committees representing the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland, and the USGA.

The proposals are subject to approval by the General Committee and the members of the RandA, and by the Executive Committee of the USGA. Any final action cannot be taken until mid-September. Changes approved would become effective January 1, 1960.

Two of the more substantial proposals concerning the putting green would permit (1) cleaning the ball and (2) repairing ball marks anywhere, by any method except by stepping on the damaged area.

Further, if a ball were moved in moving a loose impediment on the putting green, there would be no penalty, whereas there is now a penalty of one stroke.

The proposed alterations were agreed during several days of meetings at North Berwick, Scotland, just before the Walker Cup Match at Muirfield. A quadrennial British-American conference on the Rules has become customary, starting in 1951.

By agreement of both parties, the USGA negotiating committee will recommend to its Executive Committee amendments for trial in the United States of the Rules dealing with a ball out of bounds or unplayable and a provisional ball.

Most of the proposed amendments resulting from the North Berwick conference would deal with technical aspects of the Rules for the purpose of clarification. Changes in the substance of the code would be comparatively few.

One proposal would require the player to decide before playing his stroke whether the flagstick were to be attended or removed. At present this may be done at any time.

To preserve traditional aspects of the game and to combat tendencies toward introduction of "gadgets," the RandA-

## On Gamblers . . .

To correct misstatements and misinterpretations which have been published in the press, the Executive Committee has not, as of the press time for this issue, considered a suggestion, received from a source outside the USGA, that entries for the Open Championship in future be accepted only from players who, in the language of the suggestion, "have not participated in tournaments sponsored by known gamblers."

Any USGA action could have no application to the 1959 Open Championship.

The USGA has long been on record as disapproving of gambling in connection with golf tournaments.

USGA alterations would require that the flagstick be straight and circular in cross-section—that is, round—and would prohibit artificial devices for gauging or measuring distance or conditions which might affect a player's play. If the flagstick were not straight and round, the way would be open for introduction of offset and flat-sided flagsticks that could be used as backstops for the ball.

The meetings at North Berwick were, like their predecessors, conducted in a most friendly atmosphere, with great understanding of differing problems prevailing in Great Britain and the United States in respect of Rules-making.

The Chairman of the conference was G. Alec Hill, of the RandA, and his British colleagues were David F. McCurrach, David F. Simpson, Derek MacLeod, Robert M. McLaren, and Brig. Eric Brickman, Secretary. Chairman of the USGA Committee was John M. Winters, Jr., and his fellow-members were Wm. Ward Foshay, Isaac B. Grainger, Richard S. Tufts and Joseph C. Dey, Jr.