



NEWSLETTER NO 1

Greetings all,

This is the first of many newsletters that we will send out to our members. We hope that each will contain interesting ideas and help in understanding the rules of golf.

This one contains an interesting decision at Sondheim Cup. It also contains some ideas on interpretations of damaged club and a ball lost in the bunker rules.

New Referees

We welcome to our refereeing ranks two new referees: Chris Zanchetta and Hyeza Kim. We hope you enjoy your refereeing duties. Remember that as referees we are always confronted with new situations and need to think through these carefully before making any decision. Most times we referee in pairs, so that means if there is a tricky or unusual situation that we are not sure of, we can always ask the other referee for advice. This happens at all levels even with very experienced referees at such things as National Opens. There are also some Buddy referees going through training at the moment. They are Lorrain Woodfield, Chris Marple and Charlie Su. We are always looking to have new referees into our group to share the duties around, so if there are any others who are interested, then make contact with one of us.

Sondheim Cup decision was interesting.

Midway through the afternoon, a ruling that put a cloud over the event and could potentially affect the outcome. Nelly Korda of Team USA took an eagle putt on the par-5 13th that swung right-to-left and stopped so close to the hole that it was not immediately clear if part of the ball was overhanging the cup. Europe's Madelene Sagstrom walked up to the ball, relatively quickly, scooped it up and tossed it back to Korda, who was still sprawled on the green with emotion thinking the putt was going to go in. The match rules official, Missy Jones, said that she thought a rules violation may have occurred.

Under the Rules of Golf, "13.3 Ball Overhanging Hole" reads that if a ball is overhanging a hole, the player is allowed a reasonable time to reach the hole and an additional 10 seconds before the ball must be putted into the hole. Also according to the rules, in match play, if an opponent moves an overhanging ball prior before the necessary time, the putt is deemed to be holed. They determined that at least part of the ball was overhanging the hole and Korda's eagle putt was therefore good.

Clubs damaged :Explanation of the rule

Players can only start any round with clubs that conform to the Equipment Rules. A club must conform not only when new, but also when it has been deliberately or accidentally changed in any way. However, if the performance characteristics of your conforming club change because of wear through normal use, it is still deemed to be conforming, and can continue to be used. Here are some examples of the application of the rules governing this issue:

Examples of permissible wear and tear that do not change conformity, include:

Material inside a clubhead that has broken loose and may rattle when moved

- A wear mark on the grip
- Worn grooves
- A clubface depression formed through repeated use

In the recent BMW Champs on the PGA tour at Wentworth, Kiradech Aphibarnrat, took a shot out of a drain and got a stone stuck in the clubface. He was unable to remove it, but was not penalised for continuing to use that club

- No matter what the damage, or cause of damage, a damaged club is treated as conforming for the rest of the round, and may be used without penalty
- Any such damage can be repaired during the round, if no delay, but not damage existing before the round.
- If a stroke is made with a non-conforming club, the player will not be DQ'd if the stroke played, is not counted e.g. hitting a provisional ball that never becomes the ball in play
- You can replace lead tape that has fallen off
- You can tighten adjustable mechanisms that come loose, but not to a new setting

Ball lost in bunker:

In the recent North Island Under 19 Champs, a referee was asked to give a ruling where a ball was apparently lost in a bunker. All the players in the group agreed where the ball hit the sand, but it could not be found. They wanted to know whether it was "lost", were not sure they could move the sand in the search, and were worried about moving the ball during the search. While they were discussing it, the ball was then found, as some sand had been moved, leaving the ball partly uncovered. The explanations given were:

- 1) Although the ball was now found, they all agreed that they had looked longer than 3 minutes, so the ball was now deemed lost
- 2) They would have been allowed to move the sand, by hand, club or even rake while doing the search, as this was not deemed testing. There is no penalty for accidentally moving the ball during a search, but it would need to then be replaced.
- 3) If the buried ball is found in time, the original lie must be recreated and the ball replaced in that lie. In recreating the lie, the player could have left a small part of the ball visible, if it had originally been covered. If the original lie is not recreated before the next stroke, the player will have played from a wrong place.

Rules Interpretations: Also attached to this newsletter is the latest interpretations of the rules which is updated twice a year. This is to give guidance on how specific areas of the rules are to be interpreted. These are helpful to all referees and the updates come out in response to questions from golfers associations. For example a new situation might occur in a club game and a response is requested from Canterbury golf. If they cannot work out the decision, they would pass it on to NZ Golf. They in turn may pass it on to R & A who may put out the response in the interpretations.

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