



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. "C-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.

CARRYING LOST CLUB ON COURSE IS NO BREACH

USGA 62-12
R. 3, 30-2

Q. 1: A player found another player's club on the golf course. She decided to pick it up and return it to the pro shop. She already had 14 clubs in her bag. What is the ruling in both stroke play and match play?

A. 1: There is no penalty in either stroke play or match play. Rule 3 does not apply where the purpose is simply the rendering of such a courtesy. The player might wish to inform the opponent in match play or the marker in stroke play, however, so as to prevent any question arising later.

PROVISIONAL BALL: MAY BE ELECTED AFTER PLAYER'S DECLARATION TO PLAY ORIGINAL.

Q. 2: Player A hit a ball and believed it might be unplayable. She played a provisional ball. Upon reaching the spot where the original ball lay, she stated: "I think I can play the ball." She took her stance behind the original

ball with a club and then found she could not take a swing because of some small twigs. She then decided to play the provisional ball. B and C contend that this is not permissible and that A must play the original ball. Can you change your mind in such circumstances?

A. 2: Yes. See Rule 30-2.

Questions by: MRS. JOHN HUXEL
Plainfield, N. J.

and
MRS. L. H. RICHARDS
Metuchen, N. J.

LOOSE IMPEDIMENTS ON PUTTING GREEN

USGA 62-11
D. 17, R. 35-1b, 35-1f

Q: May a person remove pine needles from the line of putt on the green by brushing in such a manner as to disturb the surface of the grass?

Question by: HANSEL RAY,
Lake Worth Golf Course
Lake Worth, Fla.

A: Yes, provided nothing is pressed down (Rule 35-1b) and provided the

surface of the putting green is not tested (Rule 35-1f). In brushing a loose impediment off the line of putt, a player almost inevitably will temporarily disturb the surface of the putting green, but the prohibitions referred to take precedence over the right to remove loose impediments.

POINT OF UNDUE DELAY

USGA 62-8

R. 37-7, 40-1b, 40-3a

Q: In recent team play between member clubs of our Association, the following procedure was followed several times by the two members of one particular team. The competition was played under USGA four-ball match play Rules.

When one player would make her approach shot to the green (and this could be from 100 yards out), her partner would immediately ask her to mark her ball. Where-upon this player would walk up to the green, state her intention to putt out rather than mark, and putt out. This kept the other three players standing out on the fairway waiting until this procedure was completed, and had the effect of delaying play many times for the groups following.

Is there any Rule of Golf which would make such procedure illegal? If it is not at variance with any Rule, could it be constructed as being poor etiquette or poor sportsmanship? What penalty, if any, could be imposed?

Question by: **MRS. CHARLES MILLS**
Los Angeles, Calif.

A: The side in question obviously invoked Rule 40-1b, which provides: "Any player may have any ball (except the ball about to be played) lifted or played, at the option of the owner, if he consider that it might interfere with or be of assistance to a player or side, but this is only permissible before the next stroke is played by the player whose turn it is."

This Rule is intended to cover situations where there is a reasonable pos-

sibility that one ball might assist or interfere with another ball.

If a Committee considers that the Rule is being abused, the Committee would be justified in penalizing the offending side for undue delay and breach of Rule 37-7.

REASON FOR LOCAL RULE AUTHORIZING RELIEF FROM PAVED ROADS

USGA 62-9

D. 20, L. R.

Q. 1: I have been besieged with inquiries for a fairly complete interpretation on the change in the Appendix - Local Rules which states:

"Providing relief from paved paths and roads close to playing areas (under Rule 3 -2) if they unfairly affect play." We would sincerely appreciate some general statements of USGA policy or philosophy so that we could be in a better position to expound on the theory behind the Rule.

A. 1: Definition 20b provides that artificially constructed roads and paths anywhere are not obstructions. The reference in the Appendix which you quoted is not a Local Rule but authorizes a club to adopt a Local Rule classifying a paved path or road as an obstruction if it is so close to playing areas that it could unfairly affect play; in such a case, relief would be afforded under Rule 31-2.

In authorizing such a Local Rule, the USGA Executive Committee had in mind particularly the numerous hard-surfaced paths and roads which have been constructed to accommodate automotive golf carts.

Q. 2: Is the statement "paved paths and roads" to be construed as "paved paths and paved roads" or "paved paths and any kinds or types of roads?"

A. 2: Roads, as well as paths, must be paved before the Local Rule providing relief is authorized.

Q. 3: Is the word "paved" intended to mean only those roads or paths that have an actual hard surface covering

such as asphalt, concrete or the like, or may it include gravel paths and/or roads?

A. 3: A Local Rule is authorized only for hard-surfaced paths and roads such as are made of asphalt and concrete. Gravel is not regarded as an artificial product and therefore is not an obstruction in any circumstance.

Q. 4: What opinion would you have on internal course roads, used for the movement of heavy course equipment, that are well "rutted" and not normally maintained?

A. 4: We assume you refer to unpaved roads; a Local Rule is not authorized by the Appendix.

Under certain circumstances, the local committee might be justified in defining such roads as ground under repair until they could be repaired; in such cases relief would be provided under Rule 32-1a.

KNOWINGLY ATTESTING WRONG SCORE

USGA 62-10

R. 1, 4

Q: In stroke play, a competitor failed to hole out on a hole and continued to play out the round and turned in a score card. The fellow-competitor (scorer-marker), fully aware that the player had violated Rule 1 by not holing out the ball, signed the score card.

The Committee disqualified both players for violation of Rule 1 and also Rule 4 as we agreed that by signing the card the fellow-competitor was agreeing to waive Rule 1.

Following this decision, we noted USGA Decision 60-50, which indicates that a marker is not penalized for signing a wrong score. We have been of the opinion that the countersigning of the score card by the fellow-competitor was for the purpose of verifying the correctness of the score. If there is no responsibility of the scorer, why do we countersign the cards?

We understand that ignorance of the

violation would not warrant disqualification. We would appreciate a clarification of Rule 4.

Question by: **MRS. WM. C. BEUTEL**
Cleveland, Ohio

A: The Committee was right in disqualifying the competitor and the fellow-competitor for breach of Rules 1 and 4.

CARTS: AUTOMOTIVE: COMMITTEE TO FIX PROCEDURE FOR CART BECOMING INOPERABLE DURING ROUND

USGA 62-13

R. 37-6a, 37-7, Misc.

Q: Our State Association has voted to allow the use of electric carts in our state tournaments. Will you please give me a ruling on the following:

- (1) In the event a cart fails to operate during a round of medal play, how long is the rest of the group expected to wait until necessary repairs are being made or a new cart sent out?
- (2) In match play, if one player is using a cart and the same thing happens, how long must the opponent be expected to wait?

I am assuming that everyone displays good sportsmanship, and I realize that carts are not allowed in USGA tournaments.

Questions by: **MRS. KEENE MORISON**
Orchard Farm
Wilton, Maine

A: The Rules of Golf do not cover the matter specifically as they do not contemplate the use of automotive transportation.

Rule 37-6a prohibits discontinuance of play unless there be danger from lightning or there be some other reason which the local committee considers satisfactory. Thus, the committee should establish procedure for such an occurrence and should announce it in advance. See also Rule 37-7 regarding undue delay.