



tee time

May 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON GOLF REFEREES ASSOCIATION INC.

Rules Courses

The Rules training season is underway once again with a Level 1 course run at Boulcott's Farm HGC in April, which all attendees passed, and a Level 2 course coming up in June. We are pondering running another Level 1 course later in the year: if you have the opportunity, please encourage your fellow golfers to get in touch with any of our committee members (contact details below) if they might be interested in attending a Rules course.

Rules Clarifications 7 Apr 21 Update

As you may know, the R&A and USGA issue Rules Clarifications quarterly. There are two new clarifications in the 7 April 21 update. The first allows National bodies to determine which handicap is shown on a scorecard. The second, more interesting one, is that National bodies may adopt a policy that exempt a player from penalty if the Committee puts an incorrect handicap on the card. Under the Rules (R3.3b(2)), the player is responsible for ensuring the handicap is correct.

New Wellington Rules (WGRA) Facebook Page

WGRA Committee member Cliff Martin has recently established a new Facebook page for the WGRA. It's a private group but easy to find.



WGRA - Wellington Golf Referees Association

Simply apply for access. It's for the sharing of Rules issues, questions and advice, and already has a few interesting posts.

Common Rules Confusions

Ball in a Tree

How to proceed for a ball stuck or lost in a tree was a question that arose a couple of times in Interclub over the summer and was also raised



separately with the WGRA by two Wellington clubs.

Firstly, it cannot be assumed that a ball seen entering a tree in the General Area is lost in

the tree. Interpretation 7.2/1 requires that a ball in a tree is positively identified in order to use relief options other than replaying under stroke and distance. (Rule 19 Unplayable Ball also states that in order to use back-on-the-line or lateral relief, the spot of the original ball must be known).

Once found in the tree, if the player moves the ball, it must be replaced under Rule/Interpretation 9.4 unless the player was not intending to play it as it lies and was intending only identify it or to retrieve it and take relief. Ideally, a player should make his intentions clear before shaking the tree or climbing it to identify or retrieve a ball.

Status of Loose Divots

Rule 8, Conditions Affecting the Stroke, is well known to golfers – or it should be. It is clear that divots may not be replaced in the divot hole and that replaced divots cannot be pressed down or

removed if doing so would improve the player's CATS. But unreplaced loose divots are loose impediments that may be removed to the extent allowed by Rule 15.1 (which states, in essence, that loose impediments cannot be moved from where a ball is to be replaced, and that moving the ball in removing a loose impediment incurs a one stroke penalty).

Clean and Place

A common rules breach occurs when preferred lies ('lift, clean and place') are allowed, and that



is when players place the ball several times to get the best possible

new lie before letting the ball go and removing their marker.

The assumption seems to be that as long as the marker is still in place, the ball is not in play. Such an interpretation is incorrect: the ball may be placed ONCE. Touching the ball again incurs a penalty irrespective of whether a marker is still in place, unless proceeding under another Rule eg, if the ball does not stay on the selected spot (Rule 14.2e).

Too Many Golf Clubs?

One of our referees has noticed that it is



becoming all too common for players to carry more than the allowed 14 clubs in their bag. Note that under Rule 4.1b, carrying

more than 14 clubs is penalizable.

Rules Incidents

Injury Recovery Time

At a recent interclub tournament one of the ladies passed her hand through her hair while waiting on the first tee only to be stung by a bee. The injury on her left hand was painful and immediately began to swell. Her foursome opponents and team managers were

accommodating and agreed to the group delaying their start to allow time for recovery. After some time, the referee (yours truly) was



summoned and asked how long could they give the injured

player to recover?

Interpretation 5.6a/2 states that the Committee should normally allow 15 minutes for recovery from a sudden injury. In this case, the player recovered sufficiently in time to carry on.

Referee Ruling Over-ruled: Russell Knox at Pebble Beach

While addressing his ball on the first hole at the ATT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am back in February, Russell Knox's ball moved. The referee absolved him of blame on the basis of Knox's account, but officials reversed the decision a few holes later. He was assessed a one stroke penalty for moving the ball but not two strokes for playing from a wrong place, presumably because he acted in accordance with a referee's decision.

Late on the Tee? Nick Voke at the Korn Ferry Tour & Jimmy Walker at the Valspar

In an unusual incident, Kiwi Nick Voke, playing on the Korn Ferry Tour in the US, was very nearly DQ'd for missing his tee time. He and his caddie became stuck in their hotel lift for 45 minutes when it jammed between floors. Although they were able to contact the Tournament officials, it was still made clear that Voke had to meet his tee time or suffer a penalty. As it happened, rescue came in time for



Nick Voke

the pair to get to the course and have an abbreviated warm-up before making the cut.

Former PGA Champion Jimmy Walker was less fortunate: he simply overlooked his tee time at the Valspar Championship in late April while warming up but arrived in time to incur a two stroke penalty: he too made the cut – on the number.

Lee Westwood's Drop at the Player's Championship

Lee Westwood's penalty drop on the par 5 second hole during the final round of the Player's Championship attracted the attention of several on-line armchair experts supposedly for being way out of position.

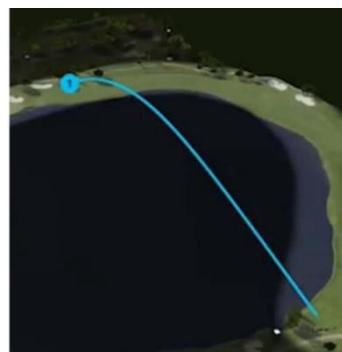
Westwood's tee shot found the right rough and his second disappeared from his sight in the direction of a penalty area on the right. The ball went into the water.

Westwood decided to take back on the line relief from the estimated point where his ball crossed the penalty area boundary.



Westwood's drop (red spot)

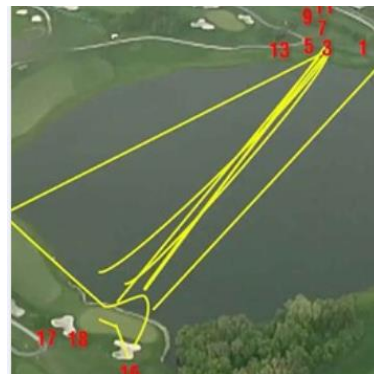
The pundits watching on TV thought his drop in the fairway was well left of where he was entitled to drop. But officials confirmed that Westwood had followed the correct procedure and reminded the critics that the relief area extends a club-length laterally from the reference point, something that Westwood may have consciously taken advantage of.



Golf is Hard: John Daly's 18 at Bay Hill 1998: his attempt at a Bryson

You may have seen Bryson De Chambeau's massive blast to carry the water on

the Par 5 sixth hole at Bay Hill back in March leaving a short wedge to the green, before going on to win the tournament.



Daly's Adventures

You may not be aware that John Daly tried the same thing back in 1998, with less success. Daly, hitting a three wood, put five consecutive shots in the water

(remember Tin Cup?) He eventually made it over and recorded an 18 on his score card.

Curiosity Corner: Ball Sizes

Did you know there is no maximum size for golf balls?



balls? Here are the old British ball

(4cm), a Titleist (4.267cm, the modern minimum) and a Callaway Max, which lives up to its name at 4.38cm, so large it wouldn't fit in the trundler ball receptacle of one of our members!

WGRA News

New Tournament Referees

The WGRA welcomed four tournament referees



Mark Casey and President Bill Stratford

this year after they successfully completed the Level 2 course and spent the requisite time as 'buddies'. They are Mark Casey from Ohariu, Wendy Rhodes,

Judgeford, and Steve Smith and Jan Ward from Waikanae. Welcome team!



Jan Ward with her Tournament Referee Certificate.



And Steve Smith with his.

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New WGRA Referees Uniform

Thanks to work by members of the WGRA



Committee, new uniform items including a smart winter jacket and cap/hat options, have been provided for WGRA referees. They are emblazoned with the Wellington Golf badge and the word 'Rules'.

Rules Questions or Incidents

If you have any questions on anything to do with the Rules of Golf, any observations or comments, or rules incidents to share, please do send them to Terry Gardiner at gardfam77@gmail.com