

SOME RELATED RULES - DISQUALIFICATION IN STROKE PLAY

One of the many ways to study, understand and remember the Rules of Golf is to group together Rules that have common characteristics such as the 16 Rules that call for a one-stroke penalty in both match and stroke play or the six Rules that require rectification of a violation or there will be a disqualification in stroke play. There are many other possible combinations or other groupings that one can manufacture. The basic idea is to establish a common thread among Rules that will lead one to a better understanding of all the Rules.

The following four Rules are somewhat interrelated in that they call for disqualification in stroke play but are distinct in their coverage of issues while using similar terms. Three of the Rules call for an agreement among players while the other Rule involves a single player. One of the Rules requires that the players be aware of the requirement of a Rule while for the other three it is irrelevant whether the players are aware of the requirements of the Rules. An appropriate Decision is given to illustrate the application of each Rule, with some key similarities or differences underlined.

Rule 1-3. Agreement to Waive the Rules

Players must not agree to exclude the operation of any Rule or to waive any penalty incurred.

Stroke play – Disqualification of competitors concerned.

Decision 1-3/2 Agreement to Concede Short Putts

Q. In a match, the two players agree in advance to concede all putts within a specified length. Is this agreement contrary to Rule 1-3?

A. In order to be in breach of Rule 1-3 for agreeing to waive a Rule, players must be aware that they are doing so. Therefore, the answer depends on whether the players knew that Rule 2-4 only allows the concession of the "next stroke" and does not permit them to agree in advance to concede putts within a specified length.

If the players were unaware that the Rules prevented them from agreeing to concede putts in this manner, there is no penalty under Rule 1-3.

If the players were aware that they were excluding the operation of a Rule then they are disqualified under Rule 1-3.

Rule 3-4. Refusal to Comply with a Rule

If a competitor refuses to comply with a Rule affecting the rights of another competitor, he is disqualified.

Decision 3-4/1 Competitor Not Given Opportunity to Lift Ball Assisting Fellow-Competitor

Q. In stroke play, A's ball lies near the hole in a position to assist B, whose ball lies off the putting green. A states his intention to lift his ball under Rule 22-1. B mistakenly believes that A does not have the right to lift his ball and plays before A has an opportunity to lift his ball. What is the ruling?

A. It is disqualified under Rule 3-4 as he intentionally denied A's right to lift his ball. It is irrelevant that B did so in ignorance of the Rules.

Rule 10-2c. Playing Out of Turn

If a competitor plays out of turn, there is no penalty and the ball is played as it lies. If, however, the Committee determines that competitors have agreed to play out of turn to give one of them an advantage, they are disqualified.

Decision 10-2c/2 Competitors in Stroke Play Agree to Play Out of Turn But Not for Purpose of Giving One of Them an Advantage

Q. In stroke play, A and B agree to play out of turn at the 10th hole to save time. There is no penalty under Rule 10-2c because they did not do so in order to give one of them an advantage. However, are they liable to disqualification under Rule 1-3 for agreeing to exclude the operation of Rule 10-2a or 10-2b as the case may be?

A. No. Rule 10-2c specifically governs and permits the procedure in stroke play. Accordingly, Rule 1-3 does not apply. As to match play, see Decision 10-1c/3.

Rule 22-1. Ball Assisting Play

In stroke play, if the Committee determines that competitors have agreed not to lift a ball that might assist any competitor, they are disqualified.

Decision 22/6 Competitor Requests That Ball in Position to Assist Him Not Be Lifted

Q. In stroke play, B's ball lies just off the putting green. A's ball lies near the hole in a position to serve as a backstop for B's ball. B requests A not to lift his ball. Is such a request proper?

A. No. If A and B agree not to lift a ball that might assist B, both players are disqualified under Rule 22-1.