



THE R&A AND THE USGA ANNOUNCE CHANGES TO “DECISIONS ON THE RULES OF GOLF”

Joint Statement Issued Regarding the Use of Video Evidence

19 November 2013, St Andrews, Scotland:

As part of a continuing commitment to provide greater clarity to the Rules of Golf, The R&A and the United States Golf Association (USGA), golf's governing bodies, today announced revisions to the 2012-2013 edition of “Decisions on the Rules of Golf.” The changes, part of a customary two-year Decisions review cycle, become effective on January 1, 2014.

“Decisions on the Rules of Golf, 2014-2015” contains more than 1,200 entries addressing specific situations under the Rules of Golf. A total of 87 changes have been made to the 2012-2013 Decisions book: three new Decisions, 59 revised Decisions, one re-numbered Decision and 24 Decisions withdrawn.

“The Rules of Golf are constantly evolving,” said Thomas Pagel, USGA senior director of the Rules of Golf. “The Decisions review process is an opportunity for The R&A and the USGA to continue to help make the game more understandable and accessible for players, officials and others who participate in the game.”

David Rickman, The R&A's Executive Director – Rules and Equipment Standards, said, “It is important to consider carefully new developments in the game and that is reflected in the new Decisions on the Rules which give greater clarity on the use of smart phones and advanced video technology.”

Among the changes for 2014-2015, four decisions are particularly noteworthy:

- New Decision 14-3/18 confirms that players can access reports on weather conditions on a smartphone during a round without breaching the Rules. Importantly, this new Decision also clarifies that players are permitted to access information on the threat of an impending storm in order to protect their own safety.
- New Decision 18/4 provides that, where enhanced technological evidence (e.g. HDTV, digital recording or online visual media, etc.) shows that a ball has left its position and come to rest in another location, the ball will not be deemed to have moved if that movement was not reasonably discernible to the naked eye at the time. The R&A and the USGA have issued a Joint Statement on the Use of Video and other Visual Evidence to further explain the governing bodies' position on the use of this technology.
- Revised Decision 25-2/0.5 helps to clarify when a golf ball is considered to be embedded in the ground through the use of illustrations.
- Revised Decision 27-2a/1.5 allows a player to go forward up to approximately 50 yards without forfeiting his or her right to go back and play a provisional ball.

The full text of the revisions to “[Decisions on the Rules of Golf](#)” and of the [Joint Statement](#) can be found at www.RandA.org and www.usga.org.