



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.

USGA 62-33
D. 6, R. 9

ADVICE: LOOKING INTO OPPONENT'S BAG NOT PROHIBITED

Q: A and B are partners playing against C and D. During the match, after A has made a shot to the green, C walks over to A's bag and overtly looks into the bag to ascertain the club used by A in the shot. Is C in violation of Rule 9-1 (giving or asking for advice)?

Question by: GEORGE A. SAUNDERS
Metairie, La.

A: No. In our administration of the Rules a distinction has been drawn between "advice" given consciously by another, as described in Definition 2, and information obtained solely by one's own observation.

It would not be practicable, for example, for the Rules to provide, or for Definition 2 and Rule 9 to be construed, that a player may not watch another player's stroke or the reaction of the ball when struck. The same sort of assistance can be had from such observation as from seeing the number marked on the club played. Similarly,

a distinction must clearly be made between (1) a player watching the roll of another ball on the putting green, and (2) his asking another player for information about the line of putt.

Definition 2 provides that "advice" is "any counsel or suggestion", etc. The words "counsel or suggestion" imply consultation in some manner with another person who is privy to and cooperative with the aim of the player seeking such consultation. In this case, C's action was solely observation.

USGA 62-23

D.5, 6; R. 5, 11-4, 21-1, 21-3

OUT OF BOUNDS: BALL THOUGHT TO BE OUT OF BOUNDS FOUND IN BOUNDS AFTER STROKE WITH ANOTHER BALL

Q: In stroke play, a competitor believes his second shot is out of bounds after he looks for it in bounds. He returns to the place from which he played his second shot, drops another ball and plays it.

His first ball is then found in bounds. He abandons the second ball

and completes the hole with the first ball.

The committee disqualified the competitor for abandoning the second ball. Was the Committee's ruling right?

A. If the first ball was lost or declared lost under Definition 6, the Committee's ruling was right. The second ball was then the ball in play (Definition 5), and the competitor was obliged to complete the hole with it — see Rule 21-3.

However, if the first ball was not lost or declared lost under Definition 6, the Committee's ruling was wrong. The original ball was the ball in play, under Definition 5. Rule 21-1 obliged the competitor to hole out with the original ball, which he did. The competitor should be penalized two strokes for playing the second ball. The Rules do not permit play of a ball under a Rule which does not govern the particular case. By applying the Rule of equity (11-4) and the General Penalty (Rule 5), the principle established in Rule 21-3 concerning play of a ball other than the player's own ball is followed.

USGA 62-22

R. 35-1e

Note: This supersedes Decision 57-26

**LINE OF PUTT: TOUCHING
PUTTER TO GREEN BEHIND
BALL WHILE DETERMINING
LINE NOT PROHIBITED**

Q: Please clarify Rule 35-1e for me. Does this mean that the putter or any part of it shall not touch the ground in back of the ball except in addressing the ball? For example, would the following breach the Rule if done behind the ball.

(1) Laying the putter on the green lengthwise behind the line to the hole?

(2) Crouching with putter extended before you and heel of putter touching the green?

(3) Placing toe of putter directly in back of ball touching the green, and the swiveling the putterhead around in

position for the stroke?

(4) Laying putter directly behind ball, walking to opposite side of hole to sight the line, and then returning to putt?

A: In none of the above cases would the player breach Rule 35-1e or any other Rule unless by his actions a mark to indicate the line of putt is placed on the putting green and left there during the play of the stroke.

USGA 62-32

R. 11-4, 17-1, 24-4, 33-1, 40-3i

**BUNKER: RAKED TO RESTORE
ALTERED LIE OF ANOTHER
PLAYER. LIE: ALTERED BY
ANOTHER PLAYER — BUNKER
RAKED TO RESTORE**

Q. 1: Two balls belonging to the same side came to rest in a sand trap. The balls lie within two club-lengths of each other. B, the player farther from the hole, requests that his partner A lift his ball. B makes his shot, and alters the lie of A's ball. B then rakes the trap of any irregularities. A then places his ball on the spot from which it was lifted and plays his shot. Is this permissible under the Rules of Golf?

A. 1: Rule 24-4 required A to replace his ball as near as possible to the spot from which it was lifted and in a line similar to that which it originally occupied. If that was done, neither A nor B broke any Rule. If not, A would be disqualified for the hole under Rule 24-4. If B's raking prevented A from proceeding in accordance with Rule 24-4, B also should be disqualified for the hole under Rule 11-4 (the rule of equity) and the principles of other rules, e. g. Rule 17-1, Rule 33-1, or the proviso to Rule 33-1g and 40-3i.

Q. 2: Would the same Rule apply if the two players were opponents?

A. 2: Similar principles would apply in a singles match. If B's raking prevented A from proceeding in accordance with Rule 24-4, A could claim the hole under Rule 11-4 and the principles of other Rules. If not, A would be re-

quired to proceed in accordance with Rule 24-4.

Q. 3: What would be the ruling in individual stroke play?

A. 3: In individual stroke play, the same Rule 24-4 would apply with respect to A, but B as a fellow-competitor would incur no penalty regardless of the results of his raking.

Question by: ROBERT L. UTZ
Rancho Sante Fe, Calif.

USGA 62-29

R. 22-3a, 23 (Preamble)

PUTTING GREEN: BALL PLAYED FROM WRONG PLACE

Q: A lot of us mark each other's ball on the putting green, and that is how this incident happened. A marked B's ball and dropped it on the green about two feet away from the original spot. B was not aware of A's action; and when it was her turn to putt, B putted from where the ball was dropped. A did not realize what B was doing until after B's stroke was made, at which time A called B's attention to the fact that she had putted from the wrong place. B moved her ball to the original spot and putted over. She missed both times.

Is there a penalty?

Question by: NOBUO HAYASHI
Hilo, Hawaii

A: Lifting and marking a ball by any person at the request or with the consent of the owner is deemed to be the act of the owner; and the owner is subject to the appropriate penalty if a Rule is violated in the process. From the statement in the question indicating that the incident happened as a result of a practice of marking each other's ball on the putting green, it may be inferred that A's marking of B's ball was with B's tacit if not express consent.

Assuming the inference to be correct, in failing to replace her ball on the original spot, B breached Rule 22-3a, which provides: "On the putting

green of the hole being played, when a ball is lifted under a Rule or Local Rule or when another ball is to be played, it shall be placed on the spot where the ball lay, except when a Rule permits it to be placed elsewhere."

Penalty for breach of Rule 22-3a is: Match play—Loss of hole; Stroke play—two strokes. See also Rule 35-2a for match play and 35-3a for stroke play. In stroke play, the penalty would be added to the score made with the ball putted from the wrong place; the score made with the ball putted from the right place would not count.

This incident points up the inadvisability of players making a practice of marking balls for fellow-competitors or opponents. The preamble to Rule 23 provides in part: "A ball to be lifted under the Rules or Local Rules should be lifted by the owner or his partner or either of their caddies."

USGA 62-30

R. 22-3a, 40-3i

PUTTING GREEN: BALL PLAYED FROM WRONG PLACE — PUTTED FROM SPOT WHERE PARTNER'S BALL MARKED

Q: During four-ball match play A marks his ball and the ball of B on the putting green. In error, B replaces his ball on A's mark with the knowledge of C and D that he is replacing his ball in wrong location. B putts and is then told by C and D that he putted from the wrong location. What rule applies and what, if any, is the penalty?

Question by: ROBERT K. HOGARTY
Northfield, Ill.

A: Assuming A and B are partners, B should be disqualified for the hole for breach of Rule 22-3a. If it were found that the action had been taken so as to assist A's play, A should also be disqualified for the hole under Rule 40-3i.

The Rules do not require C and D to warn B that he was about to breach a Rule, but it would have been an act of good sportsmanship if they had done so.