



THE R&A AND THE USGA ANNOUNCE FINAL APPROVAL OF RULE 14-1B THAT PROHIBITS USE OF ANCHORED STROKES

*Governing Bodies Issue Report Explaining Their Decision Following Comment Process
New Rule to Take Effect on 1 January 2016, Allowing for Transitional Period
Belly-Length and Long Putters Remain as Conforming Clubs*

St Andrews, Scotland and Far Hills, NJ, USA (21 May 2013):

The R&A and the United States Golf Association (USGA), golf's governing bodies, today announced the adoption of Rule 14-1b of the Rules of Golf that prohibits anchoring the club in making a stroke. The new Rule will take effect on 1 January 2016 in accordance with the regular four-year cycle for changes to the Rules of Golf.

Rule 14-1b, which was proposed on 28 November 2012, has now been given final approval by The R&A and the USGA following an extensive review by both organisations. The decision to adopt the new Rule came after a comprehensive process in which comments and suggestions from across the golf community were collected and thoroughly considered.

The R&A and the USGA have prepared a detailed report to explain the reasons for the decision to adopt Rule 14-1b. The report explains the principles on which the Rules of Golf are founded, why freely swinging the entire club is the essence of the traditional method of stroke, and why anchoring is a substantially different form of stroke that may alter and diminish the fundamental challenges of the game. It points out that the Rule will still allow the use of belly-length and long putters and that a wide variety of types of strokes remain for players to use. The report concludes that the new Rule should not adversely affect participation in the game, that it is not too late or unfair to require players to comply with it and that it will remove concerns about any potential advantage that anchoring provides. It also makes clear that one set of Rules is essential to the future health of the game. The report, entitled *Explanation of Decision to Adopt Rule 14-1b of the Rules of Golf*, can be found at www.RandA.org/anchoring or at www.usga.org/anchoring.

Peter Dawson, Chief Executive of The R&A said: "We took a great deal of time to consider this issue and received a variety of contributions from individuals and organisations at all levels of the game. The report published today gives a comprehensive account of the reasons for taking the decision to adopt the new Rule and addresses the concerns that have been raised. We recognise this has been a divisive issue but after thorough consideration we remain convinced that this is the right decision for golf."

"Having considered all of the input that we received, both before and after the proposed Rule was announced, our best judgment is that Rule 14-1b is necessary to preserve one of the important traditions and challenges of the game – that the player freely swings the entire club," said USGA President Glen D. Nager. "The new Rule upholds the essential nature of the traditional method of stroke and eliminates the possible advantage that anchoring provides, ensuring that players of all skill levels face the same challenge inherent in the game of golf."

The current Rule 14-1 of the Rules of Golf will be re-numbered as Rule 14-1a, and new Rule 14-1b will be established as follows:

14-1b Anchoring the Club

In making a stroke, the player must not anchor the club, either “directly” or by use of an “anchor point.”

Note 1: The club is anchored “directly” when the player intentionally holds the club or a gripping hand in contact with any part of his body, except that the player may hold the club or a gripping hand against a hand or forearm.

Note 2: An “anchor point” exists when the player intentionally holds a forearm in contact with any part of his body to establish a gripping hand as a stable point around which the other hand may swing the club.

Rule 14-1b will not alter current equipment rules and allows for the continued use of all conforming golf clubs, including belly-length and long putters, provided such clubs are not anchored during a stroke. The new Rule narrowly targets only a few types of strokes, while preserving a golfer’s ability to play a wide variety of strokes in his or her individual style.

The 1 January 2016 timetable for implementation also provides an extended period in which golfers may, if necessary, adapt their method of stroke to the requirements of the new Rule.

David Rickman, Executive Director of Rules and Equipment Standards at The R&A, said: “This Rule change addresses the future and not the past. Everyone who has used an anchored stroke in the past, or who does so between now and 1 January 2016, will have played entirely within the Rules and their achievements will in no way be diminished.”

“The discussion around the Rule has been very helpful, and we appreciate that so many different perspectives were offered,” said USGA Executive Director Mike Davis. “We know that not everyone will agree with the new Rule, but it is our hope that all golfers will accept that this decision is reasoned and motivated by our best judgment in defining the sport and serving the best interests of the game.”

For more information about the adopted Rule, including a demonstration video, photos, infographics, and a Guidance Document for Players and Officials, visit www.RandA.org/anchoring and www.usga.org/anchoring.

About the R&A

R&A Rules Ltd is the rules-making company of The R&A. Based in St Andrews, The R&A organises The Open Championship, major amateur events and international matches. Together with the United States Golf Association, The R&A governs the game worldwide, jointly administering the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status, Equipment Standards and World Amateur Golf Rankings. The R&A’s working jurisdiction is global, excluding the United States and Mexico. The R&A is committed to working for golf and supports the growth of the game internationally and the development and management of sustainable golf facilities. The R&A operates with the consent of 149 organisations from the amateur and professional game and on behalf of over thirty million golfers in 135 countries.

About the USGA

The USGA conducts the U.S. Open, U.S. Women’s Open and U.S. Senior Open, as well as 10 national amateur championships, two state team championships and international matches. Together with The R&A, the USGA governs the game worldwide, jointly administering the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status, Equipment Standards and World Amateur Golf Rankings. The USGA’s working jurisdiction comprises the United States, its territories and Mexico. The USGA is a global leader in the development and support of sustainable golf course management practices. It serves as a primary steward for the game’s history and funds an ongoing “For the Good of the Game” charitable giving programme. Additionally, the USGA’s Course Rating and Handicap systems are used on six continents in more than 50 countries.