

GOLF AUSTRALIA RULES

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2014



GolfAustralia



Golf Australia National Referees at the 2013 Emirates Australian Open

Rules on Tour

By Tom Duguid

(Editor, GA National Referee & part-time PGA Tour Referee)

The pre-Christmas summer season seemed to be relatively drama-free compared with the wild winds experienced in 2012's Emirates Aussie Open at The Lakes. From my perspective the main difficulties occurred during the NSW Open at Castle Hill Country Club when heavy rain firstly soaked the course and prevented any course marking on the Monday, followed up by numerous play suspensions due to electrical storms in the area on days 2 and 3.

Thankfully the event finished on schedule, utilising early starts and late finishes. The Golf NSW referees, headed by two of our regular Newsletter contributors Frank Gal and Sue Fabian, combined extremely well with PGA Tour personnel to get players off and back on to the course efficiently. Elsewhere in this issue, Sue deals with some of the important

rules aspects pertaining to suspension and resumption of play.

A wet weather tip from the Tour – when next you are staying at a reasonable hotel, be sure to “acquire” the complimentary shower cap. They fit perfectly over the steering wheel of a golf cart, thus keeping your draw and timing sheets dry!

Perhaps the most contentious situation that an official has to handle on a regular basis is that of a ball lost in or around a water hazard. Is it known or virtually certain to be in the hazard?

During the Final Stage of the PGA Tour's Qualifying School at Peninsula Country Golf Club on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula in December, a young pro hit his drive into a treed area of which most of the relevant area was marked as a Lateral Water Hazard.

Driving from the adjacent fairway, I joined the group in the search. After almost 5 minutes, the player and his caddie started discussing where

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Suspension of Play
National Referee Sue Fabian sets out how Committees should deal with suspensions and resumptions of play



New Decisions on the Rules of Golf
GA Rules of Golf & Amateur Status Sub - Committee Member Frank Gal explains some of the new Decisions introduced in 2014



Ask the Referee
John Paramor, Chief European Tour Referee answers questions about refereeing on tour





to take relief from the hazard, presumably under 26-1.c. At that point I queried with him the validity of such a drop. Both player and caddie strongly expressed the view that the ball must be in the hazard, as the fairway side of the hazard was sandy and relatively clear of rough.

However just short of the hazard was a patch of rough and trees in which a fellow-competitor had concentrated his search. Upon questioning both fellow-competitors, neither was prepared to support the player's view. I then advised the player that as there was no virtual certainty of the ball's whereabouts, he must play the provisional ball that lay nearby, out of the hazard.

As he and his caddie begrudgingly pondered his strategy with the provisional ball, I wandered back to my cart, only to find a ball some 25 metres short of the hazard. Knowing from the markings that it was the original ball and that the 5 minutes had well and truly passed, I handed it to the caddie (while trying not to show a warm and fuzzy feeling of satisfaction)!

During the Australian PGA Championship at Royal Pines, on a couple of occasions Tour officials had to deal with balls up against wire Out of Bounds fences. This can at times be difficult to explain to the player that although his ball is inside the wire, because it is completely outside the inside line of the fence posts the ball is OOB. It is wise to have in your bag of tricks a length of string to run between the posts – a physical demonstration is usually easier and better accepted than trying to line up by eye.

Also at Royal Pines, I had to answer a call to a green during the second round. The player advised that as he was about to mark his ball, he accidentally dropped his marker on to the ball which moved slightly.

Let's Hear from You!

The editorial staff would be delighted to hear from our readers and as an incentive, a prize or two will be awarded each edition for the best letter/s received and published.

Naturally the theme must be Rules and could be about an interesting or unusual situation you have dealt with, a query to which you seek an answer, a comment about an article in the Newsletter or suggesting a topic for inclusion in a future Newsletter.

We would reserve the right to make minor editorial changes and would not publish your name or club if that is your wish (so as not to embarrass anyone!).

The prize for the best letter to go in the Autumn 2014 edition will win a

dozen Titleist Golf Balls and a Titleist hat. So, have a think let's hear from you! Send your contribution to rulesnewsletter@golf.org.au.

While you are thinking, ponder this situation:-
You are playing in the final of your club championship and coming to the final hole the match is all square. You hit a good drive down the middle but your opponent hits theirs into a copse of trees. You smile inwardly!

You assist in searching for their ball and after four and a half minutes, your opponent yells out that he/she has found their ball, and it is in a good lie. What do you then do, knowing that in fact their ball is in your pocket???

Although his hand was only a distance of about eight centimetres above the ball when the incident occurred, I knew that from past experience (some years ago I had been too lenient in allowing such an action), Decision 20-1/15 clearly indicates that a penalty was incurred and the ball was to be replaced.
After putting out, the player approached me, seeking another opinion. Graeme Scott (PGA Tour Tournament Manager) arrived soon after to confirm my decision that dropping the marker, irrespective from what height, is not considered to be "directly attributable" to marking the ball. Unfortunately the player missed the cut by one stroke.
PGA Tour staff member Brad Newcombe also had to deal with this same scenario at the Victorian PGA Championship at the Heritage Golf and Country Club in January, indicating that this is not an uncommon occurrence.
At the first stage of the Tour's Qualifying School at Sandhurst Golf Club (home of the PGA of Australia in outer Melbourne), I had a call to the first hole where a player's ball was within a few centimetres of the entrance road that defined Out of Bounds. After I confirmed no free relief was available from the road, he hacked the ball a short distance through some trees towards the green and proceeded after it. As I was leaving the scene he called me back, holding up a ball that he stated he picked up in the rough, thinking it was his provisional ball, but in fact was his original ball just played from the roadside! As he had walked on some yards after picking up the ball, he could not determine its exact previous location so was required to drop it at the estimated spot for a one stroke penalty.

Suspension of Play

By Sue Fabian

(Golf Australia National Referee)

Adverse Weather Conditions: Course Unplayable

Decisions about suspensions of play are often difficult for Committees. Rule 33-2d outlines the Committee's responsibility: "If the Committee or its authorised representative considers that for any reason the course is not in a playable condition or that there are circumstances that render the proper playing of the game impossible, it may, in match play or stroke play, order a temporary suspension of play or, in stroke play, declare a round null and void and cancel all scores for the round in question." Decision 33-2d/1 gives some guidelines on when a Committee should cancel a round. [Committees need to be familiar with GA Handicapping guidelines regarding incomplete and cancelled rounds.]

When a course is affected by sudden, heavy rainfall which causes flooding of greens or extensive areas of casual water, or strong winds which prevent balls coming to rest or remaining at rest on greens, a basic question for the Committee to consider is whether the course conditions allow for the proper playing of the game, under the Rules. Clearly, this is not the case in Figure 1!



Figure 1

Decision 33-2d/2 makes it clear that, once a hole is surrounded by casual water, the course is unplayable. In stroke play, the Committee should suspend play; in match play, the Committee should relocate the hole.

To some extent, situations resulting in suspension of play can be avoided by attention to expected weather conditions and careful hole placement, best done in consultation with the Course Superintendent. Consideration of expected wind direction and strength are also important in terms of hole positioning and green speed. When adverse weather conditions threaten, it is important that pins are not positioned in gutters where the flow of water through the hole position will make the hole unplayable, even though the hole may be located in a high position on the green. See Figure 2.

In some circumstances, when only a few greens are affected by casual water, the Committee may be able to keep play going, thus avoiding the long delay involved in bringing a field in for a suspension of play. Decision 33/1 refers to the Committee's ability to sanction the use of squeegees (and to permit players and caddies to assist) to clear casual water from a player's line of putt. A "Squeegee Policy", which gives guidance to players and officials, is very useful in such situations. (See the websites of GA "Elite Competition Manual" or R&A "Guidance on Running a Competition" for suggested wording.)

A very useful Decision with which Committees should be familiar is 33-8/27, which states that a Committee may not make a Local Rule providing generally that flooded bunkers are ground under repair through the green, thus allowing a player to drop out of any bunker filled with casual water, without penalty, contrary to Rule 25-1b(ii). However, "in exceptional circumstances, where certain specific bunkers are



Figure 2

completely flooded and there is no reasonable likelihood of the bunkers drying up during the round, the Committee may introduce a Local Rule providing relief without penalty from specific bunkers." Most usefully, the Decision provides suggested wording of a Local Rule which refers to the specific bunkers in question and their location, and, importantly, reminds players that "All other bunkers, regardless of whether or not they contain water, retain their status as hazards and the Rules apply accordingly".

Suspension Of Play: Dangerous Situation

The presence of dangerous conditions, particularly lightning, places great responsibility and stress on players and Committee alike. It must be remembered that players have the right, under Rule 6-8a, to discontinue play if they believe that there is danger from lightning. Decision 6-8b/5 states "This is one of the rare occasions in which the player is virtually the final judge. The safety of players is paramount, especially as there is a common natural fear of lightning. Committees should not risk exposing players to danger." However, this Decision also states that, "if the Committee has used all reasonable means to ascertain the weather prospects and has concluded that no danger from lightning exists, it has the power to order a resumption of play and to disqualify any player who refuses to comply".

The Note to Rule 6-8a refers to the fact that "the Committee may provide, in the conditions of a competition (Rule 33-1), that in potentially dangerous situations play must be discontinued immediately following a suspension of play by the Committee. If a player fails to discontinue play immediately, he is disqualified, unless circumstances warrant waiving the penalty as provided in Rule 33-7". Section 4 in Part C of Appendix 1 (p140) of the 2012-2015 Rules of Golf gives recommended wording for this Condition.

It is recommended that Committees use the universally recognised signals for suspension of play, as listed on Page 141 of the 2012-15 Rules of Golf:

- Discontinue play immediately:
One prolonged note of siren;
- Discontinue play: Three consecutive notes of siren, repeated;
- Resume play: Two short notes of siren, repeated.

Careful decision-making, prompt action and clear communication by the Committee can not only provide for player safety, but may also assist in alerting spectators to the need to take shelter.

The 2013 Men's NSW Open, held at Castle Hill Country Club in November, saw a number of situations where



the threat of lightning resulted in immediate suspensions of play. Huge thunder cells rolled in from the Blue Mountains, especially during the first two days of play, and satellite images showed smaller cells constantly joining to form large cells as they crossed the plains and moved towards Sydney (Figure 3). There were five suspensions of play in a two-day period, culminating in a postponement of Friday's round at around 5.00pm, when it became obvious that it would not be possible to get players safely back out onto the course for further play that day.

Players completed their rounds on Saturday morning, after which the cut was done and the draw completed for Saturday's play. A further suspension of play because of failing light on Saturday evening saw players again completing their Saturday rounds on Sunday morning before play could commence for the final day. Thanks to the effective way in which the impact of thunderstorms was dealt with, the Open was completed and the Presentation held at 4.30pm on Sunday afternoon. Notable aspects of the successful management of the event were:

- Careful monitoring of the prevailing weather conditions by use of satellite information;
- A consultative and collaborative approach by the PGA, Golf NSW and Castle Hill Country Club, which kept open options for completing the event and resulted in prompt and sound decisions which were publically supported by all parties;
- Clear and frequent communication with players;
- Effective communication with on course referees, who were in position and able to assist as necessary;
- Excellent cooperation by Castle Hill Country Club in managing changes to course preparation.



Figure 3

Other Dangers: Note that, although emphasis is given to a threat from lightning, the Note to Rule 6-8a and the recommended Condition refer to "dangerous situations" in general. Figure 4 shows the 6th hole at Castle Hill Country Club, where the safety of players was of concern during the recent 2014 NSW Medal because of flames and smoke from a bushfire which began during play on the edge of the golf course and quickly spread onto the course at the 6th fairway and near the green.

Immediate suspension of play was ordered for the safety of players, particularly because of thick smoke across a large part of the course. Because of quick action by local fire services which accessed the course to fight the blaze and could indicate when conditions were safe, resumption of play was possible reasonably quickly and the field was able to complete play on the day. The situation above was complicated because players on some parts of the course would not have been aware of the extent of the danger. Assistance of on-course referees, Pro Shop and Club personnel in communicating with players about the imminent suspension and later about the resumption of play was very valuable.

Some players had chosen to remain on course during the suspension, and one group of these, unable to hear the siren signifying resumption of play, began play a few minutes early when they saw players back on the course. Decision 6-8b/6 was used in this situation and the decision was made to waive both the Disqualification and stroke penalties in light of the unusual circumstances.



Figure 4

Resumption Of Play

Committee members need to be familiar with Rule 6-8d to assist players with the procedure for resuming play after a discontinuance or suspension.

- Play must be resumed from where it was discontinued, even if resumption occurs on a subsequent day;
- If the player has lifted the ball, provided he was entitled to lift it, he must place the original or a substituted ball on the spot from which the original ball was lifted; otherwise, the original ball must be replaced (See Rule 6-8c);
- If the player has not lifted his ball, he may, provided he was entitled to lift it under Rule 6-8c, mark, lift and clean his ball or substitute a ball;
- If the player's ball or ball-marker has moved (including by wind or water) while play is discontinued, a ball or ball-marker must be placed on the spot from which the original ball or marker was moved;
- If this spot is impossible to determine, it must be estimated and the ball placed on the estimated spot.
- If the lie of the ball is altered (for better or worse) by natural causes, the player must accept those conditions and is not entitled to the lie he had prior to the discontinuance (Decision 6-8d/1). If the course is altered by an outside agency, eg bunkers raked by course staff, the player must re-create his original lie, for instance, a footprint in which the ball originally lay.
- In estimating the spot where the ball must be placed, the player is not entitled to a significantly better lie than he had with the original ball (Decision 6-8d/5).

Rules Quiz

By Brian Nesbitt

(Victorian State Level Referee)

Club Level, No Rule Book Quiz – Rule Numbers Please.

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

1. Ball Played as it Lies
2. Unplayable Ball
3. Water Hazards
4. Searching For and Identifying Ball
5. Teeing Ground
6. Obstructions
7. Loose Impediments
8. Cleaning Ball
9. Putting Green
10. Flagstick

Club Level — True or False

1. In order to determine the Nearest Point of Relief accurately, the player should use the club with which he would have made his next stroke, if the condition were not there, to simulate the address position, direction of play and swing for such a stroke.
2. A ball played at the hole being played is equipment when it has been lifted and not put back into play.
3. Snow, natural ice, dew and frost are casual water or loose impediments at the option of the player.
4. The line of play extends vertically upwards from the ground and extends beyond the hole.
5. When out of bounds is defined by a line on the ground, the line itself is out of bounds. The out of bounds line extends vertically upwards and downwards.

Now for a hole with Arbuthnot. Please count the strokes and any penalty strokes involved in each paragraph and check your score for the hole at the end. Arbuthnot's Matchless Stroke play

1. Arbuthnot stood on the first tee in the Monthly Medal and nervously approached his ball. He had not been playing well and had been beset by a vicious slice on the practice ground. He addressed his ball, which he had teed up on the left-hand side of the tee to counter his slice. He swung at the ball and his worst fears were realised as his ball sailed over the fence and

out of bounds. He then waited until the three fellow-competitors had hit their balls before teeing up another brand new Titleist, which he dispatched into the next kingdom, even further out of bounds than the first ball. By now, Arbuthnot was perplexed and he resorted to a 5 iron and struck another ball down the fairway into a bunker.

2. Arbuthnot was not best pleased with his effort on the first tee and thought it might be one of those days. He approached the bunker in which his ball lay, looked up and found that he could not play as the group in front was in trouble in front of the green. Casually he rested on his iron in the bunker as he waited to play his shot.
3. He hit a remarkably good shot in the circumstances and found himself on the apron of the green about a metre short of the green itself. As he approached his ball he noticed some sand on the apron on his line of play, which had been deposited by one of the players in the group in front. He brushed aside this sand and struck his putt confidently.
4. Unfortunately, the green was much faster than the practice putting green on which Arbuthnot had spent 15 minutes honing his stroke prior to the round and the ball raced past the hole and fell into a deep pot bunker.
5. Arbuthnot then picked his ball out of the bunker and dropped it on the apron of the green as near as possible to the spot from which he had played his putt and this time the ball rolled unerringly 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 should be able to give the Rule number and possibly the sub-para from memory!

1. In making a practice swing near his ball, a player moves a loose impediment, which causes his ball in play to move. What is the ruling?
2. 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?
3. May a player about to start his round seek advice as to clubs used at various holes from a player who has just finished?
4. A player removes a post defining out of bounds on his line of play. He realises he has made a mistake and replaces it before playing his next stroke. What is the ruling?
5. A player touches his line of putt in brushing aside loose impediments with his cap or towel. Is this permissible?

Decisions on the Rules of Golf

By Frank Gal

(GA Rules of Golf & Amateur Status Sub-Committee Member & National Referee)

Every two years, golf's ruling bodies (the R&A and the United States Golf Association) publish the "Decisions on the Rules of Golf". The Decisions provide greater clarity to the Rules by answering questions not specifically addressed in the Rules of Golf.

The publication contains more than 1,200 Decisions and is amended every two years to keep up with the evolution of the game. The 2014-2015 edition, which took effect on 1 January 2014, contains 3 new and 59 revised decisions. A list of the new and revised Decisions is provided at the beginning of the book.

New Decisions

Decision 14-3/18

This new Decision allows players to access weather information during a round, such as wind or temperature, through an App or internet browser on a smartphone. A distinction is made between accessing such information in this manner and using a device such as an anemometer or a thermometer to actively gauge or measure these conditions, which remains a breach of the Rules.

The Decision also clarifies that players are permitted to access information on the threat of an impending storm in order to protect their own safety.

Decision 18/4

Although this Decision received the most publicity, it has the least impact on play in all except the highest levels of elite tournament golf. It applies to a review of technological evidence (e.g., HDTV, digital recording or other online visual media). If the review shows that a ball has left its position and come to rest in another location, the ball will not be deemed to have moved if that movement was not reasonably discernible to the naked eye at the time.

The R&A and the USGA have issued a Joint Statement on the Use of Video and other Visual Evidence to further explain their position on this issue. The Joint Statement can be viewed on the R&A website www.randa.org

Decision 18-2b/1

This Decision clarifies the exception to Rule 18-2b; Ball Moving After Address. The exception exonerates the player from penalty if the ball moves after addressing it "if it is known or virtually certain that the player did not cause his ball to move".

However, the Decision clearly explains that the effects of gravity do not satisfy this exception. The exception only applies if 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.

So, if a player has addressed the ball by grounding his or her club immediately in front of or immediately behind the ball and the ball moves, the player will incur a penalty of one stroke if the movement was caused by gravity, and the ball must be replaced.

Revised Decisions

The following are some of the more significant revisions to the Decisions.

Decision 6-6b/2

This Decision explains that a competitor or marker can sign the score card other than in the space provided and may use initials in place of a signature, provided it is clear from all the evidence that this was done for the purpose of verifying the competitor's score for all the holes. If, for example, an initial was placed on the card to verify an alteration

to a score for a hole, this would not, of itself, satisfy the requirement under Rule 6-6b to sign the score card.

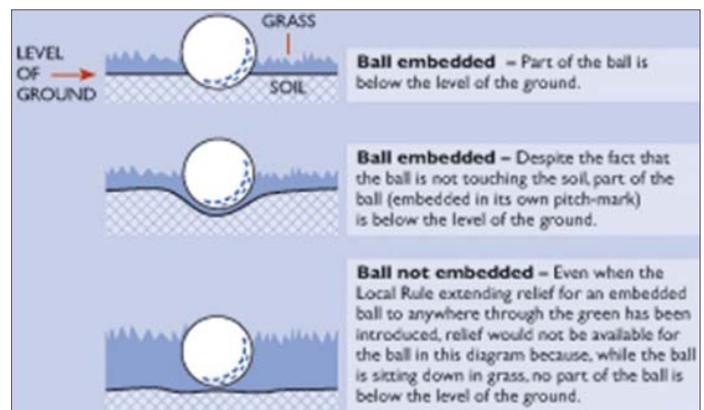
Decision 14-3/4

The amendment to this Decision allows the use of a compass during a round to determine the direction of the wind or of the grain in the greens.

As a result, smartphones with a built-in compass are not automatically precluded from being used as distance measuring devices. New Decision 14-3/18 (see above) gives further advice about the use of smartphones to access weather information. Please refer to the following link on the R&A Website for more information - <http://www.randa.org/en/RandA/News/News/2014/January/Revision-to-Rules-Regarding-Distance-Measuring-Devices.aspx>

Decision 25-2/0.5

The Decision explains when a ball is deemed to be embedded in the ground and now includes the following diagram for clarity:



Decision 27-2a/1.5

A provisional ball must be played before the player or his/her partner goes forward to search for the original ball. This revision allows a player to go forward a short distance (up to 50 yards) to determine whether it would save time to return promptly to play a provisional ball. If the player proceeds more than 50 yards he or she would only be permitted to play a provisional ball if this is done for a specific purpose, such as to retrieve a ball or a different club or to confer with a referee.

Decision 33-8/8

If exposed tree roots are encroaching on to the fairway, this revision allows a Committee to make a Local Rule providing relief for interference from exposed tree roots when a ball lies on a closely-mown area. The Committee may restrict interference for the lie of the ball and the area of intended swing.

Conclusion

It is highly recommended that clubs acquire a copy of the current edition of Decisions on the Rules of Golf for the committee(s) managing competitions for the club. It is also essential that active referees accredited at State Level have access to the current Decisions. The hard copy can be purchased on-line from State Golf Associations. The Decisions are also available for Apple and Android devices.

Ask the Referee



Courtesy: R&A Website
(www.randa.org)

This issue is the turn of John Paramor (Chief Referee on the European Tour) to answer questions from R&A website visitors, and to share his vast knowledge and experience of refereeing. (An extract from the R&A website).

How did you get started in refereeing?

I think I got started when I recognised that I wouldn't be good enough as a player and the Rules had some sort of fascination for me. I was just lucky

enough to be in the right place at the right time as I'd known Peter Butler [European Tour player and 4-time Ryder Cupper] and caddied for him for a season. He was on the Tour's players committee and knew of the position that was being created as a Rules official and luckily I managed to get the job.

If you have some players that are playing badly, playing a lot of provisional balls and searching for balls, how do you handle those groups, those players?

There comes a time when we might encourage the players, through further warnings, to try and pick up the pace. There will come a time though when eventually it's a case of saying, "Sorry lads but we're going to have to put you on the clock because you're not improving and you're unfortunately having a lot of bad luck with some of your shots." That basically means that they might be hitting a lot of provisional balls and additional shots but they must make sure that they then get it done in the prescribed limits which, as a base, is 40 seconds to make the shot.

What do you carry on the golf course with you when you are refereeing?

I take something to keep warm and dry, but a stopwatch is also essential. I need it for the time but also when I am timing players under our pace of play policy. I check I have an accurate time every morning either with the official time or by telephone to the world clock. I also make sure I have a Rules Book, Decisions Book, a hole repairing kit, dental floss – not for cleaning my teeth but for determining if a ball is out of bounds or in a water hazard, that kind of thing. I also take pencils and pens, a multi-tool, a walkie-talkie radio, sun screen and an air horn.

What has changed the most since you have started your refereeing career?

When I first started there were very few full-time tournament players. Easily over half the field were comprised of players who used to play golf tournaments but the other fifty per cent of the time they had another job, be it as a club professional or some other line of work, but they all had, or the vast majority had, other forms of income and other ways of earning their livelihood. That has changed and now we have full-time tour players and that kind of changed during the early eighties. That was the biggest change in terms of what I see and the guys I deal with.

From a referee's point of view, I suppose professionalism. We have many more referees and we do take it much more seriously. There is now much more detailed preparation prior to an



event start.

I think everything throughout the game has improved, from greenkeeping equipment so that golf courses are presented better, and equipment that guys use to play golf with has improved...although some people would say maybe not for the better! Yes, they are hitting it further and straighter than they ever have done and so I suppose that we have to make sure with everything that we do, as a committee in charge of a competition, that we have to take into consideration these improvements when setting up golf courses. So it's a general development throughout the game.

How often do you ask for a second opinion?

Not that often. Normally players are quite happy with the ruling...or maybe not [laugh]. They are usually happy to accept the ruling that I have given them but certainly in the cases where I'm not sure I'll say to the player that "I am not 100% sure on this, if you want a second opinion I don't mind but this is my answer." So, if they want a second opinion I have no problem calling for one. It's not that often, but, yes, it does happen from time to



time when it's a case of determining whether it's an abnormal ground condition or something of that kind.

If you could change any Rule of Golf what would it be?

The professional tours around the world are almost all covered on television and there are many armchair referees who don't hesitate to make contact as soon as they see any incident on their TV's that might

appear to be a breach of the Rules. Thankfully, many of these incidents don't result in any penalty but there are occasions where, because of delayed transmission times, an incident may be hours old and scorecards have already been returned to the committee. The result of this is that any penalty incurred will result in a disqualification of the player. The Tours would much prefer to be able to add the appropriate penalty to a player's score and avoid the ultimate DQ penalty. However, there are strong views from other parties that say a change of Rule 6-6d in relation to returning a scorecard could lead to a lessening of the responsibility for the player to ensure he returns a correct score card in a timely manner. We hope to persuade those doubters that a DQ penalty is not at all proportionate in many of these cases. [Editor: this subject is being closely looked at by the R&A Rules of Golf Committee of which John is a member.]

Are the Rules too complicated - should there be a policy towards the education of those playing at a competitive level and those commentating on the game?

I do get frustrated sometimes when the commentators mislead people in regard to Rules when they make a guess on a ruling rather than either looking it up or asking the Tour's Rules Team. That happens from time to time and it is frustrating. I suppose with regard to players themselves I am mindful of the fact that the reason they're asking is for their protection. They know that if they ask for a ruling they can't possibly get it wrong, there's no way that they're going to attract a penalty, so by getting us involved, it's really their safety net. So even though they're calling for us they probably do know the answer but they're just using us for that safety net so they don't get any sort of penalty.

Once a group is put on the clock how often would you have to issue bad times before the group is back in position?

That depends on how slowly the guys are playing. I think that most guys



that we time on Tour do start to hit the ball somewhat quicker but if we look at the number of bad times we have during a year, I think this year we will have in the region of 50 bad times, some of those unfortunately will be two in the same round, that will end up being a stroke penalty. But it seems

that in the majority of cases, as soon as you get the bad time then they do know that that's the last chance and they really do pick up the pace pretty quickly and that's the end of the problem.

Players are often touching the line of putt to repair old hole plugs and ball marks, however, it's quite impossible for a referee to see what the player exactly did and to be sure that he didn't repair any other damage to the putting green. How do you handle situations like that?

There is a level of trust I think in the golfers who are playing in a competition and if we believe there to be any question, we will ask them what happened and whether they may have done something on the line of putt that is not allowable under the Rules. So yes, it is a game of trust and we expect when we ask players questions, that we're going to get a truthful answer and rule accordingly based on that answer.

What has been your most difficult ruling?

Often the most difficult is determining what is a hole made by a burrowing animal, reptile or bird. I had one of these with Seve Ballesteros on the last hole of the last event of the 1994 season when he was tied for the lead. I examined every inch of the hole and

surrounding area and nothing was convincing me that this was a free drop and eventually Seve had to play, he finished second by a shot to Bernhard Langer and finished one place further down the bonus pool pay-out.

Nowadays, the good thing is that I do have very good relationships with the members of the Rules department in The R&A and if I do have a particularly difficult situation that I want to run by them and, having already run it by my own colleague Andy McFee, I will call the Rules department where all of the members of that particular department are very happy to try to help and assist.

Do you think that rules simplification is feasible at the highest level of the game?

I think that it is too much to expect golfers to know the Rules of Golf in minute detail. I know the work that I put into it and I know what sort of level of Rules I'm at and I don't expect every golfer to put in that sort of effort to play a game. That said, I really do believe that it is not that difficult to master the basics and The Quick Guide to The Rules of Golf (the new section that appeared in the last edition of the booklet) contains so much information in a simple and easy to read manner, new golfers should be expected to read these 7 pages. It would produce a generation of golfers who were proficient in the Rules of the game.

Any tips for budding referees?

Yes, try to get all of your decisions right! More seriously, learn the definitions, really get to understand why they are there and they say exactly what they do in the manner they say it and then apply that to your Rules knowledge. You'll find it'll help greatly. Also make sure that when you're reading a Rule, read to the end of the particular Rule you're dealing with because often there is a little Exception that appears somewhere near the end of that particular Rule and if you don't reach the Exception you might be in a situation where you've already applied the penalty and in fact the player would have been covered by the Exception and therefore shouldn't have been penalised. So read the Rule through to the end and whatever you do, do not rush your decisions. Think them through and by all means look at a Rule book if you feel that it will help you and if you aren't 100% sure make sure you do look it up. Oh, and never be fearful of asking a friend or colleague.

Rules Quiz Answers

Club Level Quiz — Rule Numbers

1. Rule 13
2. Rule 28
3. Rule 26
4. Rule 12
5. Rule 11
6. Rule 24
7. Rule 23
8. Rule 21
9. Rule 16
10. Rule 17

Club Level – True or False

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. True

A hole with Arbutnot

1. Three strokes, two penalty strokes. Rule 27-1b.
2. No stroke, two penalty strokes. Decision 13-4/2: breach of Rule 13-4b.

3. Two strokes, two penalty strokes. Rule 13-2
4. No stroke and no penalty strokes.
5. One stroke and one penalty stroke. Rule 27-1a and Rule 20-5.

Total: 6 strokes and 7 penalty strokes = 13 strokes

Decisions Book

1. Decision 18-2a/20.5. The player is deemed to have caused his ball in play to move in breach of Rule 18-2a; he incurs a one stroke penalty and must replace his ball.
2. Decision 12-1/4. There is no penalty. Rule 12-1 specifically authorises touching ground in a hazard while probing. Such permission overrides any prohibitions in Rule 13-4.
3. Decision 8-1/18. Yes. Rule 8-1 applies only during the play of a round.
4. Decision 13-2/25. Two strokes penalty. The player was in breach of Rule 13-2 the moment he moved the post and there was nothing he could do to avoid the penalty. The replacement of the post before the next stroke was irrelevant.
5. Decision 16-1a/8. Yes, provided he did not press anything down.

