

Rule Tip of the Week

Now & Then Quiz

Continuing with the series of “Now & Then” articles comparing the Rules as they currently exist with the Rules that will come into effect on January 1, 2019, here is another quiz to test your knowledge of the forthcoming Rules. For each of the following statements, answer “Now” if you believe that the statement applies only to the current Rules; answer “Then” if you believe that the statement applies only to the 2019 Rules; answer “Both” if the statement is correct under both versions of the Rules; or answer “Neither” if the statement is not valid under either the “Now” or “Then” Rules.

1. Without penalty, you may pry out an acorn embedded in the putting green and also repair the depression.
2. A player is not permitted to repair a club that he or she damaged by slamming it into the ground.
3. When a player suspects that his or her ball has become cut during play of a hole, the player may mark and lift the ball without penalty to determine if it is unfit for play. However, before lifting the ball, the player must announce his or her intention to lift and give his or her opponent, marker or fellow-competitor an opportunity to examine the ball and observe the lifting and replacement.
4. A Local Rule must be adopted in order to prohibit the use of distance-measuring devices.
5. If a player accidentally steps on and moves his or her ball while searching for it in the rough, he or she will incur a one-stroke penalty and must replace the ball.
6. When your ball is in a bunker, you may remove a loose impediment that is in the same bunker without penalty.
7. A Local Rule must first be adopted by the Committee before a player may take relief on the opposite side of a lateral body of water equidistant from the hole.

Answers:

1. *Then* Currently, Rule 16-1c [Repair of Hole Plugs, Ball Marks and Other Damage] limits the player to repairing only old hole plugs or damage to the putting green caused by the impact of a ball. See also Decision 16-1a/7 [Player Repairs Depression on Line of Putt Created When Partially Embedded Acorn Removed]. Forthcoming Rule 13.1c(2) [Improvements Allowed on Putting Green: Repair of Damage] states, in part, “A player may repair damage on the putting green without penalty by taking reasonable actions to restore the putting green as nearly as possible to its original condition....” This Rule includes “Embedded objects (such as a stone, acorn or tee)” as examples of “damage on the putting green.”
2. *Now* Currently, Rule 4-3a [Damaged Clubs: Repair and Replacement: Damage in Normal Course of Play] allows a player to repair a damaged club if it was damaged in the normal course of play. But Decision 4-3/1 [Meaning of Damage Sustained in “Normal Course of Play”] points out that intentionally striking the ground with a club other than during a stroke, practice swing or practice stroke is an act that is not in the normal course of play. Forthcoming Rule 4.1a(2) [Use or Repair of Club Damaged During Round] allows a player to repair a conforming club if it is “damaged during a round.” This Rule states, in part, ““Damaged during a round” means when the club’s performance characteristics are changed because of any act during the round ... whether ...[b]y the player (such as making a stroke or practice swing with the club, putting it in or taking it out of a golf bag, dropping or leaning on it, or throwing or abusing it”
3. *Now* Current Rule 5-3 [Ball Unfit for Play] requires that the player announce his intention to lift and give his or her opponent, marker or fellow-competitor the opportunity to examine the ball and observe the lifting and replacement of the ball. Forthcoming Rule 4.2c [Ball Becomes Cut or Cracked While Playing Hole] does away with this requirement!
4. *Then* The Note to current Rule 14-3 [Artificial Devices and Unusual Equipment; Abnormal Use of Equipment] states, “The Committee may make a Local Rule allowing players to use a distance-measuring device.” Opposite to this, forthcoming Rule 4.3a(1) [Allowed and Prohibited Uses of Equipment: Distance and Directional Information] points out that the Committee may adopt a Local Rule prohibiting the use of distance-measuring devices.
5. *Now* Per current Rule 12-1 [Seeing Ball; Searching for Ball], a player is subject to penalty under Rule 18-2 [Ball at Rest Moved by Player ...] if he or she accidentally moves the ball while searching for it in the rough. Per forthcoming Rule 7.4 [Ball Accidentally Moved in Trying to Find or Identify It], there is no penalty if the player’s ball is accidentally moved by the player, opponent or anyone else while trying to find or identify it!
6. *Then* Currently, Rule 13-4 [Ball in Hazard; Prohibited Actions] prohibits the player from touching or moving a loose impediment lying in or touching the hazard when the player’s ball is in the same hazard. On the other hand, forthcoming Rule 15.1a [Removal of Loose Impediment] states, in part, “Without penalty, a player may remove a loose impediment anywhere on or off the course, and may do so in any way (such as by using a hand or foot or a club or other equipment).”
7. *Then* Currently, Rule 26-1c(ii) [Relief for Ball in Water Hazard] allows the player to drop a ball within two club-lengths of, and not nearer the hole than, a point on the opposite margin of the water hazard equidistant from the hole. Forthcoming new Rule 17.1d(3) [Relief for Ball in Penalty Area: Lateral Relief (Only for Red Penalty Area)] points out that the Committee may adopt a Local Rule allowing lateral relief on the opposite side of a red penalty area at an equal distance from the hole.