

Rule Tip Madness? 2019 Week

Hey Rules fans, it's "March Madness" time again! No, not the NCAA basketball tournaments that take place this time of year, but rather the fact that you may be going mad trying to figure out the correct answers to the annual quiz issued by the Metropolitan Golf Association. The MGA issues its diabolical 25-question quiz in early-February, and its answers in mid-March. Here are three excerpts from this year's MGA quiz which can be found, along with the answers, at www.mgagolf.org/rules/quizzes.



1. In match play, a player's tee shot comes to rest on the putting green. He asks his caddie to attend the flagstick and makes a stroke at his ball. The player's ball hits his opponent's ball at rest on the green, then accidentally hits the caddie's foot and is deflected into the hole. The caddie removes the ball from the hole and the player plays from the next teeing area. What is the player's score for the hole? (a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 4 (d) The player incurs a loss of hole penalty.
2. A player decides to take unplayable ball relief from under a bush using the back-on-the-line option. He identifies the proper reference line without choosing a reference point. He drops a ball properly and it first touches the course six inches to the side of the reference line and then rolls forward three inches and comes to rest on the reference line itself. He then realizes that he still has line of play interference from the same bush. He therefore lifts the ball and moves 10 yards further back from the bush on the same reference line. He drops the ball properly and it comes to rest where it first touched the course, 12 inches to the side of the reference line. He plays the ball as it lies. How many penalty strokes has the player incurred? (a) 0 (b) 1 (c) 2 (d) 3
3. A player places a ball on a tee in the teeing area of a par-3 hole and makes a stroke. The ball is grazed, falls off the tee, but remains in the teeing area inches behind a tee-marker. The player moves the interfering tee-marker out of the way and substitutes another ball in place of the original. Thinking he may have violated a rule, the player replaces the tee-marker and re-tees the substituted ball elsewhere in the teeing area. The player hits the ball onto the green and one putts. The player's score for the hole is: (a) 3 (b) 4 (c) 5 (d) 6.

Answers:

1. (a) *Rule 11.1 [Ball in Motion Accidentally Hits Person or Outside Influence] advises that if a player's ball in motion accidentally hits any person or outside influence, there is no penalty to any player, and this is true even if the ball hits the player, the opponent or any other player or any of their caddies or equipment. [Keep in mind that, in stroke play only, the player incurs a two-stroke penalty if his or her ball in motion hits another ball at rest on the putting green and both balls were on the putting green before the stroke.] Furthermore, the ball must be played as it lies. Rule 13.2b(2) [What to Do If Ball Hits Flagstick or Person Attending Flagstick] indicates that there is no penalty if the player's ball in motion accidentally hits the flagstick or the person who removed or is attending it, and the ball must be played as it lies.*
2. (b) *Rule 19.2b [Back-on-the-line Relief] indicates that if the player drops the ball without having chosen the reference point on the reference line, the reference point is treated as being the point on the line that is the same distance from the hole as where the dropped ball first touched the ground. Since the dropped ball rolled forward, the ball did not come to rest in the required relief area, and the player was required to drop a ball a second time pursuant to Rule 14.3c(2) [What to Do If Ball Dropped in Right Way Comes to Rest Outside Relief Area]. Interpretation 14.5b(3)/1 [Player May Change Relief Areas When Dropping Again for Back-on-the-Line Relief] advises that, when a player is required to drop a ball a second time after using back-on-the-line relief under Rule 19.3b [Unplayable Ball Relief], the player is allowed to change reference points so that the relief area is nearer to or farther from the hole.*
3. (a) *Pursuant to Rule 6.2b [Teeing Area Rules] and Interpretation 6.2b(6)/1 [Ball That Comes to Rest in Teeing Area Does Not Have to Be Played as It Lies], if a player's ball in play is in the teeing area after a stroke, the player may lift or move the ball without penalty and play that ball or another ball from anywhere in the teeing area from a tee or the ground, including playing the ball as it lies. Also, the player, by restoring the tee-marker to its original position, avoids being penalized for improving the area of her intended swing (see Rule 8.1c [Avoiding Penalty by Restoring Conditions Improved in breach of Rule 8.1a(1) or 8.1a(2)]).*