



# 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. "61-1" means the first decision issued in 1961. "D" means definition. "R. 37-7" refers to Section 7 of Rule 37 in the 1961 Rules of Golf.

### WRONG BALL IN MATCH PLAY: WHEN TIME LIMIT FOR CLAIMS APPLIES

USGA 61-5  
R. 10, 11-1a, 21-2

**Q:** A and B were playing a match. On Hole No. 8 A pushed his tee shot into the rough and among the trees. After looking for the ball for three or four minutes, he found a ball on the adjoining ninth fairway. Since the ball he found was the same make and number as the one he was playing, he finished the hole with it and won the hole.

There was no dispute during the play of the hole, but B had helped A look for his ball, and one of the first places he had looked was on the adjoining ninth fairway and at the time he had seen no ball there. When A found his ball and played it, B remarked to one of the gallery that he had looked in the ninth fairway and had seen no ball but he didn't question A's integrity.

After A teed off on the ninth hole, a player who had teed off in front informed A that he (A) had played the wrong ball. On examination it was discovered that A had played the wrong ball on the eighth hole, and A admitted he played the wrong ball.

Could B claim the eighth hole under Rule 21-2 or did A win the hole under Rule 11-1a? The argument seems to hinge on whether A gave wrong information to B by at first identifying the wrong ball as A's.

Question by: SAM DOM  
New York, N. Y.

**A:** A won the hole. B could not make a valid claim under Rule 21-2 after the time limit in Rule 11-1a.

Wrong information, as used in Rule 11-1a, can cover various kinds of misinformation, but it refers primarily to the number of strokes the player has taken, including penalty strokes—see Rule 10. It does not appear that A misinformed B in this case.

### ADVICE: INFORMATION AS TO LENGTH OF HOLE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE

USGA 61-37  
D. 2, R. 9-1

**Q:** The following incident took place in a singles match and the players were accompanied only by an observer. Neither of the players or the observer carried a card and as the length of the par 3 hole about to be played was not

indicated on the tee marker, the player who had the honor asked the observer for that information. He replied, stating the length. The opponent immediately claimed the hole on the basis that the player had received advice. After playing out the hole, the players consulted the referee, who disallowed the claim.

As this is the first time that such an incident has come to my notice, I would be grateful if you would give me your opinion as to the correctness or otherwise of the referee's decision.

Question by: IAN C. MORRISON, Captain  
Prince of Wales Country Club  
Santiago, Chile

A: The referee was correct. Requesting information as to the length of a golf hole is not asking advice under Definition 2 and Rule 9-1. This is factual information customarily made available to all players through the scorecard, the tee markers, etc.

**BALL MOVED BY OUTSIDE AGENCY:  
WHERE TO REPLACE WHEN LIE  
ALTERED**

USGA 61 13

R. 11-4, 21-3, 24-4, 27-1a

Q: There seems to me to be a very unfair provision in the Rules of Golf where a wrong ball situation comes up in stroke play. A player whose ball has been wrongly played by someone else "shall place a ball on the spot from which the ball was wrongly played." The spot from which this ball was wrongly played has probably been moved ten to twenty feet in the form of a divot and probably not replaced. Is it expected then that the player shall place his ball in the bottom of what, to the player, looks like the Grand Canyon?

Question by:  
BRIG. GEN. STANLEY E. RIDDERHOFF  
Newport Beach, Calif.

A: A competitor is entitled to the lie which his stroke gives him. In this case, the Rule of Equity (Rule 11-4) and the principle of Rule 24-4 should supplement Rule 21-3 (which you have quoted); the competitor should be permitted to place a ball as near as possible to the spot from which it was wrongly played in a lie similar to that which it originally occupied. The second paragraph of Rule 27-1a, which is referred to in Rule 21-3, might also provide a basis for relief.

**(1) AGREEMENT TO WAIVE LOCAL  
RULE: TIME OF DISCOVERY  
IRRELEVANT**

**(2) DISQUALIFICATION IN MATCH  
PLAY: EFFECT ON TOURNAMENT  
OF BELATED PENALTY**

USGA 61-14

R. 4, 11-1a, 11-4

Q: During a match play competition, there was an infraction of Rule 4, where in A and B agreed to disregard a Local Rule. Rule 11-1a clearly lays down when claims and penalties for points under dispute must be made. But this Rule refers more to one competitor complaining against the other than to an infraction of Rule 4.

The infraction took place on a Thursday, and it was not brought to the attention of the Committee until the following Monday, when a third person reported it. To complicate matters, A, the winner of the match in question, played his next match on Sunday, and he won it. He had therefore played his next match before the Committee had even heard of the infraction committed in the first match.

It is our belief that Rule 11-1a does not limit the authority of the Committee to take action in the case of an infraction of Rule 4, but we wish to know whether the fact that a subsequent match had been played before the Committee stepped in automatically bars any further action on the part of the Committee.

Question by: R. DUNCAN  
Manila, Philippines

A: Both players could have been disqualified for breach of Rule 4. The fact that A had subsequently played another match before the infraction was discovered by the Committee is irrelevant.

Your Committee is correct in its belief that Rule 11-1a does not limit the application of Rule 4. Rule 11-1a applies in the event of a dispute or doubt between the players in a match. No such dispute is in evidence in this case.

The status of the player who was defeated by A in his next match is a matter for the Committee to decide in accordance with equity—Rule 11-4. There are two principal choices as follows:

(1) To reinstate the player beaten by A in the second match.

(2) To disqualify A only from the time the infraction was discovered by the Committee, thereby giving his opponent a default.

**HAZARD: UMBRELLA PLACED IN,  
BEFORE PLAY**

USGA 61-1  
R. 33-1f

**Q:** What will be your ruling if a player goes into a bunker with his umbrella under heavy rain and, prior to his play, places his umbrella in the bunker? Will he be penalized because the umbrella is not attached to the bag containing his clubs? If he is not penalized, the word "clubs" in Rule 33-1f has a broader meaning of clubs and/or equipment.

Question by: S. TAKAHATA, President

Hirono Golf Club  
Japan

**A:** Placing an umbrella in a hazard prior to making a stroke is equivalent to placing clubs in a hazard and does not violate the Rules provided the player does nothing which might improve his lie of the ball or assist him in the subsequent play of the hole or otherwise violate Rule 33-1.

**DOUBT AS TO PROCEDURE IN STROKE  
PLAY: PLAYER MAY SEEK RULING  
AND NOT PLAY SECOND BALL**

USGA 61-17  
R. 11-5, 37-7

**Q.1:** In a major stroke play Championship tournament is a player, under Rule 11-5, obliged to play two balls when in doubt as to his rights or procedure, or is he entitled to ask for someone from the Rules Committee governing the tournament to come to the location and give a ruling on the spot?

**A.1:** The player is entitled to a ruling on the spot if the Committee has facility for thus serving. Rule 11-5 does not oblige the player to play a second ball when doubtful of his rights or procedure but, through the use of the word "may," entitles him to do so if he so desires. The purpose of the Rule is to enable the player to avoid disqualification through unauthorized procedure (see Note 1 to the Rule).

**BURROWING ANIMAL HOLES,  
RELIEF FROM: PROCEDURE AFTER  
DROP WHEN INTERFERENCE  
CLAIMED THROUGH STROKE AWAY  
FROM HOLE**

USGA 61-35  
R. 11-4, 32-2

**Q:** The eleventh hole at Fort Ord Golf Course is a two level green sloping drastically to the right and guarded by two bunkers. A player's ball came to rest in the lower trap, close to the lip of the trap, and surrounded by three mounds freshly made by a gopher. The ball was not on any part of the gopher mounds, but was resting in the sand. The player contended he could play the ball backwards out of the trap and then chip onto the green, but one of the mounds interfered with the backward stroke of the club which entitled him to relief and a free drop away from the mounds. However, had this occurred he would then have been in a position to pitch squarely to the pin. He also had a stroke at the ball, chipping out and straight forward slightly below the green, then chipping up onto the green for his putt, which he finally did.

Just because he would like to play the ball backward, is he entitled to take relief from a gopher mound when he would then play the ball forward toward the pin if he got the relief?

Question by: MRS. A. A. EAKIN  
Fort Ord, Calif.

**A:** No. the relief provided by Rule 32-2 is for the player's stroke. Accordingly, if the relief is taken for a stroke in one direction the player must continue with that stroke. If he were to make his shot in another direction which then became available, the basis for the relief would be eliminated and a penalty incurred.

**BALL, HEATING OF: DEVICE  
SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR  
PURPOSE PROHIBITED**

USGA 61-39  
Misc.

**Q:** Is it permissible under the Rules of Golf to use a device specifically designed to heat a golf ball?

**A:** The Rules of Golf do not contemplate or permit the use of such a device, which must be prohibited as contrary to the spirit of the game.