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GOLF AUSTRALIA
RULES OF GOLF & AMATEUR STATUS COMMITTEE
MEETING – WEDNESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2007
AT MOWBRAY GOLF CLUB, LAUNCESTON, TASMANIA

SUMMARY

Present from the Committee: John Buckley (Chairman), Frank Gal, Jenny Hoff, John Hopkins, Val Oswald

Apologies: Andrew Langford-Jones

In Attendance: Simon Magdulski (Manager – Rules & Handicapping), Therese Ritter (Manager – Championships)

GENERAL

1. Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed Committee members to the inaugural meeting of this new Golf Australia Committee and looked forward to the further advancement of Golf Australia's activities in the areas of Rules of Golf & Amateur Status.

2. New Staff – Luke Cusack

It was noted that Luke Cusack (Golf Australia's Championships Coordinator) has expanded his areas of activity and is now working with Simon Magdulski and Therese Ritter on Rules, Amateur Status, Handicapping & Course Rating.

3. R&A Visit re 2008-2011 Rules Codes

It was noted that The R&A will visit Australia in late November 2007 as part of its international program to launch and explain the changes in the 2008-2011 Rules of Golf and Rules of Amateur Status codes. Seminars will be conducted in Sydney and Melbourne as a part of this process.

RULES OF GOLF

4. Referees for 2007 MFS Australian Open

The following referees will be invited to join the 2007 MFS Australian Open Rules Team:

Ishwar	Achanta	Ind	Ian	Hepburn	PGA
Clayton	Bell	WA	Trevor	Herden	GA
John	Bowring	NSW	Jenny	Hoff	Vic
John	Buckley	NSW	John	Hopkins	WA
Simon	Butterly	Tour	Andrew	Langford-Jones	Tour
Gary	Coblentz	Can	Simon	Magdulski	GA
Anne	Court	Vic	Jean	Moran	NSW
Tom	Crothers	Qld	Val	Oswald	Vic
Tom	Duguid	Tour	Michael	Palmer	NSW
Bruce	Eaton	Tas	Therese	Ritter	GA
Sue	Fabian	NSW	Barry	Shepherd	Qld
Greg	Fitzhardinge	WA	Peter	Spence	SA
Frank	Gal	NSW	Graeme	Scott	NZ
Tim	Gale	Vic	Russell	Swanson	Tour
David	Greenhill	Vic	Scott	Wagstaff	Qld

5. Rules of Golf 2008-2011 – Update

John Hopkins provided an update on developments regarding the 2008-2011 Rules of Golf. The changes will soon be widely publicised.

6. New Regulations Regarding Driving Clubs – Golf Australia Advice Sheet

Golf Australia will formulate an advice sheet for all clubs to assist in implementing the new regulation regarding driving clubs. This will be done in consultation with The R&A.

7. Committee Procedural Recommendations for Golf Clubs – Resource Documents

The following resource documents for club and competition committees will soon be available from www.golfaustralia.org.au:

- ◆ Course Management, Marking the Course, and Course Set-up Procedures – Recommendations
- ◆ Duties of a Rules Official
- ◆ Local Rules – Golf Australia Recommendations
- ◆ Men and Women Playing in the Same Competitions, and Same-Gender Competitions Using Different Tees
- ◆ Competition Administration and Competition Conditions – Golf Australia Recommendations

8. Rules & Referee Accreditation – Development of Structures

The Rules & Referee Accreditation Review Group will continue to look to develop the existing two-tier structure by expanding to a five-tier structure as follows:

1. Introduction to Club & General Competition Golf (New Tier)
2. Club Level (Existing Tier)
3. State Level (Existing Tier)
4. State Level – Advanced (New Tier)
5. National Level (New Tier – National level accreditation will automatically (and only) be awarded to referees who work at either the MFS Women's Australian Open or MFS Men's Australian Open)

9. Query Submitted by VGA – Latrobe Golf Club (Local Rule re Tree Roots on Fairways)

The Committee decided to refer a query to The R&A regarding the permissibility of introducing a Local Rule to provide relief without penalty from exposed tree roots on closely-mown areas.

[NOTE – The R&A's subsequent reply noted that Decision 33-8/8 should be interpreted broadly such that a Committee could consider exposed tree roots – interfering with the proper playing of the game – on a fairway, or semi-rough even, to be declared GUR. Whether a Committee wished to restrict relief to lie of ball and area of intended swing, ie no relief for stance, is something the Committee should consider bearing in mind the level of interference caused by the tree roots.]

RULES OF AMATEUR STATUS

10. Rules of Amateur Status 2008-2011 – Update

John Hopkins provided an update on developments regarding the 2008-2011 Rules of Amateur Status. The changes will soon be widely publicised.

POSITIONS ON THE COMMITTEE

11. Vacant Positions on Committee

In-line with the requirements of the Committee Charter, two Committee positions are to become vacant at the time of the 2007 Golf Australia Annual General Meeting. The Committee members whose positions are to become vacant were determined by

lot. They are Jenny Hoff and Frank Gal. Member States will be invited to forward nominations for these vacant positions (which may include Jenny Hoff and Frank Gal).

OTHER BUSINESS

12. Other Raised Matters

12.1 Golf Australia Hard Card

Golf Australia will produce a hard card (a card featuring local rules and competition conditions for national events) for the 2008 year. The hard card will be available from www.golfaustralia.org.au and will be distributed to competitors when registering at national events. It will also be available at the start of 2008 to Member States to distribute to players on their databases. Member States will be welcome to adopt the Golf Australia hard card for their own events.

12.2 Communication Process re the Handling of Queries

All communication from Member States to Golf Australia regarding the Rules of Golf and Amateur Status (and handicapping and course rating) should be directed to Simon Magdulski (Manager – Rules & Handicapping) or Therese Ritter (Manager – Championships) in the Golf Australia office. The secretariat will address the request directly or, if required, refer it to the Committee or The R&A. If a Member State specifically requests a matter be referred to the Committee or The R&A, the secretariat will act as requested unless the Committee Chairman decides otherwise.

The secretariat will also address:

- ◆ issues referred back to it by The R&A
- ◆ general queries from clubs or individuals
- ◆ queries involving a request for information which has been officially posted on the public record

Any query (to which Golf Australia is aware there is an accompanying dispute) from a club or an individual will be referred to the respective Member State. (Exception – With transparency and service in mind, a phone query involving a request for information which has been officially posted on the public record will be met where practicable.)

The point of contact for a Member State seeking any decision or any advice on a matter is the Golf Australia secretariat.

12.3 Explanation of Exception to Relief Entitlement in Rule 24-2 and Rule 25-1

There is an exception to the relief entitlement provided by Rule 24-2 or Rule 25-1 which states:

“A player may not take relief under this Rule if (a) it is clearly unreasonable for them to make a stroke because of interference by anything other than *[what Rule 24-2 or Rule 25-1 would otherwise provide relief from]* or (b) interference by *[what Rule 24-2 or Rule 25-1 would otherwise provide relief from]* would occur only through use of an unnecessarily abnormal stance, swing or direction of play.”

In assessing whether or not to apply this exception, the determination to be made is essentially whether or not (a) the player would otherwise be forced to proceed under Rule 28 (Unplayable Ball) and (b) the interference caused to the player's stance, swing or direction of play is as a result of the stroke the player would have chosen to play if *[what Rule 24-2 or Rule 25-1 would otherwise provide relief from]* wasn't there.

FUTURE MEETINGS

13. Scheduling

13.1 General

Meetings in future are to be scheduled to coincide with the Australian Amateur Championships in the first half of the year, and the Australian Interstate Series in the second half of the year.

13.2 Next Meeting

Precise timing to be determined once the Committee composition has been settled.