

## THE RULES OF GOLF TEMPLATE

When a student begins a study of the Rules of Golf, or even when an experienced official is reviewing the Rules, there is an underlying template behind the formulation of every Rule that should be recognized. There are six parameters in the template, although only a handful of Rules contain all of these six parameters. All reviews or studies of an individual Rule should begin by noting which of these parameters are present. If one or more of the parameters are absent, the question should be raised and answered as to the reason why the absent ones are not there. The six parameters are:

- **Number and Title.** All Rules have number/title. These should be memorized by beginner and expert alike as these are the language of the Rules. It is not possible to have an exacting discussion about situations involving the Rules without this unifying language.
- **Text of Rule.** All words in the text of a specific Rule are essential to the exact and complete meaning of the Rule.
- **Exceptions.** As a parameter, exceptions will always follow the text of the Rule. Without tying the exceptions directly to the text of the Rule, the true meaning of the Rule will be lost. Unfortunately, there are numerous instances throughout the Rules of exceptions integrated within the text of the Rule as opposed to listed in a labeled section following the text of the Rule. Words used by the Rules to indicate an exception include the words: except, exception, unless, other than, but and however. Any expression introduced by these words has the full weight and equivalence to a formal exception in the labeled section.
- **Penalty Statement.** As a parameter, penalty statements will generally follow the exception parameter. However, there are numerous instances throughout the Rules where penalty statements are integrated within the text of the Rule as opposed to listed in a labeled section following the exception parameter. Penalty statements always appear in **RED**, whether within or following the text.
- **Notes.** Notes can address an entire Rule, a sub-section, an exception or a penalty statement. Thus, this parameter will be placed at the end of the appropriate part of the Rule that the material within the note addresses. If one reads the part of the Rule that the note addresses without consideration of the thoughts within the note, an incorrect impression of the Rule may result.
- **Cross-reference.** These parameters are placed throughout the Rules to assist the reader in understanding that there are other Rules that may complement, override or supplement the Rule at hand. Individual Rules are always subject to the entire Rules of Golf.