

definite conclusions.”—*Leonard Macomber, Chicago District Golf Association.*

Some U. S. Golf Association Decisions on the Rules of Golf

QUESTION.—In a foursome in which I was playing, my ball stopped under a bench at one of the tees and was in such a position that it was impossible to play it. The members of my foursome said that I could lift and drop the ball not nearer the hole, as the bench would come under the class of objects which could be considered for upkeep of the course. On reaching the club house I asked several members and received a different opinion. In looking up Rule 11 I am frank to confess I am still in doubt, as it states that a ball can be lifted when touching “box or similar obstruction.”

ANSWER.—The situation you describe should be covered by a local rule, and it is the duty of your local committee to frame local rules to meet special contingencies on the golf course. In the absence of a local rule, the ball would have to be played from where it lay.

QUESTION.—According to Rule 15, in match play the player may take a practice swing within a club's length of the ball, but under Rule 34 it says that where no penalty for a breach of rule is stated the penalty shall be the loss of a hole. Then in Rule 15, stroke competition, it states, “The rules of golf, so far as they are not at variance with these special rules, shall apply to the stroke competition.” It has always seemed to me that there is an unwritten law that the penalty for playing a practice swing within a club's length of a ball in medal competition is one stroke, and yet I can not find any record of the same.

ANSWER.—The paragraph under Rule 15 is not a Rule of Golf. It is a ruling made by the United States Golf Association to advise players that they may take a practice swing or swings more than a club's length from the ball and displace turf without violating the provisions under Rules 10 and 25. If the provisions under these Rules are not violated, there is no penalty for taking a practice swing within the area designated as a club's length from the ball.

QUESTION.—In a foursome playing match play, a player off the putting green approximately 50 feet from the hole, chipped his ball against the flag stick, which was still in the cup, and holed out. There was no player or caddie near the pin when this stroke was made, nor had either the player's side or the opponent's requested this. The player who chipped the ball into the hole with the flag stick still in it, did this on his third stroke, two strokes lower than his opponent's. The ruling requested is to determine whether or not the side having the low ball won the hole or lost it due to sinking the ball with the flag stick still in the cup. We have received many conflicting opinions on this play.

ANSWER.—Rule 32 covers this point. There is no penalty for a player hitting the pin from any distance in match play, as the opponent's side always has the right to have the flag removed if it so desires.