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## **RULES INFORMATION FOR PLAYERS**

Welcome. The TSSAA district, region, and state championships are held for the players' benefit and we hope you enjoy this championship. The following information is intended to alert you to a few Rules of Golf issues but is not a substitute for the official *USGA Rules of Golf* booklet.

**PRACTICE ROUNDS:** In view of damage caused by play of extra balls during practice rounds, the TSSAA asks players not to abuse the courtesy extended by the club in the use of its course. The TSSAA requests that each player make only one stroke to a putting green. During practice rounds, practice on a putting green is permissible, provided play by a following group is not delayed.

**REPLACING DIVOTS:** Please replace divots.

**RAKING BUNKERS:** Please make sure that, after you play from a bunker, you rake the bunker and then place the rake outside the bunker at a place where it will least likely affect play.

**RULES OF GOLF:** Be sure to read the TSSAA Local Rules and Conditions of Competition along with the Notice to Players which will be distributed at your starting tee each day.

**OBTAINING RULINGS:** Do not hesitate to send for a TSSAA Rules Committee member. Those authorized to give rulings are identified by badges marked "Rules." Do not accept rulings from marshals, scorers or other unauthorized persons.

Rule 3-3 authorizing play of a second ball when doubtful of your rights or procedure applies to stroke play only. After the situation which caused the doubt has arisen and before taking further action, you must announce to your marker or another player in your group your decision to proceed under Rule 3-3 and which ball you will score with if the Rules permit. On completing the round, you must report the facts immediately to the Committee. The penalty for failing to do so is disqualification.

**CLUBS:** A player in doubt as to whether a club conforms with the Rules should request a conformance evaluation by the TSSAA Committee. Whenever possible, such requests should be made prior to the day of competition in order to provide the Committee with adequate time to make an assessment.

**GRIPS:** Features of certain grips violate the Rules of Golf, and cause those grips to be considered nonconforming. The essence of those features that should be considered in determining whether or not a grip conforms to the Rules:

1. In general, a grip must be straight and plain in form, and must not be molded for any part of the hand.
2. Grips may not have any bulge or waist.

3. Putter grips may have flat sides, but these must be continuous along the full length of the grip (interpreted to mean within an inch of the ends), so that the cross-section of the grip is generally similar throughout its length.

Putters may have more than one grip, provided each is circular in cross-section, the axis of each coincides with the axis of the shaft and they are separated by at least 1-1/2 inches.

For full text, see Appendix II, Section 3. Grip of the Rules of Golf booklet.

**MAXIMUM OF 14 CLUBS** (Rule 4-4): Check the number of clubs in your bag before starting.

**GOLF BALLS:** Consult the Committee for the most current List of conforming Golf Balls that lists golf balls tested by the USGA and found to conform with the Rules of Golf. Only golf balls on the List may be used, under penalty of disqualification. Be sure to put an identification mark on each ball you play.

**BALL UNFIT FOR PLAY** (Rule 5-3): A ball is unfit for play if it is visibly cut, cracked or out of shape. A ball is not unfit for play solely because mud or other materials adhere to it, its surface is scratched or scraped or its paint is damaged or discolored.

Thus, a ball with a “sand burn” or a ball which has been scuffed by hitting a cart path is not unfit for play.

Before lifting a ball to determine whether it has become unfit, announce your intention to your opponent in match play or your marker or another player in your group in stroke play and give the opponent, marker or other player an opportunity to examine the ball and observe the lifting and replacement.

If it is determined that two players have agreed to disregard this Rule, both will be disqualified (Rule 3-1).

#### **REPORTING RESULTS:**

Stroke Play – See Rule 6-6. Each player will serve as a marker (scorer) for another player. After each hole the marker should check the score with the player.

On completion of the round all score cards are to be brought immediately to the Committee at their scoring location near the last green. Each marker must sign the card of the player for whom he is scoring and hand it to the player. The player should check his score hole-by-hole and settle any doubtful points with the Committee. He must ensure that the marker has signed the score card, sign it himself and return it to the Committee promptly.

The player is solely responsible for returning his correct score for each hole. The Committee is responsible for addition of scores.

**PACE OF PLAY:** To be held up by a preceding group is unpleasant. It can be avoided by simple consideration by each individual. Here are suggestions for maintaining a proper pace:

1. Report to the first tee ready for play a few minutes before your scheduled time.
2. Keep close behind the group playing immediately ahead of you.
3. Clear each hole as promptly as possible, for the benefit of those who follow.

Rule 6-7 states: "The player must play without undue delay and in accordance with any pace of play guidelines that the Committee may establish. Between completion of a hole and playing from the next teeing ground, the player must not unduly delay play." Penalty for breach of Rule: Match play – Loss of hole; Stroke play – Two strokes; for repeated offense – Disqualification.

See separate memorandum on this page.

**ADVICE** (Rule 8-1): During a stipulated round, a player may not give advice to anyone in the competition playing on the course. Penalty for breach of Rule: Match play – loss of hole; Stroke play – Two strokes.

**LINE OF PLAY:** The line of play is the direction which the player wishes his ball to take after a stroke, plus a reasonable distance on either side of the intended direction. The line of play extends vertically upwards from the ground, but does not extend beyond the hole.

**LINE OF PUTT:** The line of putt is the line which the player wishes his ball to take after a stroke on the putting green. Except with respect to Rule 16-1e (Standing Astride or On Line of Putt), the line of putt includes a reasonable distance on either side of the intended line. The line of putt does not extend beyond the hole. The line of putt must not be touched except as permitted by Rule 16-1a.

**REPAIR OF HOLE PLUGS, BALL MARKS AND OTHER DAMAGE** (Rule 16-1c): The player may repair old hole plugs and ball marks on the putting green, whether or not the ball lies on the putting green. Any other damage to the putting green must not be repaired if it might assist the player in his subsequent play of the hole.

**BALL OVERHANGING HOLE** (Rule 16-2): When any part of the ball overhangs the lip of the hole, the player is allowed enough time to reach the hole without unreasonable delay and an additional 10 seconds to determine whether the ball is at rest. If by then the ball has not fallen into the hole, it is deemed to be at rest. If the ball subsequently falls into the hole, the player is deemed to have holed out with his last stroke, and he must add a penalty stroke to his score for the hole.

**FLAGSTICK** (Rule 17-3): A player's ball must not strike (a) the flagstick when it is attended, removed or held up, (b) the person attending or holding up the flagstick or anything carried by him, or (c) the flagstick in the hole, unattended, when the stroke has been made on the putting green. Penalty for breach of Rule: Match play – Loss of hole; Stroke play – Two strokes and the ball is played as it lies.

**BALL MOVED BY ANOTHER BALL** (Rules 18-5 and 19-5): If a ball in play and at rest is moved by a ball in motion after a stroke, the moved ball must be replaced, and the ball which was deflected or stopped must be played as it lies.

**A BALL MAY BE LIFTED** by the player or by another person authorized by the player (Rule 10-2). If a ball is to be lifted under a Rule requiring it to be replaced, the

position of the ball must be marked before the ball is lifted. Do not touch your ball unless a Rule expressly permits.

**DROPPING BALL** (Rule 20-2a): In dropping a ball under the Rules, the player must stand erect, hold the ball at shoulder height and arm's length and drop it. If a player drops a ball in any other manner, but has not played it, the error may be corrected without penalty as provided in Rule 20-6. Purposely spinning a ball when dropping it is not permitted. If the ball strikes any person or the equipment of any player before or after it strikes a part of the course, it must be re-dropped without penalty. There is no limit to the number of times a ball must be re-dropped in such circumstances. For other circumstances in which a dropped ball must be re-dropped or placed, see Rule 20-2c.

**ALTERED LIE** (Rule 20-3b): Except in a hazard if the original lie of a ball to be placed or replaced has been altered, the ball must be placed in the nearest lie most similar to the original lie which is within one club-length and is not nearer the hole and not in a hazard. In a water hazard, the ball must be placed as above, but in the water hazard. In a bunker the original lie must be re-created and the ball placed in that lie.

**CLEANING BALL:** A ball lifted under the Rules may be cleaned in some circumstances, but not in others. See Rule 21.

**BALL ASSISTING OR INTERFERING WITH PLAY** (Rule 22): Any player may lift his ball if he considers that it might assist the play of any other player or have any other ball lifted if he considers that it might interfere with his play or assist the play of any other player. In stroke play, a player required to lift his ball may play first rather than lift.

**WATER HAZARDS AND LATERAL WATER HAZARDS:** For difference in relief from a water hazard (defined by yellow lines or stakes) and a lateral water hazard (defined by red lines or stakes), see Rule 26-1. The Rules do not provide relief from interference by an immovable obstruction or an abnormal ground condition (ground under repair, casual water, or a hole or cast made by a burrowing animal, reptile or bird) if the ball lies in a water hazard.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Players may not ride on any form of transportation during a stipulated round unless authorized by the Committee.

**DISTANCE MEASURING DEVICES** are not permissible in TSSAA district, regional or state championships.

**PROVISIONAL BALL** (Rule 27-2): Permissible only if the original ball may be (a) lost outside a water hazard or (b) out of bounds. The player must announce in advance that he intends to play a provisional ball. If he fails to do so and plays another ball, that ball becomes the ball in play under penalty of stroke and distance. If the original ball is lost or out of bounds, the provisional ball becomes the ball in play. If the original ball is in a water hazard or is deemed unplayable, the provisional ball must be abandoned.

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Every good wish for success in the Championship.