



# 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.

### BALL NOT IN PLAY IS EQUIPMENT

Revised USGA 60-8  
D. 5, D. 7, R. 40-3b

Note: This supersedes Decision 60-8 dated March 11, 1960.

**Q:** The 9th hole at Ponte Vedra is a par 3 with an island green. A and B were partners against C and D in a four-ball match. A hit his ball directly across the water into the bank of the island and then watched it trickle down into the water. B drove onto the island about five feet short of the green but within 20 yards of the hole. C drove onto the green, about 10 feet from the hole. D drove into a trap—his ball does not enter into this discussion.

Where A's ball went into the water is not a lateral water hazard, and he should have played another ball from the tee side of the water. However, he made a remark to the effect that his ball did not make any difference any more, walked across the bridge, dropped his ball on the green side of the water and chipped up to within three feet of the hole. A's ball was then between B's ball and the pin, and slightly to the right of the line of play which B would normally take.

B chipped on the green. His ball hit A's ball solidly, ricocheted to the left

and stopped about two feet from the pin.

The question is whether or not B could then play his ball where it lay with or without a penalty. B sank the putt for a par 3 which was immediately questioned, as he halved the hole with C, who also got a par 3.

Question by: HARRY B. SCHNABEL,  
President

Ponte Vedra Men's Golf Association  
Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

**A:** C and D won the hole as the facts seem to indicate that A's ball was not in play under Definition 5 when it was struck by B's ball.

A's ball, not in play, should have been considered equipment under Definition 7. Therefore, B should have been disqualified for the hole under Rule 40-3b when his ball struck A's ball.

### BALL IN MOTION:

- (1) STOPPED INTENTIONALLY WITH CLUBHEAD
- (2) PENALTY FOR PLAYING

USGA 61-11  
R. 16, 25-1, 26 3a

**Q:** A competitor's ball was at rest on the side of a hill. As he was making a few practice swings near his ball, it started to roll downhill. He stopped the

ball with his clubhead. When he removed the club, the ball started to roll again. He stopped the ball again and, realizing that if he again removed the club the ball would continue to roll, took a fast swing and hit the ball which was again in motion before it was hit.

How many penalty strokes are involved?

Question by: LEON KAPLAN  
Waltham, Mass.

**A:** In stroke play, assuming the competitor's practice swings did not cause the ball to start moving, he should have been penalized a total of four strokes as follows: Two strokes under Rule 16 for purposely touching his ball (or under Rule 26-3a for stopping his ball), and two strokes under Rule 25-1 for playing a moving ball.

In the circumstances, the penalty for violation of Rule 16 (or Rule 26-3a) should not be applied twice.

In match play, the player would have lost the hole under Rule 16 for purposely touching his ball with his clubhead in his attempt to stop it from rolling.

#### **ARTIFICIAL AID: PENCIL MARKED TO ASSIST IN GAUGING DISTANCE CONSTITUTES**

USGA 60-48

R. 37-9

I should like a clarification of Rule 37-9 which prohibits the use of artificial devices for gauging distance or conditions affecting play. I am listing several examples and request that you indicate in each case whether its use is permissible or not.

**Q.1:** Regular eye glasses are clearly artificial devices and they are clearly of great aid to many golfers in gauging distance and conditions of play. Are they acceptable?

**A.1:** Yes.

**Q.2:** Is it acceptable to look at a distant green through a pair of standard field glasses which have no "range-finder" attachments or features?

**A.2:** Yes.

**Q.3:** Is it acceptable to drop a bit of grass to determine wind conditions?

**A.3:** Yes.

**Q.4:** Is it acceptable to use a handkerchief to determine wind conditions?

**A.4:** Yes.

**Q.5:** Many golfers let a golf club hang

vertically in front of them as an aid in judging the slope of a green. Is this practice acceptable?

**A.5:** Yes.

**Q.6:** Many golfers hold some object (such as a golf tee, a golf club, the finger of one's hand, a golf pencil, a scorecard or other piece of cardboard with pencil marks on it, or a coin), at arm's length and compare a dimension on it with the height of the flagstick, as a means of judging distance to the green. Is this practice permissible?

**A.6:** Yes. However, this answer assumes that the pencil marks on the scorecard or piece of cardboard are not special marks to indicate distances.

**Q.7:** After considerable experimentation, I have found that a golf pencil, with dots marked on it representing various distances to a remote flagstick, makes an accurate range-finder. The pencil is used by holding it at arm's length and sighting across it at the remote flagstick. Is a home-made device such as this permissible?

**A.7:** No. A pencil in itself is not an artificial aid for gauging distance, but when a pencil has been especially marked to assist in gauging distance, its use violates Rule 37-9.

**Q.8:** Assuming that play is not delayed, is it permissible to step off distances?

**A.8:** Yes.

Questions by: N. I. HALL  
Culver City, Calif.

#### **BALL: DEFLECTED BY OPPONENT'S BALL PLAYED SIMULTANEOUSLY**

USGA 60-45

Misc.

**Q:** In a four-ball match, A and B are opponents. Both are within 20 yards of the hole, but neither is on the green. A is slightly away. A plays his shot and B does the same thing a fraction of a second later. Both balls bounce one time and collide in mid-air. Both balls come to rest on the green.

What is the proper ruling for such an occurrence?

Question by: MISS NAOMI A. VENABLE  
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

**A:** As such incidents rarely occur, it has not been found necessary to frame a Rule on the subject. There is no penalty, and the balls should be played from where they came to rest.

**BUNKER:  
SAND SPILLING OVER BOUNDARY**

USGA 60-46  
D. 14, R. 17-1

**Q:** Through constant use and improper care, the outline of a bunker which was clearly defined at the beginning of the season is now very ragged with sand "spilling over" the intended outline. The top of the bunker which was grass is now completely covered with sand with only part of the overhanging grass still showing. All the sand is still in "one piece" with grass "bangs" hanging from the edge of the overhanging lip of the bunker. Is this sand which was spilled over the original outline still part of the bunker?

Question by: LEON KAPLAN  
Waltham, Mass.

**A:** No, unless the local committee determines otherwise—see Definition 14d for the Committee's duty here.

A bunker under Definition 14a is "an area of bare ground, often a depression, which is usually covered with sand. Grass-covered ground bordering or within a 'bunker' is not part of the hazard."

However, when playing from sand outside a bunker, a player must not violate Rule 17-1, which provides in part: "Irregularities of surface which could in any way affect a player's lie shall not be removed or pressed down by the player." A note to this Rule provides that irregularities of surface include sand.

**BALL UNFIT FOR PLAY: STATUS  
WHEN DAMAGE OCCURRED ON  
PREVIOUS HOLE**

USGA 60-47  
R. 28

**Q:** In an extra-hole match, B had a short putt to defeat A. A's ball had been cut during play of a previous hole, but he had continued playing with it. However, as he was now confronted with a short putt to win the match, he wanted to be sure not to miss it because of a damaged ball. He therefore informed A of his intention, and replaced the ball with a new one under Rule 28. He holed the putt to win the match. A, before either player left the green, then claimed the match, contending that B had no right to replace his ball because it had not been damaged during the play of that particular hole.

The Committee, after first determining that B had not declared the same ball, in the same condition, unfit for play on a previous hole, ruled that B was within his rights to replace the damaged ball. Was the Committee correct?

Question by: CHARLES P. STEVENSON  
Buffalo, N. Y.

**A:** No. Under Rule 28, B could have replaced the ball only if it had become unfit for play during the play of that particular hole.

**BALL LIFTED: RELATIVE POSITIONS  
OF MARKINGS MAY BE CHANGED  
IN REPLACEMENT**

Revised USGA 60-54  
R. 9-1, 22-3a

Note: This supersedes Decision 60-54 dated Nov. 28, 1960.

**Q.1:** Is a player who has teed off with a badly cut ball permitted to turn the ball around after he has reached the putting surface so that the cut portion of the ball is facing away from the putter blade?

**A.1:** Yes, provided he had the right to lift the ball (as, for example, under Rule 35-1d). Rule 22-3a requires that a ball lifted on the putting green be replaced on the spot from which it was lifted. It would be almost impossible to replace it without turning it to some extent, and the Rule does not require that the ball's markings be placed in the same relative positions to the line of putt as in the original lie.

**Q.2:** On the putting green, when a player has picked his ball up to clean it, is he permitted to replace the ball in the same spot and rotate the ball so that the trademark is aimed along the intended line of putt?

**A.2:** Yes. See Answer 1 above.

**CLUB: PARTNER MAY NOT ALIGN  
PLAYER'S BEFORE STROKE**

**Q.3:** Is a player's partner permitted to line up the player's putter so that it is perpendicular to the line of putt?

**A.3:** No. The Rules do not specifically cover the question, but the player's partner is prohibited from giving such assistance by the spirit of the Rules generally and analogy to the provisions of particular Rules, such as Rule 9-1.

Questions by: J. W. ALTMAN  
Chicago, Ill.