



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. "62-1" means the first decision issued in 1962. "D" means definition. "R. 37-7" refers to Section 7 of Rule 37 in the 1962 Rules of Golf.

CUT TURF (DIVOT): WHEN DEEMED PLACED IN POSITION

USGA 62-4

D. 17, R. 17-1 (Note), 18

Q: The term "placed in position" when referring to a divot bothers me (Note to Rule 17-1). What constitutes "placed in position"? Is a divot a loose impediment until it is exactly replaced? What status has a divot which has been tossed into its hole backward or sideways? Is an ill-fitting divot "placed in position"? Is a divot placed if only a part of it touches its hole? I realize these questions are very much the same. What it amounts to is this—at precisely what moment does a divot cease being a loose impediment and become "fairway" or "irregularity of surface"?

Question by: LEON KAPLAN
Waltham, Mass.

A: This inquiry presents essentially a question of fact which cannot be answered categorically. In most instances, a Committee would be justified in ruling that, for purposes of Rule 17-1, cut turf is deemed to be placed in position when substantially all of it lies in an area intended for it (as when a divot is replaced or a bare area is sodded). Such

turf need not be placed perfectly or in the same area from which it was originally removed.

MARKING LIFTED BALL: OWNER DETERMINES MANNER AND PLACE

Q: A player in match play requests opponent to mark his ball on the green which is in the player's line. In marking his ball with a coin, the opponent realizes after marking that he has left a perfect line for player. Opponent wanted to move coin two putterhead-lengths over to one side but the player insisted that he wanted the coin left in original position.

Was the opponent permitted to move the coin so as not to give the player this advantage?

Question by: WARREN ORLICK, Professional
Tam O'Shanter Country Club
Orchard Lake, Mich.

A: Yes. The owner of a ball requested to be marked under Rule 35 2a is responsible for lifting and accurately marking and replacing his ball. The player requesting the marking has no voice in how the ball is marked, except that he may request that the coin or marking object be moved to one side if it inter-

feres with his play. See Note to Rule 35-1 for recommendation on how to mark a ball when lifted from the putting green.

**HOLING OUT:
LOCAL RULE CANNOT ABROGATE
REQUIREMENT TO HOLE OUT ON
TEMPORARY GREEN**

USGA 62-5
R. 1, 36-7a; L. R.

Q: May we have your decision on the correct order of play on a temporary putting green?

Our golf course has been going through a great period of renovation for several months now, necessitating the use of temporary greens from time to time. I have been unable to find any ruling regarding same in the Rules of Golf booklet, but over the years have heard of many rulings.

Some pros advise putting out; others say a player may take two putts and then pick up. The latest ruling, source unknown, is that a player may pick up the ball once it is on the green, taking two putts, or if the player decides to putt, then must keep on putting until the ball is holed out.

As we are holding a two day tournament early next month with women from all over the state of California playing, I think it advisable to get a ruling from you on this so there will be no confusion or question about it whatsoever.

Question by: MRS. C. R. DANIELSON
San Luis Obispo, Calif.

A: Rule 1 provides: "The Game of Golf consists in playing a ball from the teeing ground into the hole by successive strokes in accordance with the Rules." Any Local Rule under which a player would not be required to play the ball into the hole abrogates this basic Rule and is not in accord with USGA policy. See Rule 36-7a.

**DISCONTINUING PLAY:
STATUS OF PLAYER WHO (1) LIFTS
BALL BUT DOES NOT MARK ITS
POSITION AND (2) DOES NOT LIFT
BALL AT ALL**

USGA 62-3
R. 1, 22-2a, 36 5, 37-2, 37-6a, b; 40-3h, j

Q: In a four-ball match, with A and B partners against C and D, a violent rain storm struck just after the players drove

from the fifteenth tee. The players and caddies took shelter but before doing so the caddies of B and C picked up the balls of the players for whom they were caddying. The balls of A and D remained on the fairway.

Should B and C be penalized? If so, under what Rule would the penalty be invoked? If there is no penalty, would B and C be allowed to place their balls as near as possible to the original lies inasmuch as we have a local rule permitting preferred lies in the fairway?

Question by: JAMES D. FOGERTY,
Professional
Sunset Country Club
Sappington, Mo.

A: It is assumed that the prohibition of Rule 37-6a against discontinuance of play was not infringed because there was either danger from lightning or a proper agreement among the players to discontinue.

B and C were each subject to penalty since their caddies did not mark the positions of the balls as required by Rule 37-6b. The player is made responsible for the acts of his caddie by Rule 37-2. A and D were subject to penalty for failing to lift and mark their balls, as required by Rule 37-6b.

As to the penalty, all four players should be disqualified for the hole in question and the hole was halved. While Rules 37-6 and 40-3h by their terms would require disqualification from the competition, under Rule 36-5 the Committee would be authorized to, and should, reduce the penalty as indicated.

As for the local rule permitting preferred lies, the USGA does not endorse it and will not interpret it.

**BUNKER:
SMOOTHING IRREGULARITIES NOT
PERMITTED IF STROKE WHICH
CREATED IRREGULARITIES WENT
OUT OF BOUNDS**

USGA 62-2
R. 29-1a, 33-1g

Q: When a ball played from a bunker goes out of bounds, is the player allowed without penalty, to smooth his footmarks or the soil displaced by his stroke prior to his play of a ball to be dropped in the bunker under Rule 29-1a?

Question by: S. TAKAHATA, President
Hirono Golf Club, Japan

A: No. The player would violate Rule 33-1, and the penalty would be loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play. The player's action in smoothing the bunker soil would improve his lie for the ball to be dropped under Rule 29-1a or assist the player in his subsequent play of the hole; he therefore would not be entitled to the penalty exclusion provided for by Rule 33-1g.

**LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS:
PLAYER CONTROLS REMOVAL**

USGA 62-1
R. 35-1b, 35-1 Note, 35-2a

Q: A player in match play has a difficult downhill putt on an exceedingly fast, slippery green.

Before player gets in position for his putt, a high wind comes up, blowing debris all over the green. Player proceeds to pick up the loose impediments between his ball and the hole but leaves debris directly behind the hole. The opponent wants to remove the debris because he feels that the player's ball would be stopped should his downhill putt run past the hole.

Player insists he has the right to leave the debris behind the hole. Was the player correct?

Question by: WARREN ORLICK, Professional
Tam O'Shanter Country Club
Orchard Lake, Mich.

A: Yes. The player alone controls removal of loose impediments which might affect his play—see Rule 35-1b.

**CUT TURF (DIVOT):
REPLACEMENT BEHIND BALL DOES
NOT CONSTITUTE IMPROVING LIE**

USGA 62-4

Q: If a divot is replaced behind a ball (as is permitted according to USGA Decision 61-12), is not the player improving his lie?

Question by: LEON KAPLAN
Waltham, Mass.

A: The facts of each case determine, and no hard-and-fast general answer can be given. Usually, replacement of a divot behind the ball would not improve its lie, but would tend to make the lie more difficult as the player would risk snagging the divot with his backswing.

**OUT OF BOUNDS: COMMITTEE HAS
FULL AUTHORITY TO DEFINE**

USGA 52-51
D. 21, R. 36-6

Q.1: Our course is entirely enclosed by an 8-foot fence, against which are planted various shrubs, flowers, etc. It has been proposed that, to save time and to save the flowers, we establish out-of-bounds stakes completely around the course slightly inside our boundary fence. In other words, we would have probably 2 feet of ground between our stakes and fence which would be out of bounds.

Would this seem satisfactory, or just what does the USGA recommend?

At present we play anything over the fence as out of bounds; and up against the fence as unplayable, but in many cases an unplayable lie calls for going back to the tee, which holds play up considerably.

A.1: The committee would be within its rights in establishing a boundary line placing the shrubs and flower beds out of bounds. Under Rule 36-6, it is a duty of the committee to define boundaries.

As an alternative, the committee could retain the fence as the boundary, and could protect the flowers by adopting a local rule making it mandatory that a ball in a flower bed be lifted, without penalty, and dropped as near as possible to the spot where it lay, but not nearer the hole, on ground outside the flower beds. See recommendations for local rules. Such a local rule would be proper only for the purpose of prohibiting play from an area which it is desired to protect, and not for the purpose of giving relief from the boundary fence.

Q.2: We also have one hole inside the course on which we have an out-of-bounds, purely as a safety measure, to prevent players from driving into another fairway. Is there any objection to this?

A.2: "Interior" boundaries are generally inadvisable except for prohibiting play in such areas as parking spaces, clubhouse and dwelling territories, tennis courts, swimming pools and the like. However, as noted above, it is a duty of the committee to define boundaries. Knowing the local situation, the committee can best determine the matter.

Questions by: ELLSWORTH VINES
Los Angeles, Calif.