

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS IN THE WATER HAZARD RULE

Some of the Fine
Points for Relief
Under Rule 33

What choices does a player have as to procedure when his ball enters a lateral water hazard?

A series of excellent questions has been submitted to the USGA Rules of Golf Committee by Naval Comdr. N. A. MacKinnon, of Patuxent River, Md. The USGA Decision follows:

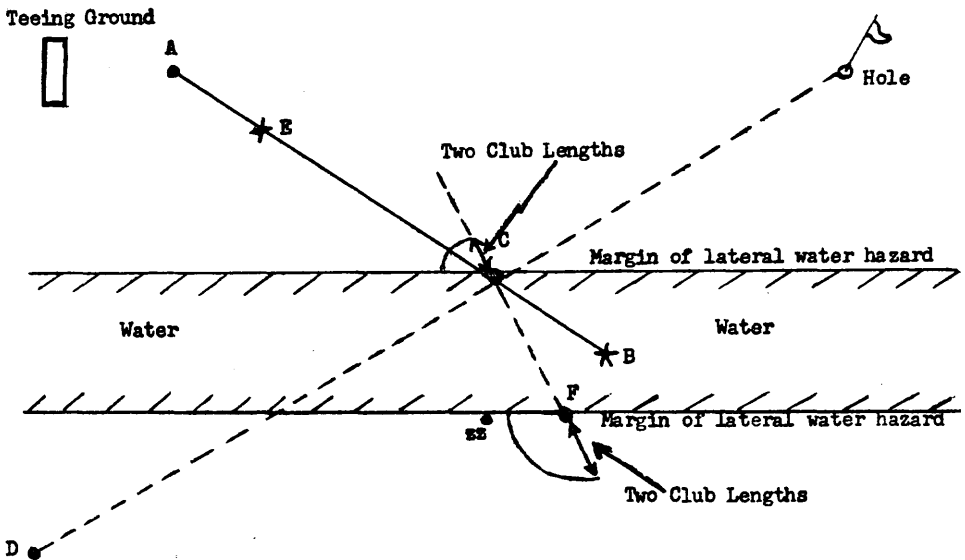
USGA 59-20
R. 33 D. 14

Q: A question has come up as to the interpretation of Rule 33. When a ball

has been hit into a lateral water hazard, the local practice is to drop a ball, under penalty of one stroke, anywhere along the line of flight of the ball that was hit into the hazard. This is justified as being in accordance with Note 3 under Rule 33.

A ball has been hit into a lateral water hazard as shown in the accompanying sketch:

1. Is it a breach of the Rules to drop a ball at point E?
2. Is it in accordance with the Rules



LEGEND:

- A — Spot from which original ball was played
- B — Spot at which original ball came to rest in lateral water hazard.
- C — Spot at which the ball last crossed the margin of the water hazard
- D — Point behind the hazard such that the spot at which the ball last crossed the margin of the water hazard is between the point and the hole. There is no limit to how far behind the hazard the point is located.
- E — Point along the line of flight of the original ball that came to rest in the hazard. This point is more than two club-lengths from C.
- F — Spot opposite the point where the original ball last crossed the hazard margin (zz—Spot opposite the point where the original ball last crossed the hazard margin—USGA)

either to play the ball as it lies or, under penalty of one stroke, to:

- (a) drop a ball at point A.
- (b) drop a ball at point D.
- (c) drop a ball within two club-lengths of points C or F so that the ball comes to rest not nearer the hole.

3. Is there any course of action open to the player other than those listed in 2, above?

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A: 1. Yes, it is a breach. The expression "line of flight" is not used in Rule 33. The so-called "line of flight" is not of itself a proper line along which to drop a ball under Rule 33-2a and 33-3a.

2. (a) Yes. See Rule 33-2b and 33-3a.
- (b) Yes. See Rule 33-2a and 33-3a.
- (c) Point C—yes; it is in accordance with 33-3b.

Point F—no; it is not in accordance with Rule 33-3b.

If a ball is dropped on the same side of a lateral water hazard at the point where the ball last crossed the hazard margin, it must be dropped within two club-lengths of that crossing point.

If a ball is dropped on the other side of the hazard, the determining point is **directly opposite** the last crossing point on a line approximately at right angles to the general directional line of the hazard there. This determining point on the other side of the hazard has been indicated by the USGA as zz in the sketch.

In any case, a ball dropped must come to rest not nearer the hole than the point where the ball last crossed the hazard margin.

3. No.

Note—as the water hazard nears the green, it would appear that its character changes from a lateral to a regular water hazard within the meaning of Definition 14b, c and d.

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