

HOLE-IN-ONE AWARDS CAN IMPAIR AMATEURISM

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Golf's eminence as an amateur sport in the United States depends largely on the appreciation and enforcement of an amateur status code.

The USGA Amateur Status and Conduct Committee, which assists the Executive Committee in administering the Rules of Amateur Status, has recently considered several cases involving awards to amateurs for making holes-in-one.

The Committee's rulings are of interest to all golfers concerned with preserving the best interests of the game. They are:

1. "Golf Digest" magazine arranged a hole-in-one sweepstakes which included-expense-paid trips to Ireland as prizes. In order to be eligible, a player would have to make a hole-in-one during 1961. The magazine was advised that players who accept trips abroad would violate Rule 1-5 of the Rules of Amateur Status since a requisite for eligibility would be skill as a golfer evidenced by making a hole-in-one. An expense-paid trip is not an approved type of prize for amateurs regardless of its value, as it is "Of a nature which is the equivalent of money or makes it readily convertible into money" (Rule 1-5b).

"Golf Digest" has since revised its contest so that all trips abroad will now be offered to professionals at the clubs where holes-in-one are made.

Amateurs will continue to qualify for a chance to receive merchandise prizes with a retail value not exceeding \$200, the maximum allowed under Rule 1-5.

By amending the conditions of the competition, "Golf Digest" has shown its desire to have the contest conform with the amateur status code. The USGA appreciates and commends such a fine spirit of cooperation.

2. A hole-in-one association established annual dues of \$5 for members. Any member making a hole-in-one was to receive \$350 in golf equipment, a \$100 paid beverage account and a portrait valued

at \$200. The Amateur Status Committee advised the association that members who accepted such prizes would be in violation of Rule 1-5.

The hole-in-one association agreed to revise its program to make prizes given to future members conform to the Rules of Amateur Status.

Subsequently, it is understood that the hole-in-one association became bankrupt.

3. An invitation tournament for both professionals and amateurs offered an electric golf cart as a prize to an amateur making a hole-in-one. An amateur did make a hole-in-one during the tournament last winter and accepted a cart valued at \$1,000 as a prize. The Committee has informed this amateur that he has forfeited his amateur status by accepting merchandise valued in excess of \$200.

Aside from the technicalities of the rules, the governing principle in all cases is expressed in the Definition of an Amateur Golfer, as follows:

"An amateur golfer is one who plays the game solely as a non-remunerative or non-profit-making sport."

NEW MEMBERS OF THE USGA

REGULAR

Ariz.	Williams AFB Golf Course
Colo.	Colorado Springs Country Club
Hawaii	Hickam AFB Golf Association
Kansas	Topeka Men's Golf Club
Ky.	Mt. Sterling Golf and Country Club
Ky.	Standard Country Club
Mass.	Wianno Club
Mich.	Sunnybrook Country Club
Miss.	Greenville AFB Golf Course
Okla.	Tinker AFB Golf Club
Ore.	Top O'Scott Men's Association
Pa.	Water Gap Country Club
Pa.	Wildwood Golf Club
Texas	Gilmer Country Club

ASSOCIATE

Colo.	Eisenhower Golf Course
Conn.	Minnechaug Golf Course
Maine	Willowdale Golf Course
Tenn.	Valleybrook Golf and Country Club
Utah	University of Utah Golf Course