

GOLF AUSTRALIA RULES NEWSLETTER

Spring 2013



GolfAustralia



Ask the Referee: David Rickman

Courtesy: The R&A Website

This is the first of a short series taken from the The R&A's website with some of the top referees and officials in the game. David Rickman, The R&A's Executive Director – Rules and Equipment Standards, is the first to take the hot seat to answer some questions. Readers were invited to send in their questions to David about the Rules and refereeing.

Q: So David, the first question to cover is, as a Rules official how do you avoid not becoming complacent about Rules knowledge and, in addition to Conditions, Local Rules and familiarising yourself with the course or your zone, what should you review before partaking in any Championship event?

David: In anticipation of an event I will carefully survey the golf course, by walking or driving around it a number of times. I will assess the type of situation that can arise, for example if there's a lot of water hazards I will pay particular attention to not just the water hazard Rule but Decisions under Rules 13-4 and 26 as well. So I think the questioner is right to be wary of complacency and all that I can suggest is to prepare thoroughly and continually test yourself during the event itself.

Q: Ok. Second question, why do professional golfers constantly request rulings when the answers should be known by all golfers competing in competitions?

David: I think there's an element of an "insurance policy" being taken out, if I can put it that way. As soon as the professional golfer gets a ruling from a referee, even if that advice proves to be incorrect (which would be very rare) the player would not be penalised.

Q: I'm a 12 years old Canadian studying to be a Level 3 official and will take the test soon. I was wondering if you have any tips you have collected over the years that would help me on the golf course and also if you had any advice for a young official trying to get into this as a profession?

David: I'm very impressed that you're getting into this detail at such an early age. I was barely playing golf by the time I was 12 let alone knowing anything about the Rules! I think all I would suggest is to continue to work hard and take as many opportunities as you can to help at events. As the years pass you will have opportunities to referee at Club level perhaps, then at district or state level and then finally perhaps at national Championships. Organisers are always looking for volunteers, always looking for people with the right experience, so I would encourage you to stick at it. I would also encourage you to watch what full time officials do at professional events.

Spring 2013: In this edition



Rule 20

GA National Referee Sue Fabian discusses the importance of understanding Rule 20



Refereeing at The Open Championship

GA's Simon Magdulski talks about his experience refereeing at The Open Championship



Local Rules

Golf Victoria's David Greenhill provides some guidance on Local Rules





Q: How, in practice, can a roving Rules official effectively referee more than one match at a time bearing in mind that he or she now has no authority to intervene?

David: In any situation where you are covering more than one match then we are back to the origins of match play where players will be

expected to look after their own interests and make claims should they wish to do so. So it is a slightly different scenario and it's worth you and the players involved being absolutely clear as to whether you are a referee with that specific match or whether in fact you are helping more than one match in which case you are really there just to answer any questions that arise from the participants themselves.

Q: During any game or match what is the most common decision or question you are asked by competitors?

David: Probably the most common questions concern taking relief from either immovable obstructions or abnormal ground conditions, including areas of ground under repair or casual water.

Q: What is the procedure you adopt for asking about a golf situation that may require a ruling by a competitor in a competition?

David: Well, there are a number of facts that you need to establish. At the very outset you need to determine what form of play is being used at that particular time. You need to identify who was involved, where on the golf course the incident has occurred and what exactly has happened. So it's all about establishing the facts and once you have established the facts (and that sometimes means you need to talk to more than one person), you can look to analyse those facts and provide an appropriate answer.

Q: How do you deal with argumentative players? Not the polite professional players, the nasty, aggressive players who want to take it out on you because they're playing poorly?

David: Well, fortunately at the elite level where referees are used at both amateur and professional levels the numbers of aggressive players or difficult incidents are few and far between. I think all referees need to remember that most of the time they are called into a situation where the player has played a poor shot and/or has had an unlucky break and, therefore, their golf ball is somewhere they don't want it to be! So an awareness and empathy for that is always helpful. You're there to do a job, to help the player get the ball back into play quickly and efficiently in accordance with the Rules - nothing more, nothing less. If you can remember what it's like to be that player, that can help you. In all of these situations, it's a case of remaining calm, remaining dispassionate, remaining impartial, talking calmly to the player, giving the player time to think about the situation and in most cases the matter can be amicably resolved.

Q: Regarding the use of red or yellow stakes, whilst preparing any course for tournament play I often come across many situations where a lateral water hazard becomes a regular water hazard and many situations during play where a competitor does not know whether the ball has crossed the margin of the lateral or a regular water hazard. I find the red stakes to be far more equitable with the elimination of problems much easier to make rulings. Is this incorrect? Should regular water marking just be eliminated?

David: The use of red and yellow markings, and the existence in the game of two kinds of water hazards is an issue that's been discussed on and off many times over the years. The main reason for retaining the yellow type of hazard is for holes when crossing a water hazard has strategic significance to the play of that hole. Two prominent examples are often cited, namely the 1st hole at St Andrews, where the player needs to negotiate the Swilcan Burn in front of the green and secondly,

the 12th hole at Augusta, where the player has to cross Rae's Creek. In both of those cases it is felt that the fundamental challenge of the hole is to negotiate that water hazard in front of the green and, therefore, any relief option that would allow the player in certain circumstances to drop on the greenside of the hazard is to be resisted. So I think that there are good reasons for keeping two kinds of water hazards. Particularly in elite play, the use of yellow hazards is highly appropriate but I would certainly accept that at recreational level and at lower competitive levels of the game a more general use of red hazards is both common and actually makes considerable sense as it can help players to play reasonably quickly in those circumstances.

Q: Are you confident that you know the Rules to cover all situations or do you have support in making the decision on a course?

David: Even when you know the Rules well and have prepared diligently for an event there can be Rules questions that are difficult to answer. At any event you should have a structure in place to support those that are giving on-course decisions. So you'll have officials out on the golf course either in buggies working in zones of 2, 3, 4 holes or you might have an official walking with every game (as we do at The Open Championship). In both of those cases you're looking to provide advice and assistance to all members of the Committee also by radio. All officials are able to call upon others to offer assistance and second opinions if that is necessary.

Q: As different referees were attached to the playing groups at the Masters, was the Chinese amateur unlucky to have a more vigilant referee? All referees should follow the Rules to the letter. I would welcome your views.

David: Clearly the slow play penalty to Guan Tianlang was unfortunate for the player concerned but the pace of play policy, which is applied to all competitors at the Masters, needs to be applied fairly and equally to all concerned and I can confirm that it was. For any official to start timing a player, that player's group needs to be "out of position". In the case of Guan, his group was out of position, in other words, there was a clear gap in front of them and they were failing to keep up with the time schedule. They had been warned, they were aware they were being subjected to individual timing and despite all of those warnings I'm afraid the young Chinese player failed to play quickly enough incurring two "bad times", resulting in the one-stroke penalty. That having been said, he dealt with the aftermath of the incident extremely well. He's played a number of professional events since and I am led to believe that his pre-shot routine is quicker.

Q: Next question is from a referee who sometimes finds it hard to concentrate when he's playing a game with his friends because he's always keeping an eye on other players. So his question is how do you find the balance between being a nightmare to play with and having a pleasant, social game?

David: It's a very good question and I think anyone who has taken time and trouble to learn the Rules can, at times, be placed in a tricky situation. I, myself, do try to separate the two parts of my golfing life – playing and refereeing. If I'm playing socially I don't get overly punctilious about possible Rules breaches that I may witness. If it's a competition, there may be occasions when something's not quite right and you have to act, but you still you have a couple of choices. Sometimes it's important to speak up at the time. Sometimes it doesn't really make any difference and, therefore, you can have a quiet word at the end of the round. In all cases you want to try and deal with these issues in a considerate way.

Q: I'm a keen amateur Rules official and I have recently qualified as a county referee. How did you get to your role today and what advice do you have for others wanting to take refereeing further?

David: I started my job at The R&A really with no great Rules experience. I learned on the job and I very much sympathise with those who are at the early stages of a career whether it is as a volunteer or as a paid official. I think it is a case of learning through experience, so take the opportunity to referee at Club and state level. If you can then get some opportunities at national level, where you can mix with other officials, it's a very good way to learn. So, simply take those refereeing opportunities and stick at it.

Rule 20

By Sue Fabian

(Golf Australia National Referee)

Rule 20 is one of the most useful of the Rules of Golf, and yet it is often not given much attention by players, perhaps because its many sub-sections make it appear difficult to follow. Rule 20 deals with procedures, and underpins many of the other Rules. Whenever a player is required by the Rules of Golf to lift, drop or place a ball, it is Rule 20 which tells him/her how, where and by whom a ball may or must be marked, lifted, dropped, redropped or placed. It also outlines what to do if the correct procedure has not been followed, and what penalties may be involved. Rule 20-7 (Playing from a Wrong Place) outlines the penalties involved if a player makes a stroke at a ball which has not been dropped or placed in the right place under the Rules, while Rule 20-6 is the player's best friend, in that it allows him/her to correct such an incorrect drop or placement provided a stroke has not been made at the ball.

RULE 20-1: LIFTING AND MARKING

Rule 20-1 answers many of the questions which are most frequently asked by players about marking and lifting a ball in play:

Who can lift a ball under the Rules? "The player, his partner, or another person authorised by the player" can lift the ball. Decisions 20-1/4 and 20-1/5 make it clear that, in stroke play, there is no penalty to a fellow competitor for the unauthorised lifting of a player's ball by that competitor, and in addition, the player is not responsible for a breach of a Rule caused by the unauthorised lifting of his ball (eg where a fellow competitor lifts a player's ball without authority and accidentally substitutes another ball, which is played. The player should hole out with the substituted ball, without penalty). Of course, a penalty of one stroke applies to an opponent in match play for the unauthorised lifting of a player's ball (Decision 20-1/2).

Must the ball always be marked when it is lifted? A ball must be marked "if it is lifted under a Rule that requires it to be replaced". Players are often unsure whether a ball must be marked when taking relief under Rules 24, 25, 26 or 28 (for example dropping from GUR). Clearly Rule 20-1 does not require the ball to be marked in such circumstances, since the ball is not to be replaced, and there would be no penalty for failing to mark it. However, common sense dictates that marking the position of the ball before it is lifted establishes a reference point.

What if the position of a ball to be replaced is not marked? "The player incurs a penalty of one stroke, and the ball must be replaced. If it is not replaced, the player incurs the general penalty for breach of this Rule (loss of hole/2 strokes), but there is no additional penalty under Rule 20-1".

Is there a penalty if the ball or ball-marker is accidentally moved? "There is no penalty provided the movement of the ball or ball-marker is directly attributable to the specific act of marking the position of or lifting the ball". (Otherwise, the penalty is one stroke and the ball must be replaced). Decision 20-1/15 further explains the meaning of "directly attributable" in Rule 20-1 (and also Rule 20-3a: Placing and Replacing): "the specific act of placing a ball-marker behind the ball, placing a club to the side of the ball, or lifting the ball such that the player's hand, the placement of the ball-marker or the club, or the lifting of the ball causes the ball or the ball-marker to move".

Decision 20-1/15 goes on to state that "any accidental movement of the ball or the ball marker which occurs before or after this specific act, such as dropping the ball or ball-marker, regardless of the height from which it was dropped, is not considered to be "directly attributable" and would result in the player incurring a penalty stroke (and having to replace the ball). In the same way, accidentally kicking the ball or ball-marker when stepping forward to mark or lift the ball would also incur a penalty of one stroke and the ball must be replaced (Decision 20-1/13). Interestingly, a player who finds his ball-marker stuck to the sole of his putter, which he



has used to press down the marker, does not incur a penalty, since the movement of the ball-marker was "directly attributable to the specific act of marking the ball" (Decision 20-1/6). However, a player who finds his ball-marker stuck to the sole of his shoe after he has accidentally stood on it would incur a penalty, and would have to estimate the ball marker's original position and replace it (Decision 20-1/5.5).

RULE 20-2: DROPPING AND RE-DROPPING

When a player elects to, or must, drop a ball under Rules 24, 25, 26, 27 or 28, it is Rule 20-2 which tells the player by whom, how and where the ball must be dropped.

By whom must the ball be dropped? The ball must be dropped "by the player himself". Decision 29/4 further clarifies this by stating that, even in foursomes, where the partners are generally treated as a single player under the Rules, "the member of the side whose turn it is to play next must drop the ball". In other words, "the player himself" is very specifically the person who is to make the next stroke at the ball.

How must the ball be dropped? To drop a ball, the player "must stand erect, hold the ball at shoulder height and arm's length and drop it" (Rule 20-2a.) It does not matter which direction the player is facing or where the player stands to drop a ball. Decision 20-2a/2 describes one situation where a ball is dropped in "an improper manner", ie when a player purposely puts spin on a ball. A more common situation is where a player drops a ball from below shoulder height in order to better control the drop. Both Decision 20-2a/1 and 20-2a/2 define the penalty of one stroke for dropping in an improper manner and failing to correct the error as permitted under Rule 20-6 before playing a stroke at the ball.

What if the ball strikes my shoe, my fellow competitor's bag or the tee I used to mark the dropping area? Rule 20-2a also specifies that if a ball, when dropped, touches any person or the equipment of any player before or after it strikes a part of the course and before it comes to rest, it must be re-dropped without penalty. There is no limit to the number of times the ball must be re-dropped in these circumstances. Note that the Definition of "Equipment" excludes "any small object, such as a coin or tee, when used to mark the position of a ball or the extent of an area in which a ball is to be dropped". Therefore the ball must not be re-dropped just because it has struck the tee.

Where must the ball be dropped? Rule 20-2b states "when a ball is to be dropped as near as possible to a specific spot, it must be dropped not nearer the hole than the specific spot which, if it is not precisely known to the player, must be estimated". This Rule also requires that "a ball when dropped must first strike a part of the course where the applicable Rule requires it to be dropped". For example, if a Rule requires a ball to be dropped in a bunker, the ball must first strike the course in the bunker. If it were to first strike a bush or grass growing outside the bunker, it must be re-dropped. It would therefore not be permissible for a player, when required by a Rule to drop a ball in a bunker, to drop it just outside the edge of the bunker in the hope that it would roll into the bunker without embedding (Decision 20-5/2). A ball dropped in breach of Rule 20-2b

must be re-dropped correctly without penalty under Rule 20-6. If played without being corrected, Rule 20-7 states the penalty involved.

RULE 20-2c: WHEN TO RE-DROP

Whereas Rules 20-2a and 20-2b deal with a ball which has been dropped by the wrong person or in an improper manner, or dropped in a wrong place (effectively “no drop” situations), Rule 20-2c refers to a ball which has been dropped correctly under the Rules and which, after striking the correct part of the course and without coming to rest, subsequently rolls into a position from which the Rules do not permit it to be played. In all of the situations outlined in Rule 20-2c (i) to (vii), the ball must be re-dropped. However, unlike the situation in Rules 20-2a and 20-2b, where there is no limit to the number of times the ball must be re-dropped, Rule 20-2c requires a ball to be re-dropped only once. If, after the second drop, it again rolls into any of the situations listed in Rule 20-2c (i) to (vii), it must be placed as near as possible to the spot where it first struck a part of the course when re-dropped.

RULE 20-3: PLACING AND REPLACING

If a ball is to be placed under the Rules, who must do this? The player or his partner.

If a ball which has been lifted is to be replaced under the Rules, who may do this? The player, his partner, or the person who lifted or moved the ball.

What if some other person places or replaces the ball? Rule 20-6 permits correction, provided a stroke has not been made at the ball. Otherwise, the player incurs a penalty of one stroke. “In any such case, the player is also responsible for any other breaches of the Rules that occur as a result of the placing or replacing of the ball”.

The ball to be replaced must be placed on the spot from which it was lifted or moved. What if this is not the case? Rule 20-6 permits correction, provided a stroke has not been made at the ball. Otherwise, the general penalty of loss of hole/2 strokes applies for a breach of the applicable Rule.

Lie of ball to be placed or replaced altered

The general principle here is that the ball must be placed in the nearest most similar lie to that of the original that is not more than one club-length from the original lie, not nearer the hole and not in a hazard, except that in a water hazard, the ball must be placed in the water hazard.

In a bunker, the original lie must be re-created as nearly as possible and the ball must be placed in that lie. Decision 13-4/18 states the principle that “the player is entitled to the lie which his stroke gave him”, so that, for example, the divot from another player’s stroke, coming to rest near the player’s ball in a bunker, may be removed. However, Decision 13-4/11 emphasises the fact that the player is not entitled to smooth footprints he has made himself, or his caddie has made, in searching for the ball in any area covered by Rule 13-2, that is “lie of ball, area of intended stance or swing, or line of play” (Note that Exception 2 to Rule 13-4 applies to smoothing, for the purpose of “caring for the course”, other areas not covered by Rule 13-2). Decision 13-4/18.5 clarifies the fact that a lie altered by natural causes, such as a pine cone falling near the ball, may not be restored, and states that “the principle in Decision 13-4/18 is applied only in cases where the lie of a ball has been altered as a result of an act by another player or caddie, or by a spectator or other animate outside agency”.

Decision 13-4/19 covers the situation where two balls lie close together in a bunker and the stroke of player B alters the lie of Player A. “A would be entitled, in equity (Rule 1-4), to restore the bunker to its original condition by raking or other means, even if this involves an area covered by Rule 13-2 with respect to his next stroke. The bunker may be restored by anyone”. In other words, Player A himself may restore the bunker. Re-creating the original lie as nearly as possible is further clarified by Decision 20-3b/1, where even a heel mark in which the player’s ball originally lay must be re-created and the ball placed in that lie.

To place or to drop?

- In cases where the original lie of the ball has been altered but is known, the ball must be placed as above, even if its exact original position is unknown.
- If the original lie is not known and it is impossible to determine the exact spot where the ball is to be placed, it must be dropped through the green or in a hazard or placed on a putting green (Rule 20-3c).

RULE 20-4: WHEN BALL DROPPED OR PLACED IS IN PLAY

Rule 20-4 states that “if a player’s ball in play has been lifted, it is again in play when dropped or placed”. Rule 20-3d, and a number of related Decisions, clarifies the fact that the ball, after being placed, must have come to rest to be in play. Rule 20-3d states that, “if a ball when placed fails to come to rest on the spot on which it is placed, there is no penalty and the ball must be replaced. If it still fails to come to rest on that spot, (i) except in a hazard it must be placed at the nearest spot where it can be placed at rest that is not nearer the hole and not in a hazard; (ii) in a hazard, it must be placed in that hazard. Once the ball has been correctly placed and is at rest, it is in play. If it subsequently moves, the player is now dealing with a new situation, and must proceed accordingly. Decisions 20-4/1 and 18-1/12 reinforce the fact that a ball at rest after being dropped or placed is in play. On the putting green, even if the ball marker is still in place, if the ball were to be moved by the wind to a new position it must be played from this new position.

Decision 20-2c/3.5 deals with a ball declared unplayable, dropped correctly and at rest, which subsequently rolls and comes to rest out of bounds. The ruling is that the player must now proceed under Rule 27-1 (ie, “must play a ball, under penalty of one stroke, as nearly as possible at the spot from which the original ball was last played”). On the other hand, Decision 20-3d/1, where a placed ball rolls about 3 feet into the hole, states that, provided the ball was at rest before rolling, the player is regarded as having holed out with his previous stroke. If the ball had not come to rest when placed, Rule 20-3d would have required the player to replace the ball. (In both of these Decisions, the assumption is, of course, that the player has not addressed the ball and that neither the player nor any outside agency have caused the ball to move).

Decision 20-3d/2 covers the common situation where a ball, at rest against a Movable Obstruction (a rake) in a bunker, moved when the rake was lifted. Due to the slope of the bunker and the firmness of the sand, the ball would not come to rest when placed at the spot where it originally lay, nor on any other spot no nearer the hole. The Decision requires the player to either take relief under the stroke and distance option of the Unplayable Ball Rule (28a) outside the bunker, or, in equity (Rule 1-4) to drop a ball, under penalty of one stroke, outside the bunker, keeping the point where the ball lay directly between the hole and the spot on which the ball was dropped. It is not permissible to press the ball into the sand in order to cause it to remain at rest.

Rules Quiz

By Brian Nesbitt

(Victorian State Level Referee)

Club Level, No Rule Book Quiz — Rule Numbers Required Please.

The key here is to try to learn Pages 2 and 3 in the Rule Book.

1. Order of Play
2. Teeing Ground
3. Ball
4. Advice; Indicating Line of Play
5. Water Hazards
6. Obstructions
7. Abnormal Ground Conditions
8. Striking the Ball
9. Ball Played as it Lies
10. Searching for and Identifying Ball

Club Level, you may use the Rule Book if necessary here, but I want the Rule number and sub-section as well please.

1. Wrong Putting Green
2. Embedded Ball
3. Lifting and Marking
4. Out of Bounds
5. Striking Ball more than once
6. Ball falling off Tee
7. Unusual Use of Equipment
8. Searching for Ball
9. Ball at Rest moved by Fellow Competitor
10. Practice Before or Between Rounds

Now for a Hole with our heroines, Dawn and Briony. Please count Briony's strokes and any penalties involved in each paragraph and check your score for the hole at the end.

Briony's Matchless Stroke Play

1. Briony stood on the first tee in a howling gale and addressed her ball to start a medal round. As she swung at the ball the wind blew it off the tee and, miraculously, Briony made contact with the moving ball and drove it about 120 metres straight down the fairway. 'Never seen that happen before' said Dawn, as she put her ball down and spanked it 200 metres straight down the fairway.
2. Briony was pleased with her effort on the first tee and thought it could be her day. She approached her second shot and decided that she couldn't reach the green in the wind, so she would sensibly lay up in front of the green. She made her usual fast

swing and was caught by a gust of wind, which nearly caused her to miss her ball, which flew off to the right and nestled down in the rough.

3. Briony and Dawn spent a couple of minutes searching before Briony found her ball. Unfortunately, she stumbled on a tree root and accidentally stood on her ball. As Briony knew the original lie of the ball she knew she had to place it, rather than drop it, and did so, just within two club lengths from the original lie. She then hacked out and the ball ended up in a deep pot bunker at the side of the green.
4. The ball came to rest near the back of the bunker and in playing her shot she touched the bare earth wall on her backswing to get the ball out. She hit a great shot and the ball came to rest about 30 cm from the hole.
5. She strolled up to her ball to knock it in and dropped her putter, which fell and moved her ball and Briony, by now fed up, knocked the putt into the hole.

This next Section will require the use of the Decisions Book and is aimed at State Level Referees. Please give the Decision number, but you may be able to give the Rule number and possibly the sub-section from memory! Ideally we want a decision within 3 minutes.

1. A player addresses his ball and it moves backwards. Before he can remove his club, the ball is stopped by the clubhead. What is the ruling?
2. In a match Player A is under a tree with some low-hanging branches. He starts his downswing and his clubhead is deflected, or stopped by the branches of the tree. His opponent Player B immediately says, 'Bad luck' and the Player A questions why he said it. The opponent Player B then states that Player A has made a stroke, even though the club never got anywhere near the ball because it got hung-up on the branch. You are called.
3. In a club match play competition, players had the option of playing on a specific date, or on a date mutually agreed before the final date. A and B agreed to play their match on a prior date. However, B arrived more than 5 minutes late and A claimed the match. B lodged an immediate claim and stated that they could still play the match on the final date. What was the Committee's decision?
4. In a match, Player A drills his 3 wood stroke into the grass covered face of a pot bunker about twenty metres in front of himself. He claims that as his ball is embedded through the green he is entitled to relief without penalty. Player B disagrees and you are called.
5. In a match Player A in playing a tee shot, missed the ball. Before playing his next stroke, he pressed down the turf behind the ball. As the ball was in play, Player B immediately protested. Player A insisted he was allowed to press down the turf. You are called.

Refereeing at The Open Championship

By Simon Magdulski

(Director - Rules & Handicapping, Golf Australia)

Many Australians refer to it as the 'British Open'. In the UK it is either 'The Open', or more formally 'The Open Championship'. Whatever you call it, it oozes history, and it's the biggest golf tournament on the planet.

I've been lucky enough to referee at four Open Championships – 2008 at Royal Birkdale, 2011 at Royal St George's, 2012 at Royal Lytham & St Anne's, and this year at Muirfield. These are all courses that are steeped in history and it is difficult not to pick up a sense of that as you navigate your way around the historic linksland. So much of the modern day is consumed with living in the moment, but it's different when you go to these places. At this event, people have been playing, or refereeing, or spectating for over 150 years, and whilst evolution will continue to occur, it will all still be happening in another 150 years from now. And it's a terrific feeling to become a tiny little part of the history of this championship.

You may remember Geoff Ogilvy lamenting his luck after the 2008 event in self-deprecating style. He believed he got the worst of the draw when on the first morning he played in freezing wind and rain, and that conditions weren't much better when he played in the afternoon on day 2. However, he then went on to observe that he played only a couple of groups away from the eventual champion Pádraig Harrington, so "maybe I'm just a whinger". But that first morning provided the conditions in which I made my debut as a Major championship referee – 7 degrees, bucketing with rain and blowing a gale. To this day I remember thinking that coming out of the Melbourne winter I was acclimatised to this weather, only to realise that I was being exposed to the height of the English summer!

But what about the spectators in this weather? Did it dampen their enthusiasm or have any discernible impact on the size of the gallery? Not a chance! I may have had good cause to question the sanity of the English golf public, but certainly not their fortitude! And what did the Scots who were present at Royal Birkdale make of all this? They assured me that this was just "dodgy English weather" and that the sun would be shining brightly up north in Edinburgh. I'm sure they knew what they were talking about.....

But where are the referees at the Open Championship drawn from? The answer is from pretty much every part of the globe and every component of international golf administration. The Rules Committee has on it representatives from the European PGA Tour, the US PGA Tour, the Australasian PGA Tour, the Japan Golf Tour, the Asian PGA Tour, the Sunshine PGA Tour in Africa, the European Golf Association, the Council of National Golf Unions, the USGA, Augusta National Golf Club, the Asia-Pacific Golf Confederation, the British PGA, the US PGA, the LPGA, the LET, the Royal Canadian Golf Association, the South African Golf Association, New Zealand Golf, the Japan Golf Association and of course Golf Australia and The R&A itself. As a professional golf administrator it is an invaluable opportunity to meet, listen and learn. It is a fun week, a week in which there is a great sense of honour to be representing your country, but it is also the richest week of the year from a professional perspective.

And how do the referees operate at the Open Championship? There are 52 groups on the first two days and every group is accompanied by a walking referee. Additionally, a number of groups will also have a Rules Observer. Plus there are a multitude of Rules Rovers on the course. The rovers will primarily be concerned with managing pace of play, however they are also available for second opinions and for ferrying players around in lost ball situations where the player has not played a provisional. At Muirfield this year I discovered another function of the rover – they serve as an incredibly effective mechanism for communicating cricket scores to Australian walking referees when England is playing well. Of course, the chatter dissipates when their team has a poor spell on the field – unfortunately there weren't too many quiet spells during my time on-course at Muirfield.....

For the final two days, there are fewer groups which means less referees are needed and consequently there will be more groups with observers.

The number of groups with observers will be dependent on how many players make the cut – some years will see the final groups accompanied by two observers and a referee.

Once a referee or their family arrives at the local airport, The R&A takes care of everything. A courtesy car driver will be collecting Phil Mickelson one day and Simon Magdulski the next. You're then taken to your accommodation which is fully covered by The R&A, as are all meals. The highlight of my four years from an accommodation perspective was in 2011 when the event was at Royal St George's. Royal St George's is in a small English village called Sandwich which has no chance of providing enough accommodation to cater for the needs of the Open Championship, so a multitude of houses, B&Bs, hotels, and motels were sourced in a variety of nearby towns. I was lucky enough that year to stay in the Canterbury Cathedral Lodge (the Canterbury Cathedral is the home of the Church of England) and each morning I was waking up 80 metres from this beautiful and historic structure. That said, when traffic was poor (which was most of the time), it took 90 minutes to get to the golf course, but it was worth it!

Most referees will arrive on the Monday of championship week. They will register with The R&A Rules staff, collect the various paperwork and walk the course with The R&A Hard Card and Supplementary Local Rules sheet. And this is where the fun starts. The first time you attend the Open Championship, there is a definite 'wow factor' around the sheer scale of the infrastructure. I haven't been to every significant golf event around the world but I'm reliably informed by those who have that The R&A 'build' is clearly the biggest thing in the game. And that makes for a lot of odd situations in which a little white ball can find itself. As a result, there are a lot of scenarios to be mentally prepared for. However the key thing to remember as a referee is that for all of the weird and wonderful scenarios you can dream up, the vast majority of rulings you encounter at the Open Championship don't actually involve weird and wonderful scenarios! For the referee, as with the player, when on-course you need to treat it as just another golf tournament and to stay focussed on the task at hand.

There is a briefing session of the entire Rules Committee on the Wednesday morning. This is conducted by The R&A's Rules Chairman (Chris Hilton) and The R&A's Executive Director – Rules and Equipment Standards (David Rickman). The full group of referees is then split up into about 10 groups, and each group walks the entire course on a tour that is led by a member of The R&A's Championship Committee (the Championship Committee is the event's governing committee and its Chairman makes the speech at the presentation ceremony and presents the Auld Claret Jug to the winner).

Perhaps the highlight to date for me at the Open Championship was being provided with the opportunity to referee Phil Mickelson on the final day in 2008. He has an extraordinary game and appears to see shots that other golfers wouldn't think of playing. He was also very engaging and it's easy to see why he's so popular with the galleries.

I have to say that I'm a real fan of Robert Allenby's ball striking, so refereeing him at Royal St George's was for me like watching an artist go about his work. A curious aspect of the Allenby swing is that people who see him a lot on television will typically find it a notably different experience to watch him on-course.

Acting as Chris Hilton's observer for Lee Westwood and Hunter Mahan in the final group on Sunday this year was a lot of fun and also enabled me to see plenty of Adam Scott and Tiger Woods in the second last group. Whilst refereeing Sergio Garcia and Pádraig Harrington the previous day certainly helped to take my mind off the cricket.

But there's one more thing. My lowest handicap to date is 14, and whilst I aim to one day get down to single figures, I know that these guys play a game I can only dream of. Nonetheless, I've had the great privilege to walk along the middle of the 18th fairway at the Open Championship and look up at those famous stands and scoreboards whilst packed galleries are providing a standing ovation to global superstars. It's pretty special to enjoy the view I've had of that sort of moment.

Local Rules - An Outline

By David Greenhill

(Chief Operating Officer - Golf Victoria & Golf Australia National Referee)

Rule 33-8a of the Rules of Golf enables Club Committees to “make and publish Local Rules for abnormal conditions”. Accordingly, Local Rules are introduced by a Club Committee for specific course conditions, not covered by the Rules of Golf.

Rule 33-2a requires Committees to “define accurately: (i) the course and out of bounds; (ii) the margins of water hazards and lateral water hazards; (iii) ground under repair and; (iv) obstructions and integral parts of the course.” Therefore, Local Rules also define areas that are located on the course and specify how a player is to proceed in such areas. Appendix 1 in the Rules of Golf outlines the various areas where local rules and definitions are required: -

- Course Boundaries
- Water Hazards/Lateral Water Hazards
- Areas of the Course Requiring Preservation
 - > Turf Nurseries
 - > Young Tree Plantations
 - > Garden Beds
- Obstructions
 - > Young Trees
 - > Fixed Sprinkler Heads
 - > Roads and Paths
 - > Stones in Bunkers
 - > Power Lines
- Environmentally-Sensitive Areas

A club's Local Rules are usually printed on the back of the Club score card, thus making it easy for players to locate and refer to the Local Rules as required during play on the course. In addition, Committees sometimes need to introduce Temporary Local Rules for situations which occur and are temporarily present on the golf course such as: -

- Ground Under Repair
 - > Areas of Course Maintenance Works
 - > Fallen Trees
 - > Burst Pipe
 - > Damage to the Course
 - > Wheel Marks made by Course Equipment

- Aeration Holes
- Embedded Ball Through the Green
- Preferred Lies or Tee-Up due to extremely wet/muddy conditions
- Temporary Obstructions

Temporary Local Rules are usually displayed on major noticeboards in men's and women's locker rooms, adjacent to the 1st tee and near professional shops (where applicable). In major open or club events, it is recommended that copies of Temporary Local Rules be provided to all competing players to fully inform of all conditions which exist on the course.

Penalties imposed by a Rule of Golf can not be waived by a Local Rule. The modification of a Rule of Golf in a Local Rule is not allowed without the permission of the The R&A (but contact your State Association in the first instance) and such permission is only given in very special cases. Local Rules are also not intended to cater for conditions that are covered by the Rules of Golf. Consequently, Local Rules are not required on the following issues as the Rules of Golf answer them directly: -

- Cleaning of a Ball on the Putting Green (Rule 16-1b)
- Repair of Old Hole Plugs and Ball Marks on the Putting Green (Rule 16-1c)
- Immovable Obstruction on the Putting Green intervening on the Line of Putt (Rule 24-2a)
- Artificially Surfaced Roads and Paths (Rule 24-2)
- Rabbit Scrapes (Rule 25-1)
- Embedded ball in any closely mown area through the green (Rule 25-2)

Printing extracts from or rewording the Rules of Golf within Local Rules is undesirable due to potential amendments to a Rule and subsequent confusion experienced by players. There are a number of Resource Items and services available to assist clubs in the development of Local Rules and Temporary Local Rules as follows: -

- The Rules of Golf Book – specifically Appendix I (Parts A & B);
- The R&A publication – “Guidance on Running a Competition”
- The R&A publication – “Decisions on the Rules of Golf” whereby approximately 100 Decisions and related references are listed under the Local Rules index heading including 48 Decisions found under Rule 33-8;
- State Golf bodies offer a free consultation service to clubs to both review existing club Local Rules and assist in developing Temporary Local Rules as required.

All clubs are encouraged to conduct regular course inspections and liaison with the Course Superintendent in order to create/review Temporary Local Rules as required. Prior to the reprint of club score cards, clubs should conduct a meeting of the Club's Match Committee and Course Superintendent to review the Local Rules as printed on the back of the score card. It must be remembered that the Local Rules as printed must be followed even if they are not technically correct.

Outlined on the following page is a standard example of a club's Local Rules. Should your club's Local Rules differ significantly from the information presented below, it is recommended that contact be made with Golf Australia or your State Golf body.



Example Golf Club - Local Rules

To be read in conjunction with the Rules of Golf and any Temporary Local Rules

1. OUT OF BOUNDS (Rule 27 applies)

- a) All ground outside the Club boundary fences.
- b) The Clubhouse and car park as defined by [insert description specific to the club – e.g. the paved cart path surrounding the clubhouse and immediate area as marked by OOB stakes]
- c) Any other boundary specific to the club – e.g. Course maintenance facility as marked by OOB stakes

2. STAKED TREES

If a staked tree interferes with a player's stance or area of intended swing, the ball must be lifted without penalty, and dropped in accordance with the procedure prescribed in Rule 24-2b. The ball may be cleaned when lifted, without penalty.

3. IMMOVABLE OBSTRUCTIONS (Rule 24-2 applies)

- a) All stakes defining GUR areas, water hazards and stakes (and/or tree guards) supporting staked trees/shrubs; cart directional signage; irrigation boxes and distance markers;
- b) Immovable Obstructions on or within two club-lengths of the Putting Green. In addition to relief available under Rule 24-2, Specimen Local Rule 6 of Appendix 1, Part B, page 130, of the Rules of Golf applies.
- c) Specific item relevant to the club – e.g. Protective fence adjacent to the 9th tee. Note: Line of sight relief is not available under Rule 24-2b.

4. GROUND UNDER REPAIR (Rule 25-1 applies)

Areas defined by white stakes; white lines and/or GUR signage;

5. WATER HAZARDS

Water hazards are defined by yellow stakes and/or lines. Lateral water hazards are defined by red stakes and/or lines. Note: Where no line exists, the hazard is defined by the natural margin.

6. STONES IN BUNKERS

Stones and rocks in bunkers are movable obstructions. Rule 24-1 applies.

7. DISTANCE MEASURING DEVICES

For all play at Example Golf Club, a player may obtain distance information by using a device that measures distance only. Specimen Local Rule 9 of Appendix 1, Part B, page 136, of the Rules of Golf applies.

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF LOCAL RULES

Stroke Play – 2 strokes; Match Play – loss of hole

Rules Quiz Answers

Answers to Club Level Quiz — Rule Numbers

1. Rule 10
2. Rule 11
3. Rule 5
4. Rule 8
5. Rule 26
6. Rule 24
7. Rule 25
8. Rule 14
9. Rule 13
10. Rule 12

Answers to Club Level Quiz using Rule Book

1. Rule 25-3
2. Rule 25-2
3. Rule 20-1
4. Rule 27-1
5. Rule 14-4
6. Rule 11-3
7. Rule 14-3
8. Rule 12-1
9. Rule 18-4
10. Rule 7-1

A round with Dawn and Briony Answers

1. One stroke, no penalty. Rule 11-3
2. One stroke, no penalty.

3. One stroke, two penalty strokes. Decision 18-2a/21.3. As the original lie was known Briony was required to place her ball within ONE club length as required under Rule 20-3b. The original lie was altered when she stepped on it.
4. One stroke, two penalty strokes. Decision 13-4/34. Whilst undoubtedly pulling off the shot of the century, Briony unfortunately incurred a two stroke penalty for touching the bare earth wall, which is considered to be part of the bunker.
5. One stroke and two penalty strokes. Decision 20-1/14 suggests a one stroke penalty, but because she failed to replace her ball she incurs a two stroke penalty under 18-2a and 20-7.

Total: 5 strokes and 6 penalty strokes = 11 strokes

Decisions Book Answers

1. Decision 18-2b/12. The player is penalised one stroke under 18-2b and the ball must be replaced. See the last para of the Decision for another situation.
2. Decision 14/1. Yes, the player has made a stroke — see Definition of a stroke.
3. Decision 33-3/1. The starting time agreed by the players had the same status as a starting time fixed by the Committee and, therefore B was disqualified for arriving more than 5 minutes after the agreed tee time.
4. Decision 25-2/5. No free relief, unless the grass had been cut to fairway height or less or there was a local rule allowing for relief for an embedded ball through the green.
5. Decision 13-2/2. Yes, this is allowed. Rule 13-2 permits eliminating irregularities of surface on the teeing ground, whether or not the ball is in play.

