

AMENDMENTS TO 2012-2013 EDITION

GENERAL

The R&A and USGA have agreed a two-year revision cycle for the “Decisions on the Rules of Golf.” Therefore, no existing Decisions will be revised or withdrawn and no new Decisions will be added to the book until the next edition is published in 2016. The Rules of Golf will not be amended until 2016.

NEW DECISIONS

- 14-3/18 Weather Information Accessed on Multi-Functional Device
- 18/4 Television Evidence Shows Ball at Rest Changed Position But by Amount Not Reasonably Discernible to Naked Eye
- 18-2b/1 Ball Moves After Address; Movement May Have Been Due to the Effects of Gravity

REVISED DECISIONS

- I-1/1 Two Balls in Play Simultaneously at Different Holes
Answer expanded to clarify that the players must be aware that they are agreeing to breach a Rule to be in breach of Rule I-3.
- I-3/7 Agreement That Side Losing After 18 Holes of 36-Hole Match Will Concede Match
Answer expanded to clarify that the players must be aware that they are agreeing to breach a Rule to be in breach of Rule I-3.
- I-4/2 Ball Adhering to Face of Club After Stroke
Reference to withdrawn Decision 14-4/1 deleted.
- 2-1/1.5 Players Agree to Consider Hole Halved During Play of Hole
Answer expanded to clarify that the players must be aware that they are agreeing to breach a Rule to be in breach of Rule I-3.
- 2-1/4 Two Holes Purposefully Omitted in Match
Answer expanded to clarify that the players must be aware that they are agreeing to breach a Rule to be in breach of Rule I-3.
- 4-1/1 Groove and Punch Mark Specifications Effective 1 January 2010 Including Condition of Competition
Expanded to clarify that this condition of competition may be adopted more widely after 1 January 2014, but it is still recommended only for competitions involving expert players.
- 5-3/4 Ball Breaks into Pieces as a Result of Striking Cart Path
Revised to refer simply to a “cart path” as opposed to a “paved cart path.”

- 6-2b/4** **Competitors in Foursome Competition Fail to Record Individual Handicaps on Score Card**
Revised to clarify that the competitors were required to record their individual handicaps on the score card.
- 6-6b/2** **Signed Score Card Other Than in Space Provided and Use of Initials**
Expanded to cover case where signatures are not in the space provided.
- 6-6b/6** **Marker Disappears with Competitor's Score Card**
Expanded to clarify that it is only in exceptional cases where a competitor's score card will be accepted without his marker's signature.
- 11-2/1** **Status of Tee-Markers After First Stroke**
Amended to clarify that the tee-markers are fixed before making the first stroke.
- 12-1/4** **Player Touches Ground in Hazard When Searching for Ball Believed to Be Covered by Loose Impediments in Hazard**
Amended for clarity.
- 13-4/16** **Removal of Loose Impediment in Water Hazard Covering Wrong Ball**
Amended to provide that it is known or virtually certain that the player's ball is in the water hazard.
- 14-1/2** **Striking Ball with Billiard-Type Motion**
Expanded to provide the penalty and to clarify that, in stroke play, the stroke counts.
- 14-3/4** **Use of Compass During Round**
Answer amended to permit the use of a compass.
- 16/4** **Hole-Liner Not Sunk Deep Enough**
Expanded to clarify that the hole-liner was sunk below the putting green surface.
- 16-1c/2** **Ball Mark in Position to Assist Opponent**
Amended for clarity and for consistency with Decision 23-1/10.
- 17/4** **Adjustment of Flagstick; Player's Rights**
Expanded for clarity.
- 18-2a/10** **Dropped Ball Lifted and Re-Dropped When It Should Have Been Played as It Lay; Ball Then Lifted Again and Placed**
Amended to a ground under repair example for clarity relating to the applicable penalty.
- 18-2a/21** **Player Accidentally Moves Own Ball in Playing Wrong Ball**
Amended for clarity.
- 18-2a/28** **Ball Dislodged from Tree; Circumstances in Which Player Penalised**
Amended to refer to serious breach.

- 18-2b/11** **Ball Moved by Another Agency After Address**
Amended in view of the introduction of Decision 18-2b/1.
- 18-3b/1** **Player's Ball Moved Accidentally by Opponent in Playing His Own Ball**
Amended for clarity.
- 20-1/7** **Ball-Marker Moved by Opponent's Caddie Accidentally**
Amended to make the facts more generic.
- 20-1/13** **Ball Accidentally Kicked by Player Asked to Lift It Due to Interference**
Reference to Rule 20-1 added.
- 20-3a/1** **Ball Moved in Removing Ball-Marker After Replacing Ball**
Amended to clarify that the movement of the ball was directly attributable to the act of replacing it.
- 20-7c/1** **Ball Replaced at Wrong Place on Putting Green and Holed**
Reference to a serious breach added.
- 23/5** **Ant Hill**
Expanded for clarity.
- 23/11** **Loose Soil from Cast of Hole Made by Burrowing Animal**
Expanded for clarity.
- 23/13** **Lump of Earth**
Amended for clarity.
- 23-1/5** **Removal of Insect on Ball**
Expanded to include the provisions of Decision 23-1/5.5.
- 23-1/6.5** **Removal of Loose Impediments from Spot Where Ball to Be Placed**
Reference to through the green added for clarification.
- 24/1** **Steps Attached to Boundary Fence**
Amended for clarification.
- 24/7** **Stone Serving as Part of Drain in Bunker**
Amended for clarification.
- 25-2/0.5** **When Ball Embedded in Ground**
Text amended and diagrams added for clarity.
- 26-1/6** **Ball Played Back into Water Hazard from Putting Green Side of Hazard**
Amended for clarity.
- 26-1/17** **Point Where Ball Last Crossed Margin of Lateral Water Hazard Determined and Ball Dropped and Played; Point Then Proves to Be Wrong Point**
Question expanded for clarity.

- 27/9** **Player Searches for Lost Ball After Putting Another Ball into Play**
Revised to confirm that the player must not play the ball if he finds it.
- 27-2a/1.5** **Meaning of “Goes Forward to Search”**
Revised to allow the player to go forward a short distance to determine whether it would save time to play a provisional ball.
- 27-2b/10** **Provisional Ball Lifted Subsequently Becomes Ball in Play; Competitor Then Plays From Wrong Place**
Question expanded for clarity.
- 29-1/9** **Both Player and Partner Drive at Same Tee in Foursome Play**
Part (a) of the Answer revised for clarity.
- 30/2.5** **Player Touches Putting Green in Pointing Out Line for Putting for Partner and Touches Own Line of Putt**
Answer amended to provide that A is disqualified for the hole.
- 30-3f/6** **Player Plays Away from Hole to Assist Partner**
Amended for clarity.
- 30-3f/11** **Request to Lift Ball That Might Assist Partner Not Honoured**
Amended so that A is disqualified for the hole regardless of the outcome of his stroke.
- 33-1/2** **Number of Holes of Stroke Play Competition Reduced During the Competition**
Amended to provide that the second choice in the Answer (as well as the third and fourth choices) is undesirable.
- 33-2a/7** **Deeming Body of Water as Both Water Hazard and Lateral Water Hazard**
Amended for clarity.
- 33-6/3** **Determining Winner and Positions in Stroke Play Play-Off**
Amended for clarity.
- 33-7/4.5** **Competitor Unaware of Penalty Returns Wrong Score; Whether Waiving or Modifying Disqualification Penalty Justified**
Amended in view of the introduction of Decision 18/4.
- 33-8/4** **Local Rule for Events in Which Motorised Golf Carts Permitted**
Recommended Local Rule amended to avoid repetition of Definition of Equipment.
- 33-8/8** **Local Rule Providing Relief from Tree Roots**
Amended to provide that a Committee would be authorised to make a Local Rule providing relief under Rule 25-1 for interference from exposed tree roots when a ball lies on a closely-mown area.
- 33-8/9** **Local Rule Providing Relief from Damage to Bunkers Caused by Children**
Amended to provide that a Committee may declare damage to a bunker that was unusual to be ground under repair.

- 33-8/15 Local Rule Providing Relief from Interference by Immovable Water Hazard Stake for Ball Lying in Water Hazard
Answer expanded for clarification.
- 33-8/16 Local Rule Deeming All Stakes on Course to Be Immovable Obstructions
Expanded to provide that such a Local Rule is not recommended.
- 33-8/28 Local Rule Permitting Re-Dropping or Placing When Dropped Ball Embeds in Bunker
Question amended for clarity.
- 34-1b/1.5 Competitor Correctly Advised by Fellow-Competitor That He Incurred a Penalty Disagrees with Fellow-Competitor and Fails to Include Penalty in His Score; Committee Advised of Incident After Competition Had Closed
Answer expanded to confirm the outcome in such a case.
- 34-1b/2 Competitor's Failure to Sign Score Card Discovered After Competition Closed
Reference to Exception (iv) to Rule 34-1b added in the Answer.
- 34-1b/4 Competitor Changes Weight of Club During Round; Breach Discovered After Competition Closed
Reference to Exception (iv) to Rule 34-1b added in the Answer.
- 34-1b/5 Disqualification Penalty Wrongly Applied to Winner of Event; Error Discovered After Two Other Competitors Play Off for First Place
Answer amended to confirm the outcome in such a case.
- 34-2/3 Referee Warning Player About to Breach Rule
Amended for consistency with the Definition of "Referee."

RE-NUMBERED DECISIONS

- 10-1c/3 Players Invites Opponent to Play First to Save Time (Formerly 10-1a/3)
Revised to clarify that the circumstances described may occur anywhere on the course.

DECISIONS TO BE WITHDRAWN

- 1-3/3 Player and Opponent or Fellow-Competitor Agree to Repair Spike Marks on One Another's Line of Putt
- 2-4/10 Player Concedes Hole After Which Opponent Plays Wrong Ball
- 7-2/2 Putting on Fairway While Waiting to Play to Green
- 8-1/3 Asking If Distance Marker Accurate
- 8-1/23 Player's Team Mate in Gallery Hits Ball to Green to Show Player Whether Green Will Hold

- 11-5/5 Ball Played from Teeing Ground of Hole to Be Played Later in Round Lifted; Ball Replaced at Spot from Which Lifted and Played Out When That Hole Subsequently Reached
- 13-2/34 Mopping Up Casual Water on Line of Play
- 13-4/36 Smoothing Irregularities in Bunker After Stroke But Before Ball Extricated
- 14-4/1 Ball Falls on Club Face After Stroke and Sticks to Mud Thereon
- 16-2/1 Ball Overhanging Hole Falls into Hole After Player Waits 40 Seconds
- 17-1/7 Removed Flagstick Placed on Ground Subsequently Lifted
- 18-1/10 Ball at Rest Kicked Away from Hole by Spectator Attending Flagstick
- 18-2b/1 Ball Moves After Stance Taken But Before Address
(Note: Replaced by New Decision)
- 18-2b/5.7 When Player Who Putts "Side-Saddle" Has Addressed Ball
- 18-4/2 Competitor's Ball Knocked Out of Bunker by Fellow-Competitor's Stroke at Own Ball
- 19-3/2 Dropped Ball Accidentally Deflected by Opponent or His Caddie
- 20-2a/1 Penalty When Ball Dropped in Other Than Prescribed Manner
- 23/6 Dead Land Crab
- 23-1/5.5 Status of Insect on Ball in Bunker
- 24/11 Wooden Planks
- 25-1b/18 Crawfish Mound Interferes with Stance or Swing
- 30/3 Determination of Honour in Four-Ball Match in Which Points Awarded for Both Better-Ball and Aggregate Scores
- 33/6 Map of Putting Green Indicating Hole Position Displayed at Tee
- 33-8/3 Local Rule Allowing Play of Second Ball in Match Play

NEW DECISIONS

14-3/18

Weather Information Accessed on Multi-Functional Device

Q. During a stipulated round, may a player access local weather information (e.g. wind, temperature, humidity) through an application or internet browser on a multi-functional device?

A. Yes. The prohibition in Rule 14-3 is only applicable to the specific act of gauging or measuring conditions that might affect a player's play (e.g. through use of an anemometer or a thermometer). When accessing weather reports provided by a weather station through an application or internet browser, the player is not actively measuring or gauging the conditions. (New)

18/4

Television Evidence Shows Ball at Rest Changed Position But by Amount Not Reasonably Discernible to Naked Eye

Q. A player addresses his ball. He observes a slight motion of the ball but believes that it has only oscillated and has not left its original position. He therefore plays the ball as it lies. Later, the Committee becomes aware from television evidence that the ball had in fact left its position and come to rest in another place, although that change of position was such that it was not reasonably discernible to the naked eye at the time of the incident. What is the ruling?

A. The ball is deemed not to have moved and therefore there is no penalty under Rule 18-2b. The Definition of "Moved" – when a ball "leaves its position and comes to rest in any other place" – does not contemplate movements of the ball that are only discernible through the use of high definition television or any other form of sophisticated technology.

When determining whether or not his ball at rest has moved, a player must make that judgment based on all the information readily available to him at the time, so that he can determine whether the ball must be replaced under Rule 18-2b or another applicable Rule. When the player's ball has left its original position and come to rest in another place by an amount that was not reasonably discernible to the naked eye at the time, a player's determination that the ball has not moved will be deemed to be conclusive, even if that determination is later shown to be incorrect through the use of sophisticated technology.

On the other hand, if the Committee determines, based on all of the evidence it has available, that the ball changed its position by an amount that was reasonably discernible to the naked eye at the time, the ball is deemed to have moved. As the player did not replace the ball, he incurs a penalty under the applicable Rule and Rule 20-7c for playing from a wrong place.

These principles apply to any review of technological evidence by the Committee, whether before the player makes his next stroke or any time thereafter. These principles also apply in a situation in which the player made no determination whether or not his ball at rest moved (e.g. because he had walked away from his ball after addressing it, was not looking at his ball, or otherwise did not observe any motion of the ball or have any reason to believe that his ball might have moved).

Before determining whether his ball has moved, it is advisable for the player to obtain information from nearby witnesses to the incident and to seek guidance from a referee if one is immediately available. (New)

18-2b/I

Ball Moves After Address; Movement May Have Been Due to the Effects of Gravity

Q. A player addressed his ball and it subsequently moved. It is uncertain what caused the ball to move as the conditions at the time were calm, there were no outside agencies present and the player did nothing obvious to cause the ball to move. The player believed that, as he did not cause his ball to move, it must have moved as a result of the effects of gravity and, therefore, the Exception to Rule 18-2b should apply. What is the ruling?

A. The player incurs a penalty of one stroke under Rule 18-2b and the ball must be replaced.

The effects of gravity do not satisfy the Exception to Rule 18-2b. The Exception only applies when it is known or virtually certain that the player did not cause his ball to move. In order to meet this standard, it must be known or virtually certain that some other observable factor (e.g. wind, water or an outside agency) caused the ball to move. Otherwise, the player is deemed to have caused the movement and Rule 18-2b applies. (New)

REVISED DECISIONS

I-1/1

Two Balls in Play Simultaneously at Different Holes

Q. Two players on the 8th hole play their approach shots to the 8th green. They agree to tee off at the 9th hole and then putt out on the 8th green. This is to avoid having to walk back up a hill to the 9th tee and to save time. What is the ruling?

A. In match play, the players are disqualified under Rule 1-3 for excluding the operation of Rule 2-1 by failing to play the stipulated round, provided the players knew that this was a breach of the Rules. If they did not know that their action was a breach of the Rules, both holes stand as played.

In stroke play, the competitors are disqualified under Rule 3-2 for failing to hole out on the 8th hole before making a stroke from the 9th tee.

(Revised)

I-3/7

Agreement That Side Losing After 18 Holes of 36-Hole Match Will Concede Match

Q. Prior to a 36-hole match, the players agree that they will play only 18 holes and whoever is behind at that point will concede the match, despite being aware that this is a breach of the conditions of competition. Is this permissible?

A. No. Both players should be disqualified under Rule 1-3 for agreeing to exclude the operation of a condition of the competition (Rule 33-1). If the players were not aware that their action was a breach of the conditions of competition, the concession would stand. (Revised)

I-4/2

Ball Adhering to Face of Club After Stroke

Q. A player plays a stroke from wet sand or soil and the ball adheres to the face of the club. What is the ruling?

A. In equity (Rule 1-4), the ball should be dropped, without penalty, as near as possible to the spot where the ball was when the ball stuck to it. (Revised)

2-I/1.5

Players Agree to Consider Hole Halved During Play of Hole

Q. In a match, a player and his opponent play their second shots on a par 5 hole. Unexpectedly, neither ball can be found. Rather than proceeding under Rule 27-I, both players agree to a half. Is this permitted?

A. Yes. An agreement to halve a hole being played is permissible.

However, if the players agree to consider a hole halved without either player making a stroke, they should be disqualified under Rule I-3 for agreeing to exclude the operation of Rule 2-I by failing to play the stipulated round, provided the players knew that this was a breach of the Rules.

(Revised)

2-I/4

Two Holes Purposely Omitted in Match

Q. Without the authority of the Committee, the players in a match agreed to omit two holes, i.e. agreed to settle the match over 16 holes. Is this permitted?

A. No. The players are disqualified under Rule I-3 for excluding the operation of Rule 2-I by failing to play the stipulated round, provided the players knew that this was a breach of the Rules. If they did not know that their action was a breach of the Rules, the match stands as played. (Revised)

4-I/1

Groove and Punch Mark Specifications Effective 1 January 2010 Including Condition of Competition

All new models of clubs manufactured on or after 1 January 2010 must conform to the groove and punch mark specifications described in Appendix II, 5c.

A Committee that wishes to limit players to clubs manufactured with grooves and/or punch marks that conform to all aspects of the Rules of Golf, including those that are effective from 1 January 2010, may adopt the condition of competition detailed below. While this condition of competition may be adopted for any competition, it is recommended only for competitions involving expert players (e.g. professional golf or the highest level of amateur golf).

"The player's clubs must conform to the groove and punch mark specifications in the Rules of Golf that are effective from 1 January 2010.

***PENALTY FOR CARRYING, BUT NOT MAKING STROKE WITH, CLUB OR CLUBS IN BREACH OF CONDITION:**

Match play – At the conclusion of the hole at which the breach is discovered, the state of the match is adjusted by deducting one hole for each hole at which a breach occurred; maximum deduction per round – Two holes.

Stroke play – Two strokes for each hole at which any breach occurred; maximum penalty per round – Four strokes.

Match play or stroke play – If a breach is discovered between the play of two holes, it is deemed to have been discovered during play of the next hole, and the penalty must be applied accordingly.

Bogey and par competitions – See Note I to Rule 32-1a.

Stableford competitions – See Note I to Rule 32-1b.

*Any club or clubs carried in breach of this condition must be declared out of play by the player to his opponent in match play or his marker or a fellow-competitor in stroke play immediately upon discovery that a breach has occurred. If the player fails to do so, he is disqualified.

PENALTY FOR MAKING STROKE WITH CLUB IN BREACH OF CONDITION:

Disqualification. (Revised)

5-3/4

Ball Breaks into Pieces as a Result of Striking Cart Path

Q. A player makes a stroke and the ball strikes a cart path. As a result of the impact with the cart path, the ball breaks into pieces. Should the ball be considered to have broken into pieces "as a result of a stroke" in which case the player must replay the stroke without penalty under the last paragraph of Rule 5-3?

A. Yes. (Revised)

6-2b/4

Competitors in Foursome Competition Fail to Record Individual Handicaps on Score Card

Q. In a foursome stroke play competition, partners A and B correctly calculated their combined handicap allowance and recorded it on their score card, rather than their individual handicaps. A and B were disqualified. Was the ruling correct?

A. Yes. In any round of a handicap stroke play competition, it is the responsibility of the competitor to ensure that his handicap is recorded on his score card before it is returned to the Committee (Rule 6-2b).

The word “competitor” includes his partner in a stroke play foursome competition – see Definition of “Competitor.” Therefore, A and B were required to record their individual handicaps on the score card. As only the combined handicap allowance was recorded, A and B were correctly disqualified. (Revised)

6-6b/2

Signing Score Card Other Than in Space Provided and Use of Initials

Q. Rule 6-6b requires a competitor to sign the score card himself and ensure that his marker has signed the score card. May a competitor or marker sign the competitor’s score card in a place other than the space provided, and may initials be used in place of a signature?

A. In each case yes, provided it is clear from all the evidence that the competitor and marker are doing so for the purpose of verifying the competitor’s scores for all of the holes.

Marks or initials on the score card that were placed for any other purpose (e.g. to verify an alteration) do not meet the requirements of Rule 6-6b. (Revised)

6-6b/6

Marker Disappears with Competitor’s Score Card

Q. In a stroke play event, a competitor’s marker leaves the course at the end of the round and takes the competitor’s score card with him. What should the Committee do?

A. The Committee should make every reasonable effort to contact the marker. If unsuccessful, the Committee should accept verification of the scores for each hole by someone else who witnessed the round (e.g. the marker’s caddie or the competitor’s caddie) or, if no one else is available, by

the competitor himself. Normally, a competitor who does not have proper verification of his score card is disqualified. However, in this exceptional case where actions beyond the competitor's control resulted in the return of his score card without his marker's signature, there is no penalty. (Revised)

10-1c/3

Player Invites Opponent to Play First to Save Time

Q. In match play, it is A's turn to play but he realises that he has accidentally left a club on the previous hole. He decides to return to retrieve the club, and suggests that his opponent B play first to save time. If B then plays out of turn as suggested, have the players agreed to waive the Rules in breach of Rule 1-3?

A. No. When done solely for the purpose of saving time, a player whose turn it is to play may invite his opponent to play first. The opponent is under no obligation to accept the offer to play first, but if he does so, the player has waived his right under Rule 10-1c to recall the stroke played out of turn. (Revised – Formerly 10-1a/3)

11-2/1

Status of Tee-Markers After First Stroke

Q. Under Rule 11-2, tee-markers are deemed to be fixed before making the first stroke with any ball from the teeing ground. Are tee-markers movable obstructions thereafter?

A. Yes. (Revised)

12-1/4

Player Touches Ground in Hazard When Searching for Ball Believed to Be Covered by Loose Impediments in Hazard

Q. A player's ball is believed to be in a bunker covered by leaves. The player probes for the ball with a club which touches the ground in the bunker. What is the ruling?

A. There is no penalty. Rule 12-1 permits a player to touch or move loose impediments in a hazard in order to find a ball. A player is also permitted to touch the ground in the hazard while probing in the loose impediments with a club for the purpose of finding the ball. Such permission overrides any prohibitions in Rule 13-4. (Revised)

13-4/16

Removal of Loose Impediment in Water Hazard Covering Wrong Ball

Q. It is known or virtually certain that a player's ball is in a water hazard. He finds a ball in the hazard and, in order to identify the ball, removes a loose impediment partially covering it. He discovers that the ball is not his ball. He searches for his ball but does not find it. He proceeds under Rule 26-1. Is the player subject to penalty under Rule 13-4 for removing the loose impediment?

A. No. Rule 12-1b permits the player to touch or remove loose impediments in a hazard in order to find or identify his ball that is believed to be covered by loose impediments. (Revised)

14-1/2

Striking Ball with Billiard-Type Motion

Q. A player holed a short putt by squatting behind the ball (but not on an extension of the line of putt behind the ball) and striking the ball with the bottom of the clubhead, using a motion similar to that used in playing a shot in billiards or shuffleboard. Was the player in breach of Rule 14-1?

A. Yes. Such a manner of moving the ball constitutes a push. In match play, the player loses the hole. In stroke play, the stroke counts and the player incurs a penalty of two strokes. (Revised)

14-3/4

Use of Compass During Round

Q. A player uses a compass during a stipulated round to help determine the direction of the wind or the direction of the grain in the greens. Is the player in breach of Rule 14-3?

A. No. A compass only provides directional information and does not gauge or measure variable conditions or assist the player in his play. (Revised)

16/4

Hole-Liner Not Sunk Deep Enough

Q. Players discover that a hole-liner, although sunk below the putting green surface, is not sunk at least one-inch below the surface as prescribed in the Definition of "Hole." What should they do?

A. The players should call the matter to the attention of a member of the

Committee if one is present. If feasible, the member of the Committee should attempt to have the fault corrected.

However, the players must continue play in the meantime, because correction might not be possible and, if possible, might take considerable time. (Revised)

16-1c/2

Ball Mark in Position to Assist Opponent

Q. A and B are playing a match. At a par-3 hole, both are on the green with their tee shots. A's ball comes to rest four feet from the hole. B's ball is fifteen feet from the hole. Upon reaching the green, A prepares to repair his ball mark. B tells A not to do so until he (B) has putted because A's ball mark is so situated that B's ball might be deflected into the hole by it. A objects, stating that he wishes to repair his ball mark immediately. May A do so?

A. No, if A repairs the ball mark, he loses the hole (see Decision 2/3) for intentionally denying B's right to have the ball mark left in position. Although A is permitted to repair the ball mark under Rule 16-1c, and accordingly would not be in breach of Rule 1-2 for doing so (see Exception I to Rule 1-2), he must comply with B's request not to repair the ball mark. (Revised)

17/4

Adjustment of Flagstick; Player's Rights

Q. A player playing from off the putting green and wishing to leave the flagstick in the hole may find that the flagstick is leaning towards his ball (a disadvantage) or away from his ball (an advantage). What are the player's rights in such a situation?

A. As the player is entitled to play the course as he finds it, the flagstick may be left as it is. Alternatively, the flagstick may be centred in the hole, as contemplated by the Definition of "Flagstick".

The flagstick may not be intentionally adjusted to a more favourable position than centred. To do so would infringe Rule 1-2 (Exerting Influence on Movement of Ball or Altering Physical Conditions).

An opponent or fellow-competitor who centres the flagstick incurs no penalty, but the player may have it restored to its original position. (Revised)

18-2a/10

Dropped Ball Lifted and Re-Dropped When It Should Have Been Played as It Lay; Ball Then Lifted Again and Placed

Q. In stroke play, a competitor whose ball was in ground under repair through the green elected to take relief under Rule 25-1b(i). When the ball

was dropped, it rolled towards the hole but came to rest not more than two club-lengths from where it first struck the ground and not nearer the hole than the nearest point of relief.

Incorrectly believing that Rule 20-2c applied, the competitor lifted the ball and re-dropped it, at which time the ball rolled towards the hole as before. The competitor again lifted the ball, placed it where it first struck the ground when re-dropped and made his next stroke. Is the competitor penalised two strokes or four strokes?

A. Two strokes. The ball when first dropped was in play – see Rule 20-4. The competitor was in breach of Rule 18-2a when he lifted it. Because the competitor failed to replace his ball at the spot at which it came to rest when first dropped, he incurred a total penalty of two strokes – see penalty statement under Rule 18. (Revised)

18-2a/21

Player Accidentally Moves Own Ball in Playing Wrong Ball

Q. In stroke play, a player plays a wrong ball from a bunker. In making the stroke, his club accidentally moves another ball nearby, which was not visible before he played and, in fact, turns out to be his ball. The player incurs a two-stroke penalty under Rule 15-3b for playing a wrong ball. Does he also incur a penalty under Rule 18-2a for accidentally moving his ball in play?

A. No. As the player's ball was not visible before he made a stroke at the wrong ball, it was not reasonably foreseeable that his ball could be moved by that stroke; therefore, he is not penalised for moving his ball. He must replace his ball in play, and if necessary, the lie must be re-created. If the ball is not replaced correctly before he makes his next stroke, the player incurs a penalty of two strokes. As the failure to replace the ball is considered a separate act from playing the wrong ball, the player incurs a total penalty of four strokes. (Revised)

18-2a/28

Ball Dislodged from Tree; Circumstances in Which Player Penalised

Q. A player could not find his ball. Believing the ball might be lodged in a tree, he shook the tree and his ball fell to the ground. He played the ball from where it came to rest. What is the ruling?

A. The player incurred one penalty stroke under Rule 18-2a for moving his ball. He should have replaced the ball. Since he did not do so, in match play he lost the hole. In stroke play, he incurred a total penalty of two strokes, unless it was a serious breach (see Rule 18 penalty statement and Rule 20-7c). (Revised)

18-2b/11

Ball Moved by Another Agency After Address

Q. After a player has addressed his ball in play, some other agency (e.g. a ball played by another player) moves the player's ball. Is the player subject to penalty under Rule 18-2b?

A. No. As it is known or virtually certain that the player did not cause the ball to move, Rule 18-2b does not apply – see Exception under Rule 18-2b. In such a case where an agency directly causes a ball to move, the Rule applicable to that agency (e.g. Rule 18-1, 18-2a, 18-3, 18-4 or 18-5) applies. (Revised)

18-3b/1

Player's Ball Moved Accidentally by Opponent in Playing His Own Ball

Q. In singles match play, A's ball is lying close to B's ball. It is B's turn to play. Although B has the right under Rule 22-2 to require A to mark the position of and lift his ball, he fails to do so. In making a stroke at his ball, B's club causes A's ball to move. What is the procedure?

A. B incurs a one-stroke penalty under Rule 18-3b for having caused A's ball in play to move. A must replace his ball; if A's lie has been altered, Rule 20-3b applies.

This ruling differs from that in Decision 18-1/8, because it was reasonably foreseeable that B's stroke could cause A's ball to move and, through the exercise of reasonable care, B could have avoided causing A's ball to move by having A's ball lifted prior to his stroke. (Revised)

20-1/7

Ball-Marker Moved by Opponent's Caddie Accidentally

Q. In match play, a player's caddie accidentally moved his opponent's ball-marker with his foot. What is the ruling?

A. In equity (Rule 1-4), the opponent must replace his ball or ball-marker as near as possible to the spot where it lay and the player incurs a penalty of one stroke. (Revised)

20-I/13

Ball Accidentally Kicked by Player Asked to Lift It Due to Interference

Q. A requests B to lift B's ball because it interferes with A's play. As B is walking up to his ball to lift it, he accidentally kicks it. What is the ruling?

A. B incurs a penalty stroke under Rule 18-2a because the movement of the ball was not directly attributable to the specific act of marking the position of or lifting the ball (see Rule 20-I). B must replace his ball. (Revised)

20-3a/I

Ball Moved in Removing Ball-Marker After Replacing Ball

Q. A player replaces his ball under a Rule and, in the act of removing the object marking its position, accidentally moves the ball. What is the ruling?

A. Removal of the ball-marker is part of the replacement process. As the movement of the ball was directly attributable to the act of replacing it, under Rule 20-3a, no penalty is incurred, and the ball must be replaced. (Revised)

20-7c/I

Ball Replaced at Wrong Place on Putting Green and Holed

Q. In stroke play, a competitor in replacing his ball on the putting green inadvertently put the ball in a wrong place nearby and holed out. The error was then discovered and the competitor put his ball in the right place and holed out. What is the ruling?

A. Provided that the competitor had not committed a serious breach, the score with the ball played from the wrong place counts and the competitor must add two penalty strokes to that score (Rule 16-1b or 20-3a and 20-7c).

The competitor incurs no penalty for having putted from the right place after holing out from the wrong place. (Revised)

23/5

Ant Hill

Q. Is an ant hill a loose impediment?

A. Yes. An ant hill is a cast or heap made by an insect. A player is entitled to remove an ant hill under Rule 23-1. (Revised)

23/11

Loose Soil from Cast of Hole Made by Burrowing Animal

Q. A player's ball lies through the green in the cast of a hole made by a burrowing animal. In addition to his relief options under Rule 25, may the player remove the loose soil, which forms the cast, from around his ball?

A. No. The cast made by a burrowing animal is not a loose impediment – see Definition of “Loose Impediments.” (Revised)

23/13

Lump of Earth

Q. Is a loose lump of earth a loose impediment?

A. Yes. Loose soil is not a loose impediment except on the putting green. However, a lump of earth is not loose soil. (Revised)

23-1/5

Removal of Insect on Ball

Q. A live insect is stationary or crawling on a player's ball. What may the player do to remove the insect?

A. A live insect is not considered to be adhering to the ball, and therefore is a loose impediment – see Definition of “Loose Impediments.”

If the player's ball lies through the green, the player may remove the insect with his fingers or blow the insect off the ball, but if doing so causes the ball to move, there is a penalty under Rule 18-2a. If the player's ball lies on the putting green, the player may take the same actions, but there is no penalty if he causes the ball to move provided the movement is directly attributable to the removal of the loose impediment (see Rule 23-1).

If the player's ball lies in a hazard, the insect is considered to be in the hazard and the player may not touch or physically remove the insect from the ball (Rule 13-4c). However, as the insect is animate and capable of moving on its own, the player may take action, such as waving his hand, a club or towel, to encourage the insect to move. If the insect moves, there is no penalty, provided the player has not touched the insect while it is on the ball, touched the ground in the hazard or water in the water hazard with his hand or club, or moved the ball. (Revised)

23-1/6.5

Removal of Loose Impediments from Spot Where Ball to Be Placed

Q. Through the green, a player taking relief under a Rule drops his ball and it rolls more than two club-lengths. He re-drops under Rule 20-2c, with the same result. He must now place the ball as near as possible to the spot where it first struck a part of the course when re-dropped – Rule 20-2c. Before he places the ball, may he remove loose impediments on or around the spot on which the ball is to be placed?

A. Yes. (Revised)

24/1

Steps Attached to Boundary Fence

Q. Is a set of steps attached to a boundary fence an obstruction?

A. Yes, unless the Committee declares it to be an integral part of the course under Rule 33-2a(iv). (Revised)

24/7

Stone Serving as Part of Drain in Bunker

Q. A large movable stone has been placed at the entrance to a drain in a bunker to prevent sand from washing into the drain. What is the status of such a stone?

A. The stone when used in this manner is an obstruction. If it is readily movable, it is a movable obstruction unless the Committee deems it immovable. (Revised)

25-2/0.5

When Ball Embedded in Ground

A ball is deemed to be embedded in the ground only if:

- the impact of the ball landing has created a pitch-mark in the ground,
- the ball is in its own pitch-mark, and
- part of the ball is below the level of the ground.

Provided that these three requirements are met, a ball does not necessarily have to touch the soil to be considered embedded (e.g. grass, loose impediments or the like may intervene between the ball and the soil).

Any doubt as to whether a ball is embedded should be resolved against the player. (Revised)



Ball embedded – Part of the ball is below the level of the ground.



Ball embedded – Despite the fact that the ball is not touching the soil, part of the ball (embedded in its own pitch mark) is below the level of the ground.



Ball not embedded – Even when the Local Rule extending relief for an embedded ball to anywhere through the green has been introduced, relief would not be available for the ball in this diagram because, while the ball is sitting down in grass, no part of the ball is below the level of the ground.

26-1/6

Ball Played Back into Water Hazard from Putting Green Side of Hazard

Q. A player plays his second shot over a water hazard into a bunker behind the green. He hits his third shot too hard and the ball comes to rest in the water hazard. The ball is not playable. What are the player's options?

A. The player may, under penalty of one stroke:

- (a) drop a ball behind the water hazard, keeping the point at which the original ball last crossed the hazard margin between the hole and the spot on which the ball is dropped – Rule 26-1b. This procedure would probably make it necessary for the player to return to the tee side of the hazard and play over the hazard again; or
- (b) drop a ball in the bunker at the spot where his second shot came to rest – Rule 26-1a. (Revised)

26-I/17

Point Where Ball Last Crossed Margin of Lateral Water Hazard Determined and Ball Dropped and Played; Point Then Proves to Be Wrong Point

Q. In the circumstances described in Decision 26-I/16, where it becomes known that A's judgment of where his ball last crossed the margin of a lateral water hazard is incorrect, what is the ruling if A, having dropped a ball in the wrong place, plays it before his error is discovered?

A. A must continue play with the ball played from the wrong place, without penalty. Applying a penalty under Rule 26-I for playing from the wrong place (see Rule 20-7) is not appropriate. Otherwise, a competitor would risk incurring a penalty every time he makes an honest judgment as to the point where his ball last crosses a water hazard margin and that judgment subsequently proves incorrect. (Revised)

27/9

Player Searches for Lost Ball After Putting Another Ball into Play

Q. According to Rule 27, if a player hits his tee shot into the woods and tees up and plays another ball without announcing it is a provisional ball, the second ball becomes the ball in play and the original ball is lost. In such a case, is the player precluded from searching for his original ball?

A. No. But the player must not play the ball if he finds it and must not unduly delay play. (Revised)

27-2a/I.5

Meaning of "Goes Forward to Search"

Q. Under Rule 27-2a, when is a player considered to have gone forward to search for the original ball such that a provisional ball cannot be played?

A. A player will be considered to have gone forward to search when he has proceeded more than a short distance towards the place where his original ball is likely to be. As the purpose of Rule 27-2a is to save time, the player is permitted to go forward a short distance before determining that it would save time to return promptly to play a provisional ball. As a guideline, a player should be considered to have proceeded more than a short distance, and therefore to have gone forward to search, if he has proceeded more than approximately 50 yards. However, this guideline does not preclude a player from playing a provisional ball when he has proceeded more than a short distance for another specific purpose, such as to retrieve a ball or a different club to play a provisional ball, or to confer with a referee. (Revised)

27-2b/10

**Provisional Ball Lifted Subsequently Becomes Ball in Play;
Competitor Then Plays From Wrong Place**

Q. With regard to Decision 27-2b/9, where a provisional ball that was lifted subsequently becomes the ball in play, what is the ruling if the competitor returns to the tee with the provisional ball and puts it into play again?

A. When the competitor played again from the tee rather than replacing and playing the provisional ball from where it was lifted, he put that ball into play under penalty of stroke and distance (see Rule 27-1a). However, the penalty of one stroke for the original lifting of the provisional ball in breach of Rule 18-2a still applies because, at the moment of lifting the provisional ball, the player had no intention of playing it again from the teeing ground. Therefore, the player would be playing his eighth stroke from the tee. (Revised)

29-1/9

Both Player and Partner Drive at Same Tee in Foursome Play

Q. A and B are partners in foursome play. At the 5th hole, forgetting that they were playing in a foursome competition, A and then B drive. What is the ruling:

- (a) if it was A's turn to drive?
- (b) if it was B's turn to drive?

A. (a) If it was A's turn to drive, B's ball would be the side's ball in play under penalty of stroke and distance and would be lying 3 – see Rule 27-1a.
(b) If it was B's turn to drive, the side loses the hole in match play or incurs a penalty of two strokes in stroke play (Rules 29-2 and 29-3). In stroke play, the side must continue with B's ball which lies 3. (Revised)

30/2.5

Player Touches Putting Green in Pointing Out Line for Putting for Partner and Touches Own Line of Putt

Q. In a four-ball match, A and B are partners and their balls lie on the putting green. A touches the green in pointing out B's line for putting. The spot which A touches is also on his (A's) line of putt. What is the ruling?

A. B is disqualified for the hole under Rule 8-2b.

A is disqualified for the hole under Rule 16-1a because he touched his line of putt; the fact that it was in the act of pointing out a line for putting for his partner is irrelevant. (Revised)

30-3f/6

Player Plays Away from Hole to Assist Partner

Q. In a four-ball competition, a player purposely puts away from the hole to a position slightly farther from the hole than the spot where his partner's ball lies and on the same line to the hole as his partner's ball. The player then puts towards the hole, and the roll of his ball is helpful to his partner in determining how much his putt will break, etc. Is such a procedure permissible?

A. No. Such procedure is contrary to the spirit of the game. In match play, in equity (Rule 1-4), the player is disqualified for the hole and, since his action assisted his partner's play, the partner incurs the same penalty (Rule 30-3f).

In stroke play, in equity (Rule 1-4), the player incurs a penalty of two strokes and, under Rule 31-8, the partner incurs the same penalty. (Revised)

30-3f/11

Request to Lift Ball That Might Assist Partner Not Honourd

Q. A and B are playing C and D in a four-ball match. B's ball is near the hole in a position to serve as a backstop for A's ball or to assist in lining up A's putt. C requests B to lift his ball. B does not comply and A puts. What is the ruling?

A. B is disqualified for the hole for failing to comply with Rule 22-1. Since it must be assumed that the breach assisted A, he would also be disqualified for the hole – Rule 30-3f. (Revised)

33-1/2

Number of Holes of Stroke Play Competition Reduced During the Competition

Q. A 72-hole stroke play competition is scheduled over four consecutive days. Eighteen holes are to be played each day. On the third day, all competitors finish the first nine holes but a number of competitors are still playing the second nine holes. At that point, the course becomes unplayable due to heavy rain and play is suspended. The rain continues and it is impossible to resume play that day. What are the Committee's options?

A. The Committee does not have the authority to reduce the number of holes of a stipulated round once play has commenced for that round.

Under Rules 33-1 and 33-2d, the Committee has the following choices:

- (a) resume play the next day and finish the third round and then play the last 18 holes that day or on a subsequent day,
- (b) cancel the third round, replay it on a subsequent day and then play the last 18 holes that day or on a subsequent day,

- (c) reduce to three the number of rounds of the competition and finish the suspended third round on a subsequent day, or cancel the third round and replay it on a subsequent day, or
- (d) cancel the third and fourth rounds and declare the leader after 36 holes to be the winner.

The first option is the preferred option as it is undesirable to cancel a round after extensive play has taken place (see choice b above) or to reduce the number of rounds of a competition when the competition is in progress (see choices c and d above). (Revised)

33-2a/7

Deeming Body of Water as Both Water Hazard and Lateral Water Hazard

A body of water (or a specific part of it) must not be defined as both a water hazard and a lateral water hazard in play of a particular hole, except in the circumstances described in Decision 33-2a/6.

A body of water (or a specific part of it) may be defined as a water hazard in play of one hole and a lateral water hazard in play of another hole.

A part of a body of water may be defined as a water hazard and another part of the same body of water as a lateral water hazard. (Revised)

33-6/3

Determining Winner and Positions in Stroke Play Play-Off

If there is a stroke play play-off between two competitors and one of them is disqualified or concedes defeat, it is not necessary for the other to complete the play-off hole or holes to be declared the winner.

If there is a play-off involving more than two competitors and not all of them complete the play-off hole or holes, the order in which the competitors are disqualified or decide to withdraw determines the result of the play-off. (Revised)

33-7/4.5

Competitor Unaware of Penalty Returns Wrong Score; Whether Waiving or Modifying Disqualification Penalty Justified

Q. A competitor returns his score card. It later transpires that the score for one hole is lower than actually taken due to his failure to include a penalty stroke(s) which he did not know he had incurred. The error is discovered before the competition has closed.

Would the Committee be justified, under Rule 33-7, in waiving or modifying the penalty of disqualification prescribed in Rule 6-6d?

A. Generally, the disqualification prescribed by Rule 6-6d must not be waived or modified.

However, if the Committee is satisfied that the competitor could not reasonably have known or discovered the facts resulting in his breach of the Rules, it would be justified under Rule 33-7 in waiving the disqualification penalty prescribed by Rule 6-6d. The penalty stroke(s) associated with the breach would, however, be applied to the hole where the breach occurred.

For example, in the following scenarios, the Committee would be justified in waiving the disqualification penalty:

- A competitor makes a short chip from the greenside rough. At the time, he and his fellow-competitors have no reason to suspect that the competitor has double-hit his ball in breach of Rule 14-4. After the competitor has signed and returned his score card, a close-up, super-slow-motion video replay reveals that the competitor struck his ball twice during the course of the stroke. In these circumstances, it would be appropriate for the Committee to waive the disqualification penalty and apply the one-stroke penalty under Rule 14-4 to the competitor's score at the hole in question.
- After a competitor has signed and returned his score card, it becomes known, through the use of a high-definition video replay, that the competitor unknowingly touched a few grains of sand with his club at the top of his backswing on a wall of the bunker. The touching of the sand was so light that, at the time, it was reasonable for the competitor to have been unaware that he had breached Rule 13-4. It would be appropriate for the Committee to waive the disqualification penalty and apply the two-stroke penalty to the competitor's score at the hole in question.

A Committee would not be justified under Rule 33-7 in waiving or modifying the disqualification penalty prescribed in Rule 6-6d if the competitor's failure to include the penalty stroke(s) was a result of either ignorance of the Rules or of facts that the competitor could have reasonably discovered prior to signing and returning his score card.

For example, in the following scenarios, the Committee would not be justified in waiving or modifying the disqualification penalty:

- As a competitor's ball is in motion, he moves several loose impediments in the area in which the ball will likely come to rest. Unaware that this action is a breach of Rule 23-1, the competitor fails to include the two-stroke penalty in his score for the hole. As the competitor was aware of the facts that resulted in his breaching the Rules, he should be disqualified under Rule 6-6d for failing to include the two-stroke penalty under Rule 23-1.
- A competitor's ball lies in a water hazard. In making his backswing for the stroke, the competitor is aware that his club touched a branch in the hazard. Not realising at the time that the branch was detached, the competitor did not include the two-stroke penalty for a breach of Rule 13-4 in his score for the hole. As the competitor could have reasonably determined the status of the branch prior to signing and returning his score card, the competitor should be disqualified under Rule 6-6d for failing to include the two-stroke penalty under Rule 13-4. (Revised)

33-8/4

Local Rule for Events in Which Motorised Golf Carts Permitted

Q. A competition involving stroke play qualifying followed by match play is to be held. Motorised golf carts will be permitted but some may have to be shared. Play will be in groups of two. No caddies will be available. Should a Local Rule clarifying the status of the carts be made?

A. It is suggested that the following Local Rule be adopted:

“A motorised cart is part of the player’s equipment:

(1) A player or players using a cart may appoint someone to drive the cart, in which case the driver is considered to be the caddie of the player or players.

(2) Use of a cart by anyone other than the player or players using it or the appointed driver is prohibited. Any player allowing unauthorised use of his cart is subject to penalty as follows:

Match play – At the conclusion of the hole at which the breach is discovered, the state of the match is adjusted by deducting one hole for each hole at which a breach occurred; maximum deduction per round – Two holes.

Stroke play – Two strokes for each hole at which any breach occurred; maximum penalty per round – Four strokes (two strokes at each of the first two holes at which any breach occurred).

Match play or stroke play – If a breach is discovered between the play of two holes, it is deemed to have been discovered during play of the next hole, and the penalty must be applied accordingly.

In either form of play – Use of any unauthorised automotive vehicle must be discontinued immediately upon discovering that a breach has occurred. Otherwise, the player is disqualified.”

If some caddies are available, it is suggested that they be assigned in an equitable way and that the above suggested Local Rule be adopted with item (1) amended to read as follows:

“A player or players using a cart may appoint someone to drive the cart if no caddie is available, in which case the driver is considered to be the caddie of the player or players.” (Revised)

33-8/8

Local Rule Providing Relief from Tree Roots

Q. May a Committee make a Local Rule providing relief without penalty if a player’s stroke is interfered with by exposed tree roots?

A. A Local Rule is authorised only if an abnormal condition exists.

Generally, the existence of exposed tree roots is not abnormal. However, if the exposed tree roots are encroaching on to the fairway, a Committee

would be authorised to make a Local Rule providing relief under Rule 25-1 for interference from exposed tree roots when a ball lies on a closely-mown area. The Committee may restrict relief to interference for the lie of ball and the area of intended swing. (Revised)

33-8/9

Local Rule Providing Relief from Damage to Bunkers Caused by Children

Q. Some holes are accessible to the general public, and children play in the bunkers leaving footprints, holes and sand castles.

May the Committee make a Local Rule allowing a player, without penalty, either to drop his ball outside a bunker damaged by children or to lift his ball from such damage, smooth out the sand and replace the ball?

A. No. This would be a modification of Rule 13-4. However, the Committee could declare unusual damage to the bunker to be ground under repair. (Revised)

33-8/15

Local Rule Providing Relief from Interference by Immovable Water Hazard Stake for Ball Lying in Water Hazard

Q. If the stakes defining the margins of water hazards are immovable, may the Committee make a Local Rule providing relief without penalty if a player's ball lies in a water hazard and such a stake interferes with his swing or stance?

A. No. Such a Local Rule would be a modification of the Rules as the stakes are immovable obstructions – see Note I to Rule 24-2. (Revised)

33-8/16

Local Rule Deeming All Stakes on Course to Be Immovable Obstructions

Q. It is proposed to adopt a Local Rule providing that all stakes on the course, i.e. stakes defining the margins of water hazards, ground under repair, etc. are deemed to be immovable obstructions. The Local Rule would not, of course, apply to boundary stakes since they are not on the course. Is such a Local Rule permissible?

A. Yes. However, this is not recommended as it may result in players being penalised under Rule 13-2 for moving such a stake. (Revised)

33-8/28

Local Rule Permitting Re-Dropping or Placing When Dropped Ball Embeds in Bunker

Q. The bunkers on a course frequently have casual water in them. The texture of the sand in the bunkers is such that a ball dropped under Rule 25-1b(ii)(a) embeds itself in wet sand to the depth of the ball or deeper.

Would it be proper for the Committee to make a Local Rule permitting a ball that embeds in a bunker after being dropped from casual water in the bunker to be re-dropped or placed?

A. No. It is not abnormal for a ball dropped in a bunker to embed itself in the sand. (Revised)

34-1b/1.5

Competitor Correctly Advised by Fellow-Competitor That He Incurred a Penalty Disagrees with Fellow-Competitor and Fails to Include Penalty in His Score; Committee Advised of Incident After Competition Had Closed

Q. In stroke play, A, in ignorance of the Rules and with the concurrence of B, his marker, removed a stone from a water hazard when his ball lay in the hazard. Subsequently, A was advised by C, a fellow-competitor, that he (A) was in breach of Rule 13-4. A disagreed, failed to settle the doubtful point with the Committee at the end of the round and returned his score card without including a two-stroke penalty for a breach of Rule 13-4.

After the competition had closed, C advised the Committee of the incident. Should A be disqualified?

A. Yes. Rule 34-1b says in effect that a competitor must be disqualified after the competition has closed if he had returned a score, failing to include a penalty which, before the competition closed, he knew he had incurred. As C pointed out to A that he had proceeded incorrectly and A took no action to check whether he had incurred a penalty before returning his card, A is deemed to have known that he had incurred a penalty. (Revised)

34-1b/2

Competitor's Failure to Sign Score Card Discovered After Competition Closed

Q. Shortly after a stroke play competition had closed, it was discovered that the score card of the winner had not been signed by him. Should the Committee take any action?

A. The Committee must decide whether the competitor knew, before the competition closed, that he was in breach of the Rules by failing to sign his score card (Rule 6-6b). If he knew, he is disqualified, as provided in Exception (iv) to Rule 34-1b. Otherwise, no penalty may be imposed and the result of the competition must stand. (Revised)

34-1b/4

Competitor Changes Weight of Club During Round; Breach Discovered After Competition Closed

Q. It was reported a few days after the conclusion of a stroke play competition that the winner had changed the weight of his putter during a stipulated round. Should he be penalised?

A. The Committee must determine whether the competitor knew, between the time of the breach and the close of the competition, that he had incurred a penalty under the Rules for changing the weight of his putter during the stipulated round (Rule 4-2). If he knew he had incurred a penalty under the Rules, he is disqualified, as provided in Exception (iv) to Rule 34-1b. Otherwise, no penalty may be imposed. (Revised)

34-1b/5

Disqualification Penalty Wrongly Applied to Winner of Event; Error Discovered After Two Other Competitors Play Off for First Place

Q. In the final round of a stroke play competition, the Committee disqualified A for recording on his score card a total score which was one stroke less than his actual score. A's hole-by-hole scores were correct. The Committee was in error. A would have won the event if he had not been disqualified.

As a result of A's disqualification, B and C play off for first place and B wins the play-off. Before the result of the competition is announced, the Committee discovers that A should not have been penalised.

Must the Committee rectify its error?

A. Yes. As the competition had not closed, the penalty applied to A must be rescinded and A declared the winner – see Rule 34-1b. (Revised)

34-2/3

Referee Warning Player About to Breach Rule

Q. If the referee observes a player about to breach a Rule, may he warn the player and thus prevent a breach?

A. Yes. While a referee is not obliged to warn a player who is about to breach a Rule, it is generally recommended that a referee should do so. If

he volunteers information about the Rules, he should do so uniformly to all players.

However, in match play where the referee has not been assigned to accompany the players throughout the match, the referee has no authority to intervene and, therefore, must not warn the player – see Definition of “Referee”. (Revised)