

## Officiating 101 Referees and Observers Lesson Summary

### Getting Ready...Referees

- √ Introduce yourself!
- √ Find out the names of the players and their caddies.
- √ Determine the type of ball and player markings for both players.
- √ Stay out of the players' way.

### Getting Ready...Observers

- √ Introduce yourself, then hustle forward to the landing zone!
- √ Try to prevent any interference with play or disturbances in the landing areas. Got spectator problems? Notify a Rover.
- √ Communicate only with the Referee and let the Referee interact directly with the players.

### What Referees Do

Decide questions of fact and apply the Rules as you accompany the players on their rounds.

#### Play by the Rules

- √ You have to act on any infraction of a Rule that you observe yourself or that's reported to you.
- √ You must be able to decide on the facts of a case and sort through those facts to give a correct ruling.
- √ Refer to a Rules of Golf book if you need it.

#### Stay Sharp

- √ Give the players, and their play, your undivided attention.
- √ Be alert to the order of play at all times.
- √ You don't need to see every shot, but you *should* be aware of most of the action that takes place.

#### Call for Backup

- √ If you're working with an Observer, use your radio—as well as hand/marshal signals—to communicate about things like who is away, ball safe, ball out of bounds or in a hazard, play a provisional ball, and so on.
- √ Use the radio for support if you need to.
- √ If a player asks for a second opinion, don't hesitate to call a Rover or other official.

### **Don't Do This!**

- √ DON'T attend the flagstick.
- √ DON'T stand at or mark the position of the hole.
- √ DON'T lift the ball or mark its position.

### **What Observers Do**

Spot golf balls and otherwise assist a Referee in any way you're requested. Help decide questions of fact and notify the Referee of any Rules infraction you see.

#### **Location of the Ball**

- √ **What if...**you need to search for a ball?  
Keep track of the ball's location at all times.  
Help the Referee with the five-minute timing procedure.  
Coordinate your efforts with forecaddies and marshals.
- √ **What if...**you see a ball that would be difficult for a player to find?  
Stay at the ball's location until the player arrives.
- √ **What if...**two balls are in difficult areas?  
Be ready to help the Referee until both balls are back in play.

#### **Potential Rulings**

- √ **What if...**you observe a potential ruling situation (such as a ball in casual water, or a spectator steps on a ball)?  
Notify the Referee as soon as possible over the radio of potential rulings.
- √ **What if...**the ball comes to rest in a water hazard?  
Use a tee to mark the spot where the ball last crossed the hazard margin.
- √ **What if...**there's a question about which player is away?  
Determine which player is away and notify the Referee via radio or by using hand signals.

#### **Putting Greens and Bunkers**

- √ **What if...**you need to determine which ball is away?  
Do not go onto the putting greens unless you have to.  
If you're pacing on the putting green, avoid walking on the player's line of play or line of putt.
- √ **What if...**the putting green needs to be cleared?  
Remove the flagstick, and replace it in the hole when the job is completed.
- √ **What if...**a rake is left in a bunker?  
Reposition bunker rakes to outside the bunkers, where they are least likely to affect play. [See Decision Misc./2 in your Decisions Book.]

### **Don't Do This!**

- √ DON'T be a "companion" who walks with the Referee. Observers should always be forward!
- √ DON'T attend the flagstick.

- √ DON'T stand at or mark the position of the hole.
- √ DON'T lift the ball or mark its position.

### Where Referees Belong

Be in a position where you can see the action.

- √ **The Action**  
Be in a position where you can see the action. This includes knowing the location of the ball and watching the player's actions (near the ball, taking practice swings, taking a stance, grounding the club, and so on.).
- √ **The Players**  
Stay slightly behind and to the side of players. Be readily available but unobtrusive to the players (we call that being "conspicuously inconspicuous"!).
- √ **The Fairway**  
Walk in the fairway, not in the rough, unless you're helping a player with a ruling.
- √ **The Bunker**  
Do NOT go into a bunker unless you're helping a player search for a ball.
- √ **The Putting Green**  
Do NOT go onto the putting green unless you're helping a player with a ruling.

### Where Observers Belong

Position yourself in the traditional forward location: that's near the landing zone of the stroke being played.

- √ **The Landing Area**  
Position yourself in the traditional forward location: that's where the landing zone of the stroke is being played. That would be to the side of the drive zone when players are on the tee at a par-4, and near the putting green as approach shots are being played. If two Observers are working a match, position yourselves on opposite sides of the landing zone.
- √ **The Next Landing Area**  
When all of the balls are on the putting green, move forward to the next hole's landing area.
- √ **The Fairway**  
On blind shots, if the landing area is not clear, stand in the middle of the fairway to hold up play. When the zone is clear, wave the match forward and move to the side.
- √ **The Ball**  
Be in a position to see the flight of each player's ball and where it comes to rest. Did it clear the hazard or not? Anticipate the *worst* place a ball might end up! This could be into the woods, in high rough, in a bunker, in

a stream paralleling the fairway, or in a pond fronting the putting green.  
(For example: if ball is in a green-side bunker, anticipate the ball being skulled over green and be in position to see where ball comes to rest.)

√ **The Referee**

Position yourself alongside a Referee (as a “companion” Observer) only if: you’re in training as a new Rules Official, or you’re observing in a ceremonial capacity.

√ **The Bunker**

Do NOT go into a bunker!

√ **The Putting Green**

Do NOT go onto the putting green!