



Rule of the Month

September 1, 2016

Water, Water, Everywhere.

Parts of the Course: Water Hazards

This month we continue the “parts of the course” series with a focus on water hazards and lateral water hazards. Knowing the difference between water hazards and lateral water hazards and the proper relief options for each is imperative for every golfer. Many golfers have incurred additional penalty strokes by proceeding under the lateral water hazard (red) option of two club-lengths from where the ball last crossed the margin when their ball was in a water hazard (yellow). A thorough reading of the definitions of each and Rule 26 will put you well on your way to understanding how water hazards are treated on the course and assist in answering the following questions.

Questions: True/False

1. If any part of the ball touches the line of a water hazard the ball is in the hazard.
2. A man-made ditch is not a water hazard and is treated as an immovable obstruction.
3. Areas of tall grass and rough may be marked as a lateral water hazard for the purpose of pace of play.
4. A player may take practice swings in a water hazard touching the grass.
5. A player’s ball touches the margin of a water hazard. Because the ball is in a hazard he may not ground his club outside the hazard.
6. When both stakes and lines are present around a water hazard the margin is defined by only the line painted on the ground.
7. There are only two relief options for a ball that is in a water hazard (Yellow).
8. A player’s ball lies playable in a lateral water hazard but her swing is interfered with by a culvert. She may take relief without penalty by determining the nearest point of relief and dropping a ball within one club-length of this spot. The nearest point of relief must be within the hazard and the ball must be dropped within the hazard.
9. Water and lateral water hazard stakes that are removable may be moved to eliminate interference with a player’s swing even if the ball lies in the hazard.
10. A player unsure of the location of his ball may assume it is in a lateral water hazard provided there is a reasonable possibility that the ball is lost in the hazard.