



Rule of the Month: What You See is What You Get

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Part 1: Course Played as It Is Found — Allowed Actions

Answers:

1. **True.** Rule 8.1b(8). In the teeing area, a player is allowed to alter the surface of the ground prior to making a stroke. This permission includes when a ball is in play and is still within the teeing area. Additionally, dew, frost and temporary water may also be purposely removed from the teeing area by the player.
2. **False.** Definition of Improve and Interpretation 8.1a/2. In order for an action to be considered a breach of improving the area of the intended line of play, the improvement must have created a potential advantage. Since the divot was replaced only a few yards in front of the ball prior to a long shot over the area, it is unlikely that any potential advantage has been gained and the player incurs no penalty.
3. **It Depends.** Rule 12.2b(2). It is true that sand in a bunker may be smoothed at any time provided that the smoothing is only for the care of the course and not to test the condition of the bunker. However, the question is also false if the smoothing of the sand improved the area of the players intended stance, swing, lie of ball or the line of play. If so, the player has breached Rule 8.1a and incurs the general penalty.
4. **False.** Rule 8.1b(7). Provided that the player completes the stroke, there is no penalty for improving the conditions affecting the stroke during the swing. If the player stops the swing after breaking the branch, there would be a penalty for improving the area of the intended swing. Additionally, if the branch was broken during a practice swing, there would be a penalty if the action improved the area of the intended swing for the stroke to be made.
5. **True.** Rule 13.1c(2). Damage to the putting green may be repaired at any time by taking reasonable actions to restore the putting green as nearly as possible to its original condition. However, damage as a result from normal maintenance, natural forces, natural surface imperfections and natural wear of the hole must not be repaired.
6. **False.** Rules 8.1b(1) & 7.1a. The player is allowed to take reasonable actions to find and identify his or her ball and incurs no penalty if the reasonable actions improve the conditions affecting the stroke. However, caution should be exercised because if the actions exceed what is reasonable, the player has breached Rule 8.1a for the improvement.
7. **True.** Rules 8.1b & 15.1a. Any loose impediment may be removed, including a loose impediment in a bunker or penalty area. If the conditions affecting the stroke are improved by the removal, there is no penalty provided that the player used reasonable actions to remove the loose impediments.
8. **False.** Rule 8.1b(6). Provided that the player used the least intrusive course of action to take his or her stance, there is no penalty for improving the area of intended stance or swing. A player is allowed to fairly take a stance by taking reasonable actions to get to the ball, even if these actions improve the conditions affecting the stroke.