

# Pulse Odds & Ends

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As we know, professional golfers are not immune from playing errant shots. In this particular edition of "Odds & Ends," we examine several errant shots by Tour professionals earlier this year, and learn which Rules are relevant to those situations.

- During the second round of the Valspar Championship held on the Copperhead Course at the Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club in Palm Harbor, Florida, Trey Mullinax's tee shot on the par-3 4<sup>th</sup> hole ended up in the hospitality tent left of the putting green. Rather than taking relief without penalty from this temporary immovable obstruction, Mullinax realized that he had an excellent lie on the carpeted surface. Thus, he elected to play his ball as it lay! Mullinax proceeded to play an excellent wedge shot onto the green, and then holed the putt for his par! Remember that you can always play your ball as it lies without penalty, except when your ball has come to rest on a wrong putting green. Note that it was permissible for Trey to open the doors of the hospitality tent in order to facilitate playing the ball as it lay. See Decision 24-2b/14 [Window of Clubhouse Opened and Ball Played Through Window] which indicates that any part of an immovable obstruction that is designed to be movable, such as a window or a door, may be moved to any position if this can be done without undue delay.



- Rickie Fowler had a bit of tree trouble during the second round of The Players Championship at TPC Sawgrass. His drive at the 6<sup>th</sup> hole drifted towards the trees lining the right side of the hole. A ball was partially visible in the husks of a tall palm tree, but Rickie was unable to see his identifying orange markings on his ball, even with a pair of binoculars and using Rules Official Mark Russell for support. Because Fowler was unable to identify his ball within five (5) minutes, his ball was deemed lost per the



Definition of "Lost Ball" and Rule 27-1c [Ball Not Found Within Five Minutes]. Note that Rickie's use of binoculars to try to identify the ball was not a violation of Rule 14-3 [Artificial Devices and Equipment; Abnormal Use of Equipment]. Decision 14-3/3 [Eyeglasses and Binoculars] points out that standard eyeglasses and binoculars that have no range-finder attachments are not artificial devices within the meaning of the term in Rule 14-3.

- During the third round of the BMW PGA Championship at the Wentworth Club west of London, England, Rory McIlroy's errant drive on the 6<sup>th</sup> hole ended up under some foliage to the right of the hole. When he attempted to advance his ball, the ball ended up striking a spectator. Later in the same round, an errant drive by McIlroy on the 18<sup>th</sup> hole struck another spectator. In both of these situations, Rule 19-1 [Ball in Motion Deflected or Stopped by Outside Agency] applies since each of the spectators was an outside agency. Per this Rule, Rory was required to play his ball as it lay after it caromed off the spectator.
- During the second round of the Travelers Championship at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Connecticut, Zach Johnson's drive on the par-4 17<sup>th</sup> hole splashed into the lateral water hazard guarding the right side of the hole. Nevertheless, he was still able to par the hole thanks to Rule 26-1c [Relief for Ball in Water Hazard] which provided Johnson with the option of dropping a ball within two club-lengths of and not nearer the hole than the point on the opposite margin of the lateral water hazard equidistant from the hole from where his original ball last crossed the margin of the hazard. Using this option, Zach dropped a ball near the teeing ground of the 16<sup>th</sup> hole where he had a clear shot of about 230 yards to the 17<sup>th</sup> hole. After playing a hybrid to within eight feet, he drained the putt for a "ho-hum" par!



In the adjacent photograph showing Zach about to play from near the 16<sup>th</sup> teeing ground, note the yellow line defining the margin of the water hazard adjacent to the teeing ground of the 16<sup>th</sup> hole. In this case, the lake bordering both holes was defined as a water hazard (yellow lines) when playing the 16<sup>th</sup> hole and a lateral water hazard (red lines) when playing the 17<sup>th</sup> hole. See Decision 33-2a/7 [Deeming Body of Water as Both Water Hazard and Lateral Water Hazard] which points out, "A body of water ... may be defined as a water hazard in play of one hole and a lateral water hazard in play of another hole."