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BALL MOVED AFTER LOOSE IMPEDIMENT TOUCHED

The deletion of the old Rule 18-2c in the 2004 Rules revision has resulted in numerous queries.

Rule 18-2a now covers the situation and is basically unchanged in that it penalises the player if he/she, the player's partner or either of their caddiescauses the ball to move except as permitted by the Rules.

The old Rule 18-2c stated that if the ball moved after the player, their partner or either of their caddies touched a loose impediment within a club-length of the ball, the player was deemed to have caused the ball to move and incurred a one stroke penalty. The ball was then to be replaced.

This rule was not included in the 2004 Rules revision as ultimately it was considered to be too harsh on the player if the touching of the loose impediment was not responsible for the ball having moved. This non-inclusion however has caused a good deal of confusion due in some degree to incorrect interpretations appearing in some magazines and newspapers.

Rule 23 (Loose Impediments) now refers the player to Rule 18-2a if the removal of a loose impediment causes the ball to move.

In essence, the only change is that the player is not automatically penalised if the ball moves after a loose impediment within a club-length is touched, UNLESS such action caused the ball to move.

If, for example, the movement of the ball was caused by the wind, the ball is not replaced and no penalty is incurred.

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