



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. "59-1" means the first decision issued in 1959. "D" means definition. "R. 37-7" refers to Section 7 of Rule 37 in the 1959 Rules of Golf.

Card Returned

R&A 58/82/58
R. 38

Q: A competitor having completed his round gave his score card (unfortunately the winning one) to his fellow-competitor to put in the competition box we use on these occasions. His marker, however, overlooked doing so at that time and only deposited the card in the box approximately one and one-half hours later and in this time had left the course. To further complicate the issue the marker was a committee member who, although competing, was technically among those who were running the competition. On checking the card was found to be in order and it is purely on technical grounds that doubt has arisen. Should the winner be disqualified?

A: While it is the competitor's duty to see that the score card is returned without delay, the committee in charge of a competition is not precluded from accepting a reasonable explanation for his failing to do so. While, therefore, the matter must rest with your committee, it is entitled to accept an explanation involving the handing of the card to one of its own number.

Discontinuance Of Play

R&A 58/91/63
R. 37-6

Q: Two players, A and B, when playing in a stroke competition were caught in very heavy rain. A, having torn up his card, continued play for the purpose of marking B's card. A memorized B's score for the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth holes in order to avoid marking the card in the rain. At the tenth tee before striking off A entered a nearby shelter to take out B's score card from his waterproof clothing and proceeded to mark the card for the preceding holes. When so doing he was joined by B who could not continue play without his marker. B states definitely that he did not enter the shelter for the purpose of sheltering.

Does this constitute "discontinuance of play" as referred to in Rule 37-6?

A: Provided B remained in the shelter only long enough to enable his marker A to mark his card, this would not constitute discontinuance of play. The incident was properly reported to your committee, and it is for it to decide whether

in fact play was discontinued, in which case B should be disqualified under Rule 37-6.

Casual Water and the Plugged Ball

R&A 58/84/60
D. 8

Q: I am writing to seek your guidance and ruling in connection with Rule 32 and the definition of casual water as given in Definition 8 of the Rules of Golf. The point on which your opinion is sought is:

A player's ball plugged deeply in the fairway following heavy rain. Although water splashed up as the ball pitched, there was no visible accumulation of water on the surface, but the hole where the ball had plugged had filled with water.

The player claimed that this was casual water and picked and dropped the ball without penalty. Was he correct in claiming that his ball was in casual water?

A: The player was justified in regarding this as casual water in accordance with Definition 8.

Drive Out of Turn Replayed in Error

USGA 59-11
R. 5, 12-3b

Q: In stroke play, a competitor played out of turn from the teeing ground, abandoned the ball and played again in proper order. What penalty, if any, did he incur?

Question by: Y. IWASAKI
Tokyo, Japan

A: There is no penalty for playing out of turn from the teeing ground in stroke play, and the competitor should not have abandoned his original ball or put another in play; see Rule 12-3b.

In doing so, he incurred the general penalty of two strokes provided in Rule 5.

Under a strict application of Rule 23-3, the player could be disqualified. However, we feel that in these particular circumstances, where he did play one ball from tee to hole, the disqualification penalty would be unduly harsh and the general penalty is therefore applied.

Caddie Employed by Four-Ball Opponents

USGA 59-12
L. R. R. 26-1a

Q: The caddie-master assigns two caddies among four players who are to play a four-ball match. The caddie-master neither knows nor cares which players are on the same side in the match. He does not permit bag-switching at the behest of the players. It therefore often develops that each caddie is caddying for members of opposing sides.

One of the caddies moves a ball.

Under Rule 40-3d, when a ball is moved accidentally by one side's own caddie, the owner of the ball incurs a penalty stroke and the ball is played as it lies.

Under Rule 40-3e, when a ball is moved by a caddie assigned to one opponent, that opponent incurs a penalty stroke and the ball is replaced.

When the caddie is employed by both player and opponent, is the ball played as it lies or is it replaced? Or should the caddie be regarded as an outside agency, as is recommended when one caddie is employed by two players in a single match?

Question by: MRS. KENNETH COOLEY
Evanston, Ill.

A: In equity, a caddie employed by opponents in a four-ball match should be considered an outside agency, just like a caddie employed by opponents in a single, except when he acts upon specific directions of a player, in which case he is considered to be that player's caddie.

Thus, if a caddie employed by opponents in a four-ball match accidentally moves a ball while acting without specific directions of either player, the ball should be considered to have been moved by an outside agency. Rule 26-1a would govern. If the caddie was acting on specific direction, the player who gave the direction would incur the relative penalty.

We would suggest that the caddie-masters in question be instructed by the proper authorities to assign caddies caddying double to partners or to permit players to reassign bags in order to avoid Rules questions such as the one you raise.