

Explaining Lexi rules infraction at ANA

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The new Exception to Rule 6-6d for signing an incorrect score card is something new since 2016 and we saw it used today. Lexi incorrectly replaced her ball on the 17th green during the 3rd round at the ANA in Rancho Mirage, California. Rule 16-1b requires the ball to be replaced in the exact same spot. It is obvious that she replaced her ball in a different place. Wrong place is wrong place. Whether it is two inches or two feet. The penalty for playing from a wrong place in breach of Rule 16-1b is two strokes. Since she signed her scorecard without the two-stroke penalty and she was completely unaware of the penalty at the time, the Exception to Rule 6-6d is in effect.

The new exception lessened the previous penalty that would have disqualified her for signing for an incorrect scorecard. Since her incorrect score was the result of failing to include a penalty she was unaware of, she

is not disqualified but is assessed the penalty she failed to include (two strokes under Rule 16-1b) and an additional two-stroke penalty under Rule 6-6d for signing for an incorrect score on the 17th hole. The result is four total penalty strokes.

There are some who feel Committees shouldn't take call in information but data is data. It doesn't matter if it is video evidence, spectator evidence or an official who sees it from another fairway. The rules team owes it to the field to protect them with all the information available. The Committee has an obligation to enforce the rules and they hate this type of thing more than anybody. Nobody wants to see this happen but they must enforce the rules. Maybe we won't have this type of situation with the implementation of the proposed rules changes announced March 1st.

The proposed rules changes for 2019 includes a new Reasonable Judgment Standard that states:

When you need to **estimate or measure** a spot, point, line, area or distance under a Rule, **your reasonable judgment will not be second-guessed** based on later evidence (such as video review) **if you did all that could reasonably be expected under the circumstances** to estimate or measure accurately.

I think this would have absolved Lexi if it was in effect today, She had no intent to put her ball back in the wrong place and I think she used reasonable judgment. This is a welcome change that Committees everywhere will be glad to have at their disposal.