

Rule Tip of the Week

April Rules Quiz

2018

“April showers bring May flowers.” Did you know that this familiar rhyme, often heard this time of year, can be traced back to the mid-16th century? In 1557, an English poet and farmer, Thomas Tusser, wrote, “Sweet April showers, do spring May flowers” in his work *A Hundred Good Points of Husbandry*. In this month’s quiz, see if you are able to select the correct ruling for each of the following flower-infused situations:

1. Petunia’s drive with a yellow ball ends up in a large patch of dandelions. Unfortunately, there are so many blooming dandelions that no one can find her ball within five minutes of her commencing the search. However, everyone agrees that it is virtually certain that Petunia’s ball is hiding somewhere within the dandelions. Which of the following is correct? (a) Since it is virtually certain that her ball is in the dandelion patch, Petunia’s ball is not lost. Without penalty, Petunia may drop a ball outside of the dandelion patch no nearer the hole than the estimated point where her original ball came to rest. (b) Petunia may drop a ball anywhere within the dandelion patch under penalty of one stroke. (c) Petunia must return to the teeing ground under penalty of stroke and distance.
2. Heather’s ball comes to rest within a group of azalea bushes. She deems her ball unplayable and drops a ball about 20 feet behind the azaleas pursuant to Rule 28b. After playing the dropped ball into the fairway, she discovers that the azaleas have been designated as ground under repair by Local Rule. Heather abandons the ball in the fairway and drops and plays another ball after taking relief from the azaleas pursuant to Rule 25 [Abnormal Ground Conditions]. How many penalty strokes has Heather incurred in this stroke-play scenario? (a) None (b) One (c) Two (d) Three (e) Four (f) Five.
3. Pansy’s ball comes to rest just in bounds near a pair of lilac bushes that are rooted out of bounds. When she takes a practice swing, she accidentally knocks down a branch holding several large lilac blossoms, thereby improving the area of her intended swing. What is the ruling? (a) Since the lilac bushes are rooted out of bounds, Pansy incurs no penalty. (b) Pansy incurs a one stroke penalty. (c) Pansy incurs a loss of hole penalty in match play or a two-stroke penalty in stroke play. (d) Pansy can avoid the penalty by altering her direction of play provided the broken branch does not improve the area of her intended swing for the stroke in the new direction.



Answers:

1. (c) *See Rule 27-1c [Ball Not Found Within Five Minutes] which states, in part, “If a ball is lost as a result of not being found or identified as his by the player within five minutes after the player’s side or his or their caddies have begun to search for it, the player must play a ball, under penalty of one stroke, as nearly as possible at the spot from which the original ball was last played...” Note that, had the dandelion patch been designated as ground under repair, then Petunia would have been able to take relief from the dandelions under Rule 25 [Abnormal Ground Conditions] since it was known or virtually certain that the original ball was lost in an abnormal ground condition.*
2. (d) *Heather incurred the first penalty stroke when she proceeded in accordance with Rule 28 [Ball Unplayable]. According to Decision 28/13 [After Deeming Ball Unplayable and Lifting It, Player Discovers Ball Was in Ground Under Repair], once a player has put a ball into play under Rule 28 [Ball Unplayable], he is not permitted to then take relief, without penalty, under Rule 25 [Abnormal Ground Conditions] for the ground under repair. When Heather dropped and played another ball thinking that she could proceed under Rule 25, she was in breach of Rule 15-2 [Substituted Ball] for wrongly substituting a ball and Rule 20-7 [Playing from Wrong Place] for playing from a wrong place. In stroke play, Heather incurred an additional penalty of two strokes for playing from a wrong place, but there is no additional penalty for incorrectly substituting a ball. See the Exception to Rule 15-2.*
3. (c) *According to Rule 13-2 [Improving Lie, Area of Intended Stance or Swing, or Line of Play], generally, a player must not improve the area of his intended swing by moving, bending or breaking anything that is growing. See Decision 13-2/19 [Improving Area of Intended Swing by Moving Growing or Fixed Object Situated Out of Bounds]. Also see Decision 13-2/24 [Area of Originally Intended Swing Improved by Breaking Branch; Area of Intended Swing Finally Used Not Affected by Branch] which points out, “The player was in breach of Rule 13-2 as soon as he improved the area of the originally intended swing. The penalty is not avoided if he subsequently plays in another direction, even if the breaking of the branch had no effect on the area of the swing for a stroke in the new direction.”*