

# Brief History of Rules of Golf



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# RULES QUIZ – HOLE #2 – PLAYER EDDY



Eddy puts his ball on a tee and, in practice, hits the ball past the tee. Eddy moves his tee, picks up the ball and puts it back on the tee. His tee shot goes into a bunker.

❖ What is the rule

**STROKE:** A “stroke” is the forward movement of the club with the intention of striking the ball.

**BALL IN PLAY:** A ball is “in play” when it is on the teeing ground.

**11-3. BALL FALLING OFF TEE**  
If a ball, when not in play, falls off the tee, the player in addressing it



on the

e

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RULES OF GOLF



- ❖ The earliest known written rules for the game date from 1744 - “Articles & Laws in Playing at Golf” (13 Articles) drafted by The Gentlemen Golfers of Leith
- ❖ Reasons for rule change include
  - the evolution of course design, maintenance and agronomics;
  - innovation in clubs, balls and other player equipment; and
  - the expansion and diversification in the landscapes where golf played.
- ❖ Revisions of a larger scope, as happened in 1899, 1934, 1952 and 1984



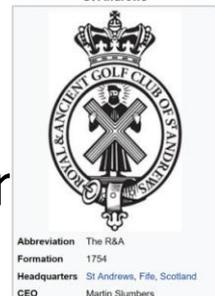
*The MacDonald boys playing golf*  
by 18th-century portrait painter  
Jeremiah Davison



# DEFINING A GAME: 1744-1899

- ❖ The 13 Articles of 1744 – first to record the Rules of Golf; - The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (The R&A)
- ❖ The R&A became acknowledged as the rulemaking authority.
- ❖ The R&A established its Rules of Golf Committee, leading to the first-ever consolidated code in 1899.
- ❖ The United States Golf Association was founded in 1894
- ❖ The USGA provided its interpretations of the rules, and began to diverge from The R&A Rules of Golf in significant ways

The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews





# DECISIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS: 1899-1934

- ❖ The first official “decisions book” was published in 1908 by The R&A (the rulemaking authority)
- ❖ The USGA began doing the same in 1927
- ❖ The R&A revised its rulemaking processes including England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand in the late 1920s
- ❖ The R&A’s Rules of Golf Committee led a major revision to the R&A and USGA codes in 1934



# A UNIFORM SET OF RULES: 1934-1952



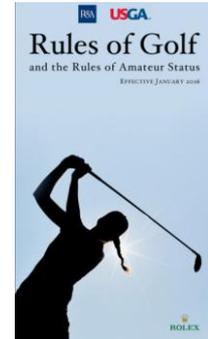
- ❖ The R&A and USGA came together to issue the first truly unified code as of 1 January 1952
  - Eliminating the stymie rule entirely,
  - Expanding the circumstances in which a lifted ball was allowed to be cleaned, and
  - Recognising the concept of a lateral water hazard where relief could be taken within two club-lengths of where the ball entered the hazard.





# CONTINUING TO PURSUE UNIFORMITY: 1952-1984

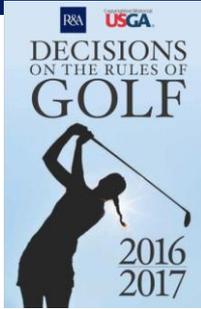
- ❖ The USGA and The R&A began work on a revised code in 1954 and a further revision in 1956
- ❖ In 1960, it was agreed that a four-year revision cycle would be used going forward
- ❖ The new code was issued in 1984 using this reorganised structure and a revised writing style, and with various other revisions
- ❖ The publication of the first-ever uniform decisions book was issued in 1984





# RESPONDING TO RAPID DEVELOPMENTS: 1984-PRESENT

- ❖ Revising the Decisions on the Rules of Golf every two years
- ❖ The number of decisions increased from 933 in 1985 to 1,275 in 2012
- ❖ The R&A and the USGA will remain committed to providing leadership and guidance in making and interpreting the Rules of Golf





# REVISION HISTORY

13  
Articles  
• 1744

Rules of Golf  
committee  
• 1899

Decision book  
(USGA)  
• 1927

True unified  
revision  
• 1952

4 year  
revision Cycle  
• 1960

**Major  
revision**  
• **2019**



The USGA  
• 1894

Decision  
book  
• 1908

Major  
Revision  
• 1934

Major  
Revision  
• 1956

Uniform  
decision  
book  
• 1984

2 year  
revision  
cycle

# RULES QUIZ – HOLE #2 – PLAYER EDDY



He picks up a rake and heading towards his ball, he rakes the bunker in order to save time and clean up his steps. He removes a rope near his ball without moving it and once struck, his ball lands on the fringe of the green.

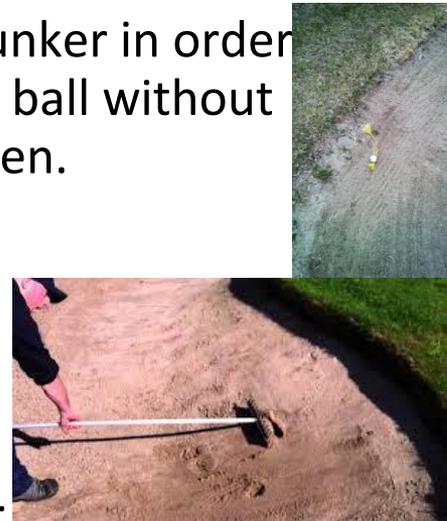
❖ What is the rule

13-4. BALL IN HAZARD; A ball that is in a hazard, the player must not:

- Test the condition of the hazard or any similar hazard;
- Touch the ground in the hazard with his hand or a club; or
- Touch or move a loose impediment lying in or touching the hazard.

Exceptions:

- There is no penalty, if the player (a) touches the ground in removing an obstruction, or (b) places his clubs in a hazard.
- The player may smooth sand for the sole purpose of caring for the course.



# FUNDAMENTAL REVIEWS



- ❖ to make the rules easier to read and use;
- ❖ to address perceived complexity, inconsistency or unfairness in outcomes and procedures;
- ❖ to reinforce and reinvigorate golf's fundamental principles; and
- ❖ to make sure the rules will work for everyone who plays the game.

# NEW WRITING STYLE AND FORMAT



- ❖ A simpler writing style – uses more commonly used and spoken words
- ❖ Referring to the player as “He or She”
- ❖ Using examples to explain what the rules mean and how they work
- ❖ Using visual tools to explain key concepts and procedures
- ❖ Statement of purpose of each rule
- ❖ Embracing technology



# REORGANISING THE RULE BOOK



- ❖ Focus on what the player needs to know – a separate document – “Committee Procedures”
- ❖ Number of rules reduced from 34 to 24
- ❖ Moving key decisions into the rules – more than 100 key decisions in the body of the rules
- ❖ Guidance handbook – replacing decisions book



# THE PLAYER'S EDITION



- ❖ A shorter edition of the rules
- ❖ Written in the second person – focus on “you” the golfer
- ❖ It is a rule book – an actual rule book – include the rules that describe the essential characteristics of the game of golf
- ❖ Less frequently occurring situations are not included and will be found the answers in the full rule book





# SUMMARY CHART OF PROPOSED CHANGES

## ❖ Summary Chart: All Proposed Changes in Penalties in the New Rules of Golf



Summary Chart of All Proposed Changes in Penalties in the New Rules of Golf for 2019.pdf

## ❖ Summary Chart: Proposed Changes in Definitions and Key Terms in the New Rules of Golf for 2019



Summary Chart of Proposed Changes to Definitions and Key Terms in the New Rules of Golf for 2019.pdf





# RULES QUIZ – HOLE #2 – PLAYER EDDY

Arriving at his ball, he repairs his ball mark on the fringe. This mark was about 1 foot in front of his ball. He sends the ball into the hole with the back of his putter.

❖ What is the rule

13-2. IMPP

A play

16-1. GEN

The pl

or not

14-1. GEN

The ba



# QUESTION AND FEEDBACK

