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**GOLF AUSTRALIA
RULES OF GOLF & AMATEUR STATUS COMMITTEE
MEETING – THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2009
AT PENINSULA COUNTRY GOLF CLUB, FRANKSTON, VICTORIA**

SUMMARY

Present from the Committee: John Buckley (Chairman), Ian Read, Robert Crosby, Frank Gal (via phone), Jenny Hoff, John Hopkins (via phone), Andrew Langford-Jones

In Attendance: Simon Magdulski (Manager – Rules & Handicapping), Therese Ritter (Manager – Championships), Trevor Herden (Director – Championships) (*NOTE – Trevor Herden was in attendance only until the conclusion of Agenda item 5*)

GENERAL

1. Previous Meeting Summary

This was agreed.

2. Determination of Positions on Committee

The Chairman reaffirmed that the Committee positions of Frank Gal and Jenny Hoff are to be declared automatically vacant at the time of the 2009 Golf Australia AGM as a result of the expiration of their designated terms and in accordance with the Committee Charter. Nominations for these vacant positions are being received. A determination regarding these positions moving forward will be announced at the AGM.

RULES OF GOLF

3. National Rules Accreditation & Education Programs Framework

3.1 GA Rules & Competitions Newsletter (Component of General Education Programs Tier – ie Tier 1)

The Committee noted that GA Rules & Handicapping communications to clubs are widely consumed within each club's administration and the information considered to be of high value. Constant feedback from clubs indicates a desire for greater provision of guidance and information in this area. As GA does not provide a regular Rules & Handicapping communication, but instead distributes information only when a specific need arises, it appears a demand exists which is not currently being serviced.

With this in mind, the Committee endorsed a proposal to periodically distribute to all clubs an electronic newsletter geared at providing guidance on any club competition management issue (including handicapping). This proposal would also serve as a mechanism for promoting relevant resources the State Associations have for sale as well as the suite of programs and services offered by State Associations and GA.

In addition to the distribution to all clubs, it is envisaged the electronic newsletter will be made available at no cost to any member of an affiliated Australian golf club (the sign-up mechanism would be contained within the GA website).

3.2 Report on GA Club Level Resources

It was noted that an updated version of the *Complete Club Level Rules Accreditation Resources* CD will soon be distributed to all State Associations.

3.3 Report on Development of GA State Level Resources

The Committee noted that the Rules Accreditation Review Group is continuing its work on the development of the State Level program. The current intention is to distribute to all State Associations early in 2010 a CD containing the complete State Level resources. This will enable feedback emanating from State Level schools being conducted in the latter part of 2009 in New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria to be worked into the final product. It will also allow the incorporation of the 1 January 2010 changes to the R&A Decisions Book.

3.4 Report on Development of GA Advanced State Level Rules & Competitions School

It was noted that the first annual GA Advanced State Level Rules & Competitions School is to be held from 11-13 January 2010 at Victoria Golf Club in Melbourne. It will be jointly constructed and presented by The R&A and GA. Presenters will include; Grant Moir (Director – Rules of Golf, The R&A), Steve Otto (Director – Research & Testing; The R&A), Simon Magdulski (Manager – Rules & Handicapping, GA), Trevor Herden (Director – Championships, GA), and Andrew Langford-Jones (Director of Tournaments, PGA Tour of Australasia).

The school will be attended by approximately 15-17 people. All State Associations have been invited to advise GA of their attendees. The cost of attendance of State personnel will be subsidised by GA.

The school will provide a mechanism for educating golf officials and also for achieving uniform development of skill sets in the areas of advanced Rules delivery and elite Competition management across all States and organisations. By doing this, the school should achieve its primary objective of improving the quality and delivery of all state and national events.

GA had noted that there currently is no mechanism for training and calibrating state level officials in the areas of rules and competitions. It is anticipated that Member States and their events should receive a significant benefit from the creation of such a development opportunity.

4. Pace of Play – Proposal to Produce Documentation Providing Guidance to Clubs

The Committee approved a proposal for GA to produce documentation geared at providing guidance to clubs on the array of factors which affect pace of play. Such documentation will be formulated in consultation with the State Associations, the Australian Golf Course Superintendents' Association, and The R&A, and will be distributed to all clubs.

The Committee noted the continued growth in significance and profile of this issue and adopted the view that it would be desirable for GA to provide assistance for clubs in their pursuit of improved outcomes.

5. 2010 GA Hard Card

The following issues were discussed and resolved with a view to confirming the 2010 GA Hard Card.

5.1 Distance Measuring Devices

With a view to achieving consistency with PGA Tour regulations, the Committee decided against adopting a local rule to allow the use of electronic distance measuring devices. As GA's elite amateur events are a near end-point in the pathway to PGA Tour events, the Committee felt it an important objective to align the conditions of play our elite players will experience in national amateur events to those they will be required to play under in Tour events.

The Committee was also particularly mindful of the advice of The R&A on this issue.

5.2 Club Face Groove Regulations

The Committee adopted The R&A's strong recommendation on the timeline for the phased introduction of the new regulations relating to club face grooves as follows:

- 1 January 2010 – To apply for the Championship Proper sections of the Men's Australian Open and Women's Australian Open.
- 1 January 2014 – To apply for all GA Elite Amateur Competitions.
- 1 January 2024 at the earliest (note: The R&A may extend this date after review in 2020) – To apply to all players, all abilities, all forms of play.

5.3 Restriction on Practice Between Holes during a Stipulated Round

With a view to achieving consistency with PGA Tour conditions given playing pathway considerations, the Committee decided the restriction on practice between holes during a stipulated round should apply to stroke play rounds only.

6. R&A Update

John Buckley updated the Committee on developments in The R&A's work on the 2012-2015 Rules of Golf.

7. NSWGA Queries

7.1 Ball Substituted at Wrong Place for Ball in Play

Question – A player plays from the tee on a par 3 towards a location where the ball could be lost or out of bounds. He then plays a provisional ball on to the green. He finds his original ball in a garden bed and, believing he is entitled to GUR relief, drops the ball accordingly and plays it on to the green. It is then discovered that the garden bed was out of bounds. The dropped ball was played from within the boundary.

Answer – The Committee considered Decisions 18-2a/8.5 and 20-7c/4 to be analogous. The player's provisional ball was the ball in play as the original ball was out of bounds. However when he dropped the ball in accordance with what he assumed to be GUR relief, he was in fact wrongly substituting a ball for his ball in play. When he did not correct his error in accordance with Rule 20-6 and made a stroke at the wrongly-substituted ball, he was in breach of Rule 15-2 as well as 20-7 for playing from a wrong place and the applicable Rule is Rule 13-1. In match play he incurred a penalty of loss of hole (Rule 15-2 or 20-7b). In stroke play, he incurred a penalty of two strokes for playing from a wrong place (Rule 20-7c). There is no additional penalty for incorrectly substituting a ball (see Exception to Rule 15-2) and the player must continue with the wrongly-substituted ball.

7.2 Ball Moves after Backswing Commenced; Player Misses Ball in Attempting Stroke

Question – A player addresses his ball and the ball moves after he starts his backswing. He continues with the stroke but misses the ball. He incurs a penalty stroke, but must he play the ball from its new position or is he required to replace the ball?

Answer – The Committee considered that the player must play the ball from its new position in accordance with Rule 18-2.

8. Rules Query – Andrew Langford-Jones

After preliminary discussion, it was decided to defer further consideration of this query until the next meeting.

9. Hole Details/Diagrams on Women's Tees

GA has received a proposal for it to publish advice to the effect that signage displaying hole details/diagrams be erected on women's tees as well as on men's tees. After discussion, it was considered prudent to refer this matter to the GA Game Development Committee as this Committee should be best positioned to address the relevant considerations.

RULES OF AMATEUR STATUS

10. R&A Update

John Buckley updated the Committee on developments in The R&A's work on the 2012-2015 Rules of Amateur Status.

11. Golf Cash Update

GA has communicated to Golf Cash the final determination of The R&A and GA regarding its concept. In summary, Golf Cash is considered to be contrary to the Rules of Amateur Status. GA will shortly be issuing a further statement to the industry on this matter.

FUTURE MEETINGS

12. Next Meeting

April 2010 in Melbourne.