



Rules

This year has been a very quiet year with few rules brought to the committee's attention. All issues were resolved on the course the day of play.

As most of you know, there are 33 proposed changes for 2019 that will impact the game and be of interest to golfers who play and follow the game. The proposed changes are organized into eight categories: Ball at Rest, Ball in Motion, Area of the Course, Equipment, Playing a Ball, When to Play During a Round, and Player Behavior. Committees are trying to modernize golf rules and improve the golf experience. Changes include the following...

- allowing 3 minutes rather than 5 minutes to look for a lost ball
- dropping a ball only inches above the ground rather than from shoulder height
- assessing no penalty when a ball in motion accidentally hits you, your equipment, or your caddie

Again those are proposed rules and, if passed, will not be in effect until 2019.

Knowing the rules helped Jordan Spieth when he played in the Open Championship at Birkdale in July this year. Jordan made a decision and declared his ball unplayable on a dune on Hole 13. He also was smart enough to tell his caddie to move out of his line of flight to prevent a penalty for getting assistance with the shot. He ended the hole with a bogey when the situation could have produced a much higher number. Knowing the rules, Jordan went on to win the British, defeating Matt Kuchar, who had patiently waited for Jordan to play his shot on 13. (Although I wouldn't take 20 minutes—none of us are that friendly.)

If you are not sure of a rule, it is okay to ask the players in your group what your options are or to play a second ball.

Study the rules. But, most of all, stay healthy and enjoy the game.

Respectfully submitted

Viola Kemp