

Some U. S. Golf Association Decisions on the Rules of Golf

A player tees the ball for a drive, swings, and misses it entirely. He then addresses the ball, playing two, and accidentally knocks it off the tee. Has he the right to re-tee without penalty?

(Decision.) As the player had made his first stroke when he missed the ball, it was in play, and therefore there is a penalty of one stroke for knocking it off the tee when he subsequently addressed the ball. Rule 12.

Both players have reached the green. One player putts his opponent's ball toward the cup and his opponent then putts the other ball left on the green, which he thought was his, and after making the putt discovers that both players played each other's ball. This was in match play.

(Decision.) Rule 20 covers this point. The hole stands as played out.

A player driving off of the tee drives a ball straight down the fairway and gets an unlucky hop to the left into a ditch under a bridge. This bridge is just laid across the ditch and can be moved very easily. Is the player allowed to move the bridge so that he can make his shot? This ditch is dry about nine months out of the year. The way the ball was lying, it was impossible for him to make the shot without moving the bridge. An opponent objected to his moving the bridge, upon which he took the attitude that if he could not move the bridge he could drop the ball a club's length from the bridge in the ditch without penalty.

(Decision.) The player should not have moved the bridge, as it was part of the water hazard. Unless there were a local rule covering, the player had no right to drop a club's length from the bridge.

Competition in Golf Architecture

It has long been the practice in the construction of buildings to invite the submission of plans and estimates of cost by different architects—the builder reserving the right to select the one he deems most satisfactory. Is this idea applicable to golf architecture? Certainly any golf club in building its course desires the best possible layout and the highest type of holes, both as to playing quality and to landscape beauty. Such a plan, if golf architects can be induced to compete, should make for more rapid progress in their art. Certainly it would go far to discourage the tiresome repetition on one course after another of identical holes.

It is true that every painter, every sculptor, perhaps every artist, has idiosyncrasies, so that an expert can almost at once recognize the creator of a piece of art. This is notoriously true of golf architects. For them it would seem there is far less excuse than in the case of painters, builders, or other artists. The golf architect has Nature as his setting, and no two pieces of terrain are quite identical. In other words, Nature never repeats. To make more or less exact replicas of holes whether meritorious ones or otherwise—regardless of the topography and landscape—is not a high type of art.

It certainly would be both interesting and instructive to compare the plans of several different architects for the same piece of land. It would necessitate careful work of competent judges to determine the most meritorious.