



2025 Rules Volunteer Training

Session 2



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Agenda

- Art of Refereeing
- Positioning
- Difficult Interactions
- Starting
- Scoring

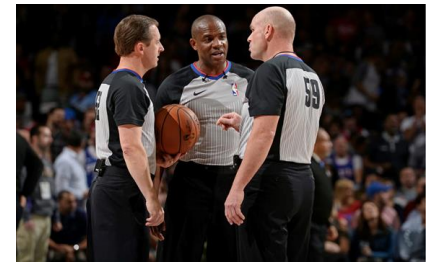


Being a Referee/Rules Official

Golf is a Different Game

“Hours of boredom, moments of terror.” – Mike Shea – PGA Tour

- More than one ball
 - Up to 100+ players in a wave
 - Multiple balls in motion at one time
- More than one arena
 - 18 holes (arenas)
 - Dimension very different week to week (hole to hole)
- More than one day
 - Hours vs. days (retrospective penalties)
 - Differing conditions



Art of Refereeing

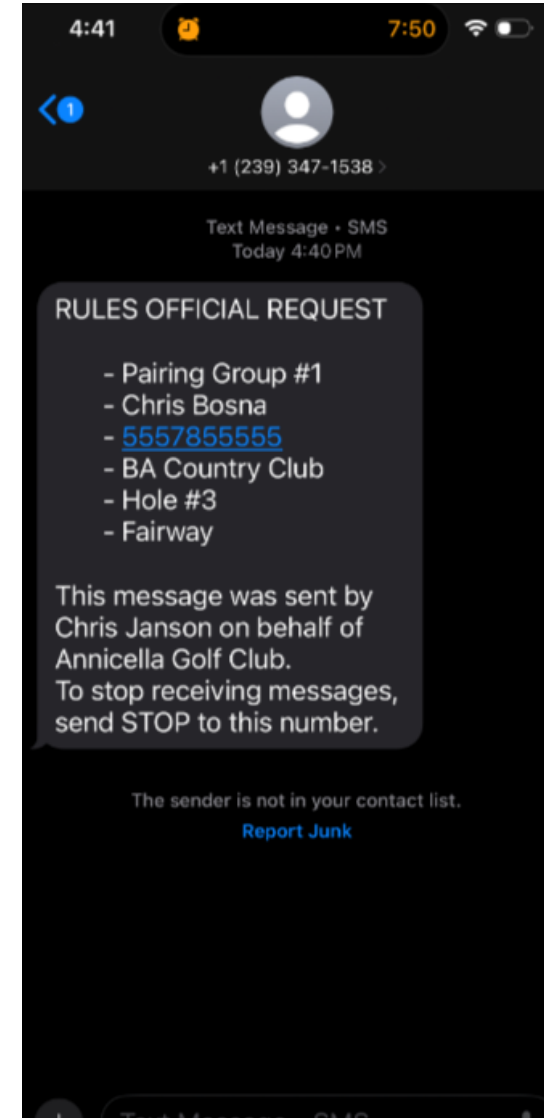
- Not all about the rules, but how to officiate
- About applying the rules accurately and...
 - Professionally/Calmly
 - Effectively
 - Efficiently





New this Year

- We will be implementing rules official requests via Golf Genius
- A group often can't find a rules official close to their group
- A message will be sent to all officials
 - Player: The player who initiated the request
 - Callback Number: The phone number of the golfer who initiated the request
 - Course: The course where the request took place
 - Hole: The hole of the request
 - Location: The location of the request
- Radio to everyone who is taking the request





Art of Refereeing

Aspects of a Good Ruling:

- The ruling is correct
- The player is comfortable with the ruling
- No time is wasted completing the ruling

Not all rulings will go as we'd like –
use this as a checklist for review





Art of Refereeing

Making a Ruling:

- Accuracy
 - Played from the correct place
 - Put into play properly
 - Penalty issued if required
- Efficiency/Timeliness
- Demeanor
- Professionalism
- Outcome





Art of Refereeing

Accuracy:

- Consulting over the radio is not a sign of weakness
- Even if you are certain of a rule, it might help to show it or confirm over the radio so the player can hear
- If a player questions a ruling, offer to call another official for a second opinion



Art of Refereeing

Making a Ruling:

- Accuracy
- Efficiency/Timeliness
 - Relevant questioning
 - Reasonable time for decisions
 - Radio communication succinct and direct
- Demeanor
- Professionalism
- Outcome



Art of Refereeing

Relevant Questioning/Conversation:

- The rules are easy, getting the facts is hard. Don't make assumptions
- Say "tell me (or show me) what happened," (who, what, when, where, why) then **listen**
 - **You have two ears and one mouth for a reason!**
- Repeat back facts to confirm, "Just so I'm clear..."
- Get everyone involved to agree to the facts before giving a ruling
- Be wary of rules requests containing few or no facts

Art of Refereeing

Making a Ruling:

- Accuracy
- Efficiency/Timeliness
- Demeanor
 - Calm greeting and tone
 - "Open" posture
 - Attitude to assist
 - Allow player to state facts and case
- Professionalism
- Outcome





Art of Refereeing

Avoid Imposing Posture

- Hands on hips, arms crossed signify imposition and confrontation
- Arms open, lowered or behind back signal friendly and helpful
- Know your audience, a junior may be far more intimidated by what is normally a reasonable distance – especially if you are taller
- No need to hover



Art of Refereeing

Making a Ruling:

- Accuracy
- Efficiency/Timeliness
- Demeanor
- Professionalism
 - Eye contact (no sunglasses)
 - Fact-based statements
 - Be confident, but not arrogant
 - Avoids negative implications
- Outcome



Art of Refereeing

Making a Ruling:

- Accuracy
- Efficiency/Timeliness
- Demeanor
- Professionalism
- Outcome
 - Stay focused on that ruling
 - Player accepts/feels heard
 - Complete explanation (including any penalty)





Art of Refereeing

Outcome:

- If there is a penalty involved, make sure the player is aware of it and tie that into the explanation early – don't throw in the penalty after!
- Be cognizant the player may not have thought a penalty was coming
- Don't use Rules speak/numbers with players – put in layman's terms
- Close out the ruling with the player – “Is there anything else I can help you with?”
- Close out the ruling with the Committee



Questions



Being In Position - Overview

What Do We Mean By Positioning?

- In a place to help the player
- Still give adequate space
- Avoids imposing posture
- Appropriate match play referee positions
- No wasted steps



Being In Position

Give Adequate Space

- Park at least 10 yards away and away from other player's play – then walk in
- Look in advance for areas to avoid or getting stuck too close
- Give enough space for entire potential relief area
- Exit the ruling before the stroke if you can



Being In Position

Give Adequate Space

- Be distanced from relief area, and closer to hole where ball cannot roll
- Stay out of bunker – only rarely when needed should you go into a bunker
- Immediately exit the ruling





Being In Position

Match Play Positions

- May be closer than in stroke play
- Belly buttons and butts
- Strike a balance between players, there's still no need to hover
- Still stay off putting greens
 - But be close enough to be able to offer an opinion on who is away quickly
 - Listen for concessions



Being In Position

Match Play Positions

- Go to every teeing area
- Don't be too far ahead (within 10 yards if trying to encourage pace of play)
- Split the difference when on opposite sides
- Avoid criss-crossing
- Know your exits





Questions



Difficult Interactions - Overview

Types of Difficult Interactions

- Unhappy Players
- Caddie/Others Interference
- Issuing Penalties
- Second Opinions
- Scoring Area



Difficult Interactions – Unhappy Players

De-escalation

- Initial engagement can change everything
- Listen as much as possible – try to gather all of the facts
- Why is the player upset?
- The unhappy player may not be the one with the rules issue or there may be no rules issue at all – recognize the conflict
- Conflict resolution – rules issue (official or staff) vs. other issues (staff)
- Be calm, collected and don't show emotion





Difficult Interactions – Caddie/Other Interference

Player Focus

- Information from caddies, spectators and others can be helpful and necessary
- Caddies have the same interest of the players – be aware of that
- Unsolicited or “extra” interactions can escalate a situation
- Making caddie or other person feel heard – so that they back off
- Calmly “removing” the other person from the conversation



Difficult Interactions – Issuing Penalties

Stick to the Facts

- No one is excited to give or get a penalty
- Make clear it isn't subjective (you are relaying Rules information, not your opinion) and clarify the facts.
- Avoid using "I" in certain situations – "I can't give you relief"
- Use of phrases: "I understand what you are saying, however...", "I am sorry but...", "Unfortunately, the Rules don't allow..."
- Get out of the situation once the ruling has been made – any longer discussions can always be had at scoring
- Avoid phrases: "At least you're not DQed", "The problem is...", "I think"

Difficult Interactions – Second Opinions

Second Opinions

- OK to call in a second opinion
- Sometimes necessary for player to hear it from someone else, even when ruling is clear
- Once second referee arrives, you can go – do not linger, the ruling is now theirs
- The second referee very quickly already knows how you ruled, otherwise they would not have been called in





Difficult Interactions – Scoring Area

Different Types of Conversations

- Brought in to resolve a known conflict (player knows this is coming)
- Heard of a potential issue (player is hearing it for the first time) and must sort through the facts
- In either situation a member of the staff should take the lead with involved committee member(s), if necessary
- Make sure staff is aware of situation before player discussion
- Handle in a quiet or private manor – go somewhere else, if necessary



Difficult Interactions – When Things Go Wrong

When You Make a Wrong Ruling

- Admit the mistake
 - We've all done it – you have to move forward
- Get to the player
 - Correct it, if not too late
- Next steps may depend on
 - the nature of the wrong ruling, or
 - the visibility of the situation
- Make sure Committee is informed and aligned



Questions





Starting Procedures





Starting Procedures

- Volunteers assigned as the starters are responsible for ensuring the players start at the time specified by the committee
- Arrive 30 minutes prior to the first group to ask the staff member in charge (SMIC) questions and check the starters box
 - Atomic clock
 - Scorecards (official) and extra
 - Hole location sheets
 - Notice to Players (NTP) and VSGA "Hard Card"
 - Starter's Script and Starter's Sheet
 - Pencils, Markers, and Tees
 - Golf Genius GGID (Download the App!)





Introduce Yourself and Players

- Introduce yourself to the players and welcome them to the event/championship
- Have the players in the group introduce themselves
- Match play
 - Introduce the players to the observer and/or referee





Hand out Necessary Information

- Hand out scorecards, NTP/hole locations
 - Make sure they are not keeping their own score
 - Scan QR code for hard card
- Go over important information noted on the starter's script
 - Tees, format, local Rules, scoring, etc.
- Tell them the order of play
 - Located on the rounds pairing sheet
- Golf Genius – Players entering scores
- Use the official atomic clock **ONLY** to start the groups on time





Late to the Tee

- Missing a player with three minutes before the group tees off
 - At a point three minutes prior to the group's tee time, the starter will give three minutes to go on the radio. Ex. "I'm missing Kevin Smith."
 - At a point one minute prior, the message is repeated on the radio. Other players in the group are informed
 - At a point of 30 seconds, the starter informs the group 30 seconds remains
 - If a player misses their starting time, announce to the staff/Committee





Late to the Tee

- When the initial 3-minute radio transmission is made by the starter, the starter must not leave the tee to look for the player.
- If the player is “found,” that should be communicated on the radio
- Penalty for breach of rule 5.3a: Disqualification, except in these three cases
 - Exception 1 – Player arrives at starting point, ready to play, no more than five minutes Late: the player gets the general penalty applied to their first hole
 - Exception 2 – player starts no more than five minutes early: The player gets the general penalty applied to their first hole
 - Exception 3 – Committee decides that exceptional circumstances prevented player from starting on time: There is no breach of this rule and no penalty

Delays

- If starting times are delayed, maintain time records on the pairings sheet
- Additionally, please notify the SMIC and Committee of any delays
- General rule of thumb is to maintain time intervals after a delay
- If you can maintain group spacing interval, it is okay to make up time





Questions





Scoring Area Items

- Table and chairs
- VSGA tablecloth
- Computer and charging cord
- Pencils
- Clip (keep scorecards together)
- Radio
- Pairings from the day



Scoring

- Responsibility of the committee
- **ONLY** players and VSGA rules officials are permitted in the designated scoring area
- Conversations should be kept to a minimum
- Any disputes or issues should be reported to the staff





Scoring Procedures

- Ask if there are any rules questions
- Ask the player and marker to go through hole-by-hole scores
- Verify the scores in Golf Genius
 - Make sure the scores are legible on the scorecard
- Yourself and the player/marker should agree on the total score
- Write the total score in the upper right of the scorecard
- Confirm that there are two signatures and 18 scores in 18 boxes





Individual Stroke Play Scorecard

Checking a Scorecard

C.
1. Check that there are 18 individual hole scores - one in each box.
2. Check that each is legible.

A.
Player's Certification matches the name on card.

F.
Add this card's total to previous round(s) total.

G.
When everything is checked and agreed upon, place your own initials in area provided.

B.
Marker Certification

D.
Add up each nine holes and fill in the total or confirm/correct the total.

E.
Add the "OUT" and "IN" totals and fill in the total score or confirm/correct the total.

OFFICIAL SCORECARD
118TH U.S. OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP®

PLAYER Russell Knox

ROUND 2 DATE 6/15/2018 HOLE 1 TIME 2:20 pm

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	OUT
YARDS	399	252	500	475	589	491	189	439	485	3819
PAR	4	3	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	35
	4	4	4	3	5	4	3	3	5	

Marker's Signature Ra Q

35

USGA®

FOR USGA USE

PREVIOUS TOTAL 73

THIS ROUND 69

NEW TOTAL 142

SCORER: RM COMPUTER: _____

10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	IN	TOTAL
415	159	469	374	519	409	616	175	485	3621	7440
4	3	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	35	70
4	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	5		69

Russell Knox - Signature Russell Knox

34



Scoring Four-Ball Scorecard

OFFICIAL SCORECARD

3rd U.S. WOMEN'S AMATEUR FOUR-BALL CHAMPIONSHIP®

Each score must be clearly identified as the score of the individual partner who made it (Rule 23.2b).

ROUND 2 DATE 5/28/2017 HOLE 1 TIME 8:00 am

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	OUT
YARDS	386	391	369	438	139	358	365	504	150	3100
PAR	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	5	3	36
Josephine Chang	4	5	5	X	3	5	4	4	3	
Sarah Shipley	X	3	5	4	3	X	4	4	4	

35


Marker's Signature



The Dunes Golf and Beach Club

FOR USGA USE

PREVIOUS TOTAL 71


THIS ROUND 68

NEW TOTAL 139

SCORER: 

COMPUTER: _____

10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	IN	TOTAL
336	368	178	514	362	463	339	173	348	3081	6181
4	4	3	5	4	5	4	3	4	36	72
3	2	5	4	3	5	4	4	X		
4	3	5	X	3	4	4	3	5		
									33	68


Player's Signature



Questions

Session 3: Monday, March 24th at 11:00 a.m.
