

Ball Overhanging Hole Moved When Flagstick Removed

Case 1 [Decision 16-2/4, first part] - Ball at rest overhanging hole:

Player removes flagstick and ball either rolls away from hole or falls into hole.

There are two possible sets of outcomes depending on player's actions:

- Player caused ball to move – *ball replaced on lip of hole.*
 - Movement of ball directly attributable to removal of flagstick – *no penalty.*
 - Movement of ball not directly attributable to removal of flagstick – *player incurs penalty stroke under Rule 18-2.*
- Player did not cause ball to move [ball did not strike flagstick but see Case 2 below]
 - Ball falls into hole – *ball holed; possible penalty stroke under Rule 16-2.*
 - Ball moves to another position – *ball played from new position; no penalty.*

Additional principles included or implied in Decision:

- Question of fact whether player's actions caused ball to move and any doubt should be resolved against player.
- Rule 17 does not apply [Rule 24-1 overrides Rule 17 in these circumstances].

Case 2 [Decision 16-2/5] - Ball not necessarily at rest overhanging hole:

While player removes flagstick, ball falls into hole, striking flagstick; player did not cause ball to move.

There are two possible outcomes depending on location of ball after striking flagstick:

- Ball at rest within circumference of hole and all of it below level of lip of hole – *ball holed; possible penalty stroke under Rule 16-2.*
- Ball deflected out of hole after striking flagstick – *ball replaced on lip of hole; no penalty.*

Additional principle included or implied in Decision:

- Rule 17 does not apply [Rule 16-2 overrides Rule 17 in these circumstances].

Case 3 [Decision 16-2/4, second part] - Ball not necessarily at rest overhanging hole:

Opponent or fellow-competitor removes flagstick without player's authority before ball deemed at rest under Rule 16-2 and as a result of this action causes the ball to move.

There are three conclusions:

- *Opponent or fellow competitor incurs appropriate penalty for breach of Rule 1-4 [Player's rights infringed under Rule 16-2]*
- *Player incurs no penalty.*
- *Ball replaced on lip of hole in stroke play.*

Case 4 [Decision 16-2/5] - Ball not necessarily at rest overhanging hole:

Opponent or fellow-competitor removes flagstick without player's authority before ball deemed at rest under Rule 16-2 and ball falls into hole, striking flagstick; opponent /fellow-competitor did not cause ball to move.

There are two possible outcomes depending on location of ball after striking flagstick:

- Ball at rest within circumference of hole and all of it below level of lip of hole – *ball holed; possible penalty stroke under Rule 16-2.*
- Ball deflected out of hole after striking flagstick – *opponent/fellow competitor incurs appropriate penalty for breach of Rule 1-4 [Player's rights infringed under Rule 16-2]. Ball replaced on lip of hole in stroke play.*

Additional principle included or implied in Decision:

- Rule 17 does not apply [Rule 16-2 overrides Rule 17 in these circumstances].