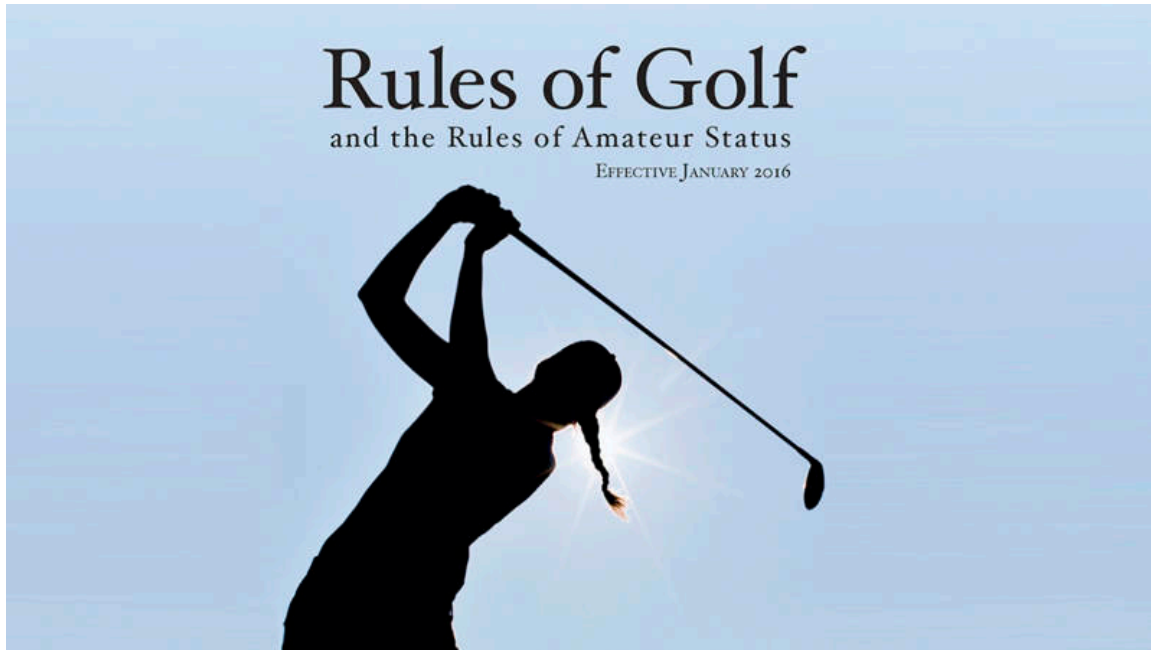


Rules Changes 101

By Missy Jones • @missyjonjones

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There have been some interesting interpretations to some of the rules changes announced on Monday so I'll give you my "explaining to a guy in the bar" version for a few of them.

- [Withdrawal of Rule on Ball Moving After Address - Rule 18-2b \(Ball Moving after Address\)](#) has been withdrawn. This means that if a ball at rest moves after the player addresses it, the player is no longer automatically deemed to have caused the ball to move. A one-stroke penalty under Rule 18-2 will be applied only when the facts show that the player has caused the ball to move.

What does this mean? It certainly doesn't mean that there will be no penalty now if you move your ball after addressing as I've read in a couple of places. You kick it, you drop your club on it or just bump it with your club and you get the penalty just like always.

What this rules change does is give us more options in evaluating the facts. Before this change, officials were forced to "deem" that the player moved the ball if we couldn't find something else that did it like the wind or a dog. We couldn't point to gravity or just bad luck. Now we have the ability to look at the facts and determine if the player moved his ball and should get a one stroke penalty. Depending on the circumstances, the relevant considerations might include:

- The nature of any actions taken near the ball (e.g. movement of loose impediments, practice swings, grounding club, taking stance, etc.),
- Time elapsed between such actions and the movement of the ball,
- The lie of the ball before it moved (e.g. on a closely-mown area, perched on longer grass, on a surface imperfection, etc.),
- The conditions of the ground near the ball (e.g. degree of slope, presence of surface irregularities, etc.), and
- Wind, rain and other weather conditions.

If the weight of evidence indicates that it is more likely than not that the player caused the ball to move, the player gets the one-stroke penalty and the ball must be replaced. Otherwise, the player has no penalty and the ball is played as it lies unless some other Rule applies. It's not a "get out of jail free card" - it's just a chance for officials to evaluate all the facts.

· [Limited Exception to Disqualification Penalty for Submission of Incorrect Score Card](#) - A new exception has been introduced to Rule 6-6d (Wrong Score for Hole) to provide that a player is not disqualified for returning a lower score for a hole than actually taken as a result of failing to include penalty strokes that the player did not know were incurred before returning the score card. Instead, the player incurs the penalty under the Rule that was breached and must add an additional penalty of two strokes for the score card error. In all other cases in which a player returns a score for any hole lower than actually taken, the penalty will continue to be disqualification.

This one is pretty self explanatory and I think it is a great change. We want players to still be in the competition even if they blow it on a rule. With TV and time delays etc, we see playbacks and possible infractions and we were forced to DQ a player if they signed a wrong card. Now we have the tools to apply the penalty and keep the player in the competition. It's a steep price (two additional strokes for each screw up) to not know the rules but at least you are still there.

· [Modification of Penalty for a Single Impermissible Use of Artificial Devices or Equipment](#) - The penalty for a player's first breach of Rule 14-3 (Artificial Devices, Unusual Equipment and Abnormal Use of Equipment) during the round has been reduced from disqualification to loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play. The penalty for any subsequent breach of Rule 14-3 will continue to be disqualification.

I love this change and I've seen it firsthand where we, as officials, wish we had other options. The situation was a college player, who was able to use a distance measuring device in her collegiate competitions. Without thinking, she pulled one out during a

competition where it wasn't allowed. Boom! No option. She was an automatic DQ. Now we can give her the general penalty and she will still be playing golf.

- Prohibition on Anchoring the Club While Making a Stroke - As announced in May 2013, the new Rule 14-1b (Anchoring the Club) prohibits anchoring the club either "directly" or by use of an "anchor point" in making a stroke. The penalty is loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play.

We knew this was coming and I really think it is much ado about nothing at this point. You can still use a long putter but don't anchor the club to your body. Easy. We see lots of infographics on what is and isn't allowed but I'll bet we don't have to deal with it much on the course. Players have had a chance to figure it out.

There are other changes but these are ones I've seen misinterpreted so wanted to clear some stuff up. Send your questions!