

INSIDE GOLF NEWSPAPER

Pacific Northwest golf courses ranked among the toughest

Three Pacific Northwest courses are ranked among the 75 toughest in the U.S. Pacific Dunes (right) is ranked 18th, Bandon Dunes is tied for 33rd and Sahalee is tied for 63rd on the list by *Golf Digest*. The Ocean Course at Kiawah Island is the country's toughest.



WHAT'S NEW IN NW GOLF

Pacific Northwest will host three golf shows in February

Golfers around the Pacific Northwest will be treated to a golf fest in the month of February with three golf shows taking center stage. Golf shows in Portland, Seattle and Spokane will be held during the month giving golfers an idea about what is new for the 2012 golf season.

The shows in Portland and Seattle will kick off the show season as both shows are scheduled for the same weekend, Feb. 10-12, 2012.

The Portland Golf Show will be held at the Oregon Convention Center and feature plenty of things to see and do. Free rounds of golf will be handed out at the door. See www.portlandgolfshow.com for more information.

The Seattle Golf and Travel Show will take on a new look as the golf show has partnered with the Seattle Travel Show for three days. See www.seattlegolfshow.com for addition information. Free rounds will be handed out at the door.

The Spokane Golf Show will wrap up the show season with a two-day run at the Spokane Convention Center Feb. 18-19. See www.spokanegolfshow.com for more.

Northwest Golf Shows

Here is some information on golf shows in the Pacific Northwest.

- **Seattle:** Seattle Golf and Travel Show will take place Feb. 10-12, 2012 at the Centurylink Event Center. See www.seattlegolfshow.com for more.

- **Portland:** Portland Golf Show is set for Feb. 10-12, 2012 at the Oregon Convention Center. See www.portlandgolfshow.com for more.

- **Spokane:** The Spokane Golf Show will take place Feb. 18-19, 2012 at the Spokane Convention Center. Check out www.spokanegolfshow.com for additional information.

Rules Quiz

Please note: Virtually all of the changes made by the USGA implemented this year will come into play for most golfers on virtually every round they play. Some long held procedures and outcomes have changed and not only would a penalty apply now but in some cases penalties will no longer apply.

- A player searching for their ball in a hazard (bunker or water hazard) touches and moves loose impediments and accidentally moves the ball covered by loose impediments. What is your ruling? See Page 2 for the answer.

Safeway agrees to deal for 2012, LPGA tournament will return to Pumpkin Ridge

One of the Pacific Northwest top golf events, the LPGA Safeway Classic, will be back in 2012.

The Safeway Classic, the LPGA Tour golf tournament that has been played in the Portland area since 1972, will return as the grocery chain has agreed to continue its role as title sponsor next year. Tournament Golf Foundation, the non-profit organization that runs the event announced the renewal of the event.

The one-year extension will get TGF through the 2012 tournament. TGF president Tom Maletis said TGF will meet with Safeway officials next year, probably before the event, to discuss the tournament's future beyond 2012. The 2012 Safeway Classic will be played Aug. 17-19. The event will return to Pumpkin Ridge's Ghost Creek course. The tournament originally was held at Portland's Columbia Edgewater Country Club.

Pumpkin Ridge officials have said they like having the tournament, which helps keep the 36-hole facility in the public eye. The tournament's 2009 move to the North Plains course has produced the three biggest attendance counts in tournament history, topped by the record crowd of 88,100 it drew this year.



Destination: Twin Lakes

Twin Lakes Golf and Country Club in Federal Way, Wash. has been around for over 40 years and it is still as pleasure to play as it was when it first opened. With its tree-lined fairways and Puget Sound back nine views, Twin Lakes has something for everyone. For more on Twin Lakes, please see inside this section of Inside Golf Newspaper.



Pacific Northwest golf teachers earn some national mention by Golf Digest Magazine

A handful of golf instructors from the Pacific Northwest have earned their way onto a list of the top teachers listed state by state by *Golf Digest Magazine*.

In Oregon, Jerry Mowlds of Pumpkin Ridge is ranked as the top teacher in the state. He is followed by Bruce Furman of Langdon Farms in Aurora, Ed Fisher of Rogue Valley in Medford, Doug Hixson of Quail Valley in Banks, Vernye Perry Jr. of Pumpkin Ridge and Chris Smith of Pumpkin Ridge.

In Washington, Bill Porter of the Links at Moses Pointe is ranked No. 1. He is followed by Bill Tindall of Newcastle, Ted Naff of Gold Mountain, Doug Doxsie of the Seattle Golf Club, Scott Williams of Glendale, Jim Pike of Sahalee, Steve Prugh of Manito, Joey Pickavance of TPC Snoqualmie Ridge, Joe Thiel of Olympia, Tom Sovay of Trilogy at Redmond Ridge and Jim Bennett of Pro Golf at Southcenter.

Butch Harmon ranked No. 1 nationally.

Former UW golfer Lee qualifies for PGA Tour

Richard H. Lee, a 2010 All-American for the Washington Huskies, earned a PGA Tour card with a solid finish at the PGA Tour Qualifying School.

Lee rallied in the final round of the PGA Tour Qualifying Tournament in La Quinta, Calif., to secure a card and earn \$25,000. Lee, 24, is a graduate of Newport High School in Bellevue and was a standout at Bellevue College before transferring to Washington.

For more, see inside.

The Pacific Northwest loses one of its good guys with passing of Dave Gibson

Dave Gibson was always one of the good guys you saw at a golf course. Whether behind the counter, giving lessons or just chit chatting with golfers on the putting green Gibson was one guy who loved to talk.

Last month, Dave passed away after fighting Parkinson's Disease and pulmonary fibrosis (lung disease). Dave just didn't battle the diseases, he proved that you can do just about anything even if you are afflicted with it.

Dave worked for 13 years at Riverbend Golf Course in Kent, many of those years dealing with the Parkinson's. But he didn't let them get him down. He was out there for hours at the driving range, showing people how to swing a golf club.

In fact when *Inside Golf* did a section on teachers in the Pacific Northwest, I ran into Dave at Twin Lakes Golf and Country Club in Federal Way where he was playing a round of golf with his wife. I asked him if he would like to be our cover model for the section. He quickly agreed and showed up the next day at the driving range ready to get his picture taken. But that was just Dave, always there for anyone who needed help.

Dave had been a PGA member since 1971. During the 25 years he spent as a Head Golf Professional at Butte, Twin Lakes and Meridian Valley Country Clubs, he developed an outstanding reputation as a player and teacher.

His 14 years of full-time teaching at Riverbend has brought his lesson total to over 30,000 instructional sessions. Dave emphasized a simplified approach to learning the fundamentals of the golf swing and short game.

As a former PGA Tour Player and PNW Section Major Title Winner, he knew what it took to accomplish the goals of all golfers.



Steve Turcotte

His ability to "coach" students set him apart from other professionals in the industry. He took the extra time to make sure that his students knew what he was teaching them. He would often go over the time limit of the lesson to get his point across.

At Twin Lakes, they held a memorial for Gibson. And, of course, it was packed. He was one of the good guys in the business and everyone knew that.

"He was good to everyone," said Brett Wilkinson of GolfTEC in Bellevue who worked with Dave for years at Riverbend. "I learned a lot from him how to treat people. He's a guy that would never say no to anyone for anything."

Dave's MO was always the same. Treat people the way you want to be treated.

"Ever since he had the illnesses, he was always in a good mood," said Wilkinson. "It seemed that nothing could get him down."

When they celebrated Dave's life at Twin Lakes on a sunny afternoon in the middle of December, everyone seemed to have a story. From his days on playing on the PGA Tour from 1969-70, to his time as the head professional at Butte Country Club to his 20 years as the head man at Twin Lakes, everyone who came across Dave always came away with a



Dave Gibson

positive experience. His family, which includes wife Nancy, son Matt and daughter Corey will always remember him as a great husband, father and great teacher of the game. Matt is in the golf business himself, working as a caddy at Chambers Bay.

Dave Gibson will be missed. He was one of the good guys in the business. And if you ever had a chance to run across him, you knew why.

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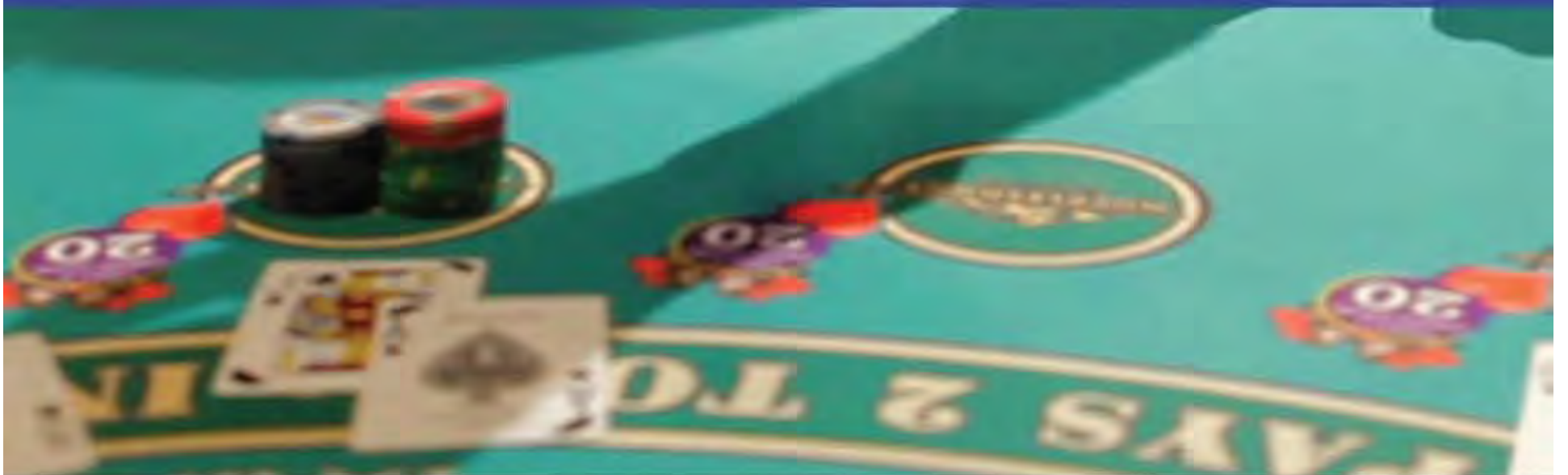
Now under the revisions of Rule 12-2b the player incurs the penalty under Rule 18-2a. The ball must be replaced. It is permissible to move or touch the loose impediments while searching for a ball in a hazard but not move the ball in the process. If the ball was covered by loose impediments and they were moved to find and identify the ball the ball must be re-covered leaving only enough of the ball visible to see it a portion of the ball.

• Inside Golf would like to thank rules official Paul Lucien for the rules questions.



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Long-time Pacific Northwest pro Dave Gibson passes away; WSGA sets winter series schedule

Long-time Pacific Northwest golf professional David Gibson passed away November 30 after a long illness.

Gibson was well known as a head professional at several of the Pacific Northwest's top clubs for years.

Dave had been a PGA member since 1971. During the 25 years he spent as a Head Golf Professional at Butte, Twin Lakes and Meridian Valley Country Clubs, he developed an outstanding reputation as a player and teacher.

He was a popular teacher and during his years at Riverbend still taught despite his illness and was considered one of the top teachers in the area.

A memorial was held for Gibson in December at Twin Lakes Golf and Country Club.

WSGA sets dates for 2012 winter series of tournaments

The Washington State Golf Association will hold four tournaments as part of its 2012 winter series.

The tournament series will kick off on Jan. 27 at the Resort at Port Ludlow. It will continue Feb. 24 at Oakbrook Golf and Country Club, March 23 at McCormick Woods and finish off April 13 at Palouse Ridge.

An entry fee of \$70 per player per event will cover greens fees, range balls and prizes. See thewsga.org for more info.

Green Mountain course saved from extra greens fees tax

Clark County Commissioners reject-

ed the draft ordinance to establish a 5% admissions tax to build a multi-use stadium on Clark College property in order to bring the Yakima Bears professional baseball team to the area.

After nearly two hours of public testimony, seemingly more in favor of building the stadium and implementation of the tax, Commissioner Marc Boldt stated in his comments that he could not support the ordinance that would bring forth the tax. A motion made by Commissioner Steve Stuart to approve the ordinance then died for a lack of a second.

The tax would have been added to greens fees at Green Mountain Golf Course.

Shuksan in Bellingham hires new head professional

Shuksan Golf Club in Bellingham has brought in a new head golf professional in Phil Gaggero. Phil grew up in San Francisco and has always been involved in athletics. A multi-sport standout in high school, Phil went on to play collegiate baseball at San Francisco State University.

His passion for golf began shortly after that, turning professional in 1999 and beginning work at Presidio Golf Course (the oldest course in continuous operation west of the Mississippi). Shortly after Phil landed his first Head Golf Professional position at Crystal Spring Golf Course, a semi-private facility in Burlingame, CA.

Jim Bennett: Northwest pro settles in at Pro Golf Southcenter

After having taught at Southcenter Golf

for 15 years Jim Bennett has moved down the street to the New Pro Golf Discount store in Southcenter, 17305 Southcenter Parkway across from Red Robin.

The new technology with the Pro Golf Theatre, state-of-the-art launch monitor, simulator, and video equipment makes it easy helping students with their game, and club fitting.

Bennett has been teaching for 27 years and still enjoys helping all levels of golfers. Go down to Pro Golf and check out the new digs, and start working on your game now, so when spring comes, you are ready to go! You can contact Jim at (206) 431-0100.

Northwest juniors chosen to attend national industry event

Stacie Chan, 17, of Beacon Hill and Alex LaChasse, 16, of Bellevue were among successful applicants for the fifth annual national golf industry event, designed to help students broaden leadership skills, prepare for college, and explore career disciplines within the golf industry. The once-in-a-lifetime "immersion training" enables participants to network and learn the sport, business and science of golf from some of the most talented professionals in the industry.

Washington Huskies sign two prep golfers for next season

UW Men's Golf Coach Matt Thurmond announced that two high school seniors have signed NCAA Letters of Intent to compete for Washington starting in the 2012-13

school year.

Tyler Salsbury (Enumclaw, Wash.) and Jonathan Sanders (Chatsworth, Calif.) both bring impressive resumes out of their high school competitions. Thurmond is extremely excited to help them start their college careers.

"Both of these guys are going to be great Huskies," Thurmond said. "They are just what we are looking for and what has made us great. They have high character, fun personalities, excellent academics, and they can play some serious golf. I can't wait for them to arrive on campus to start their careers."

UW golfer Williams takes 15th at All-American event

In a gathering of 27 of the best college golfers in the nation, Washington junior Chris Williams ended up tied for 15th at the 37th annual Western Refining All-American Classic.

Williams (Moscow, Idaho) shot 2-over 73 in the final round and finished at +5 (218) for the 54-hole tournament held in El Paso.

UW women golfer named Pac-12 golfer of the month

Washington freshman Soo Bin Kim was named Pac-12 Women's Golfer of the Month for November Commissioner Larry Scott announced. Kim earned her first career victory in just her third collegiate tournament and set a Husky record at the Stanford Intercollegiate on Oct. 16.

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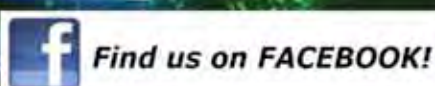
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Former Husky golfer Lee earns his spot on PGA Tour

Richard H. Lee, a 2010 All-American for the Washington Huskies, earned a PGA Tour with a solid finish at the PGA Tour Qualifying School.

Lee rallied in the final round of the PGA Tour Qualifying Tournament in La Quinta, Calif., to secure the card and earn \$25,000.

Lee, 24, is a graduate of Newport High School in Bellevue who was a standout at Bellevue College before transferring to Washington.

Lee was in 108th place after two rounds of the six-day event and worked his way up to a tie for 34th by shooting a 7-under-par 65 Sunday in the fifth round. He closed with a 4-under 68 to tie for 24th place at 9-under 423; the cutoff for a Tour card was 8 under.

Lee played his last five holes of the 108-hole event in 5 under, including birdies on the final two holes.

There were 29 players at 8 under or better, but two already had earned PGA Tour cards by finishing among the top 25 on the 2011 Nationwide Tour money list. Thus 27 Tour cards were handed out Monday.

Of the players earning cards at PGA West, Lee was the only one who played the TPC Stadium Course in the final round. The others played the Nicklaus Tournament Course.

Brendon Todd (68) finished first at 17 under and earned \$50,000.

Jeff Gove (69) of Seattle tied for 72nd. Gove earned a spot on the Nationwide Tour for the 2012 season. He played on the Nationwide Tour last season as well.

Bremerton native Troy Kelly qualified for the tour via the Nationwide Tour.



Richard H. Lee



Jeff Gove

Tour Players With NW Ties

PGA Tour

- Fred Couples • Seattle
- Ben Crane • Portland
- Robert Garrigus • Gresham
- Ryan Moore • Puyallup
- Troy Kelly • Bremerton
- Richard H. Lee • Bellevue
- Michael Putnam • Tacoma
- Jeff Quinney • Eugene
- Kyle Stanley • Gig Harbor
- Kirk Triplett • Pullman

Nationwide Tour

- Andres Gonzales • Olympia
- Jeff Gove • Seattle
- Brock Mackenzie • Yakima

Champions Tour

- Fred Couples • Seattle
- Bob Gilder • Corvallis
- Peter Jacobsen • Portland

LPGA Tour

- Allison Hanna • Portland
- Jimin Kang • Seattle
- Paige Mackenzie • Yakima
- Wendy Ward • Edwall, Wash.

Did you know....

• The WSGA helps fund and provides administrative support to The First Green program, which is an innovative environmental education outreach program using golf courses as environmental learning labs for high school students. The First Tee is a national program and has outlets throughout the state of Washington.



• The OGA maintains the most comprehensive directory for places to play, events you can play in and clubs you can join. Visit www.exploreoregongolf.com today! A new version of the site debuts in January! Check it out for some terrific golf deals.

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Twin Lakes

Private club in Federal Way finding new and innovative ways to bring in golfers to club

Are you a public golfer who has always wanted to enjoy the many benefits of a country club experience? Twin Lakes Golf and Country Club in Federal Way, WA, just might be what you are looking for. That's right, a country club at a competitive price.

Currently Twin Lakes is allowing public golfers that opportunity to come out and try the course at a daily fee rate. It is also offering some killer discounts on memberships. Golfing memberships start at only \$225 per month with a one time initiation fee of \$500.

The benefits of being a country club member are not limited to just golf. The club's restaurant offers weekly specials that are a great value to the members. \$5 steak night, two entrees for \$20, \$9.99 Sunday Brunch and a great Friday night buffet makes the club our members' favorite place to dine.

Twin Lakes also has many activities for the family. The pool is a great place for the family to hang out during the summer. If you have a competitive spirit, Twin Lakes swim team is the place for you. The Club also has one of the largest Junior Golf programs in the State with several of its juniors going on to college with golf scholarships. With its tennis court set right next to beautiful Lake Jeane, it's hard to resist a couple sets.

"We feel we have a lot to offer anyone who is looking for the new country club experience," said Carol Balestreri, the sales and membership director at the club.

Twin Lakes got its start in 1965 as a planned community and completed its 18-hole course in 1969. It's a course with plenty of history and

Twin Lakes Golf and CC

• **Location:** Federal Way, WA. Located between Seattle and Tacoma.

• **Course facts:** Course is owned and operated by its membership. Club has been around since 1965 with the course completed in 1969. In 1976, members purchased the course from Weyerhaeuser. Course is open for some limited public play.

• **Specials:** Limited public tee times are available at winter rates. Call the pro shop at 253.838.0345 for more information on playing winter golf.

• **Club rates:** Unlimited golfing memberships are available for \$225 per month with a \$500 initiation fee. Social memberships starting at \$40 per month.

• **Phone:** 253.838.0432 and ask for Carol Balestreri.

• **Web site:** www.twinlakesgolf.net

tradition with a group of members purchasing the course and club from Weyerhaeuser in 1976. Over the years an aggressive sanding program has made the course playable all year round.

The course has hosted plenty of golf championships in the Pacific Northwest as well as the Washington State Women's Open and recently hosted the Washington State Women's Golf Association Championship. The course plays to just over 6,000 yards making it a great course for beginners but with tree lined fairways and plenty of sand traps, the course is a challenge for experienced golfers.

For more information on the club call Carol at 253.838.0432 or Carol@twinlakesgolf.net.



Twin Lakes Golf and Country Club in Federal Way is a challenging 18-hole layout.



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The Lesson Tee: Close but no cigar at the Champions Tour Q School

It's a brand new year! We have heard this so many times before. New opportunities, goals and vision. Sometimes it is beneficial to look back to get a better perspective on the future.

Evaluations of my golf game for improvement is a common occurrence for me and my students. Whether its the swing itself, driving, the mental side, wedge play, par 5 scoring, putting, etc. Objectively pinpointing the problem and planning a strategy for success has served me well.

We all need a qualified objective voice to speak into our lives and golf games. I would encourage that for 2012. The earlier we get started the sooner we will "play the golf of our dreams."

Late last fall, I had the great opportunity to enter the Champions Tour Qualifying Tournament. I have played the PGA Tour, Nationwide Tour and every mini tour under the sun prior to starting my academy at Semiahmoo 17 years ago. Since turning 50 I've played several Senior U.S. Opens, PGA's and the Boeing Classic. My point is, I'd been to "the prom" before. I might be close to the record for most "tour qualifiers" attended.

The Champions Tour only has five exempt spots for the 500 or so guys that enter. I wasn't going to fold up my golf academy no matter the outcome. Teaching and playing are my passions. So are people. Fortunately or not, I am a better coach/instructor/mentor than a player. I think they will bury me on that range at Semiahmoo!

I made the regional in Las Vegas nicely. I finished around 7th.



I enjoyed the week. I even had fun. I like the heat. Being able to be free, calm and unattached to the outcome coming down the stretch. Sweet stuff.

The finals were in Scottsdale at the TPC. Amazing weather. I could suffer down there a few months in the winter! The course was very nice. Seventy eight guys for five exempt cards. There were a total of 26 PGA Tour wins among all of the players.

Again, beside developing my strategy and plan for each hole, 18 one hole events rather than one 18 hole event per day. I wanted to trust myself fully, totally committed on each shot, totally target focused, relax my mind and body, sprinkled with en-joy-ment! I do some functional things in my swing also!

The finals were like a high school reunion. I had played on various tours with almost everyone there. When the tournament began it was more like the UFC octagon than the high school reunion.

I felt like 13 under or better would finish in the top 5. I needed serious birdies and limited mistakes. I played with Jeff Freeman the first round. Jeff won the qualifier. He

is a nice guy. Talented. He knows how to win. We've played many times. The last was the final round of last years National Club Pro Championship. I birdied the last couple of holes to go to Atlanta. Freeman got the par 5's daily and was automatic from 6' and in. I'm happy for Jeff. I shot 71 the first round.

After the first round a few of us went to Tom Lehman's house for dinner. Tom won "player of the year" on the Champions Tour in 2011. He gets it. Studly and a great man. He used to babysit my kids. Great guy, great golfer, decent babysitter. Too much sugar too late! He paid my son, Tyler, very well to caddy for him when Tyler was 15. Lehman paid him enough to help buy his first car. Tom's house was the nicest home that I had ever seen. By far! The dinner guests were Bobby Clampett who finished 6th, Ted Shultz who earned a conditional card, Gary Hallberg who finished 2nd and me who shot 71-70-69-73, nada...

We had a great time. Tom cooked, did dishes, dessert and a great night. A wonderful group of friends.

I did many good things on the course the week of the finals. Drove it solid, did many things solid but not extraordinary. Made some uncharacteristic mistakes. It was a week of extraordinary. Maybe next time. I will say this, I was the only guy who walked with a caddy. Everyone else took a caddy and a cart.

Jeff Coston is a 12-time Pacific Northwest PGA Player of the Year. He can be reached for appointment by calling Semiahmoo Resort at 360 210 4590 or jeffcoston.com

Think you know the rules? Try these ones

• Question: An overhead power line is so situated that it interferes with the play of a hole. Would it be appropriate for the Committee to make a Local Rule allowing a player whose ball is deflected by this power line the option to replay the stroke, without penalty, if he wishes?

• Answer: No. However, a Local Rule requiring a player to replay the stroke would be acceptable. The following text is suggested: "If a ball strikes the power line during play of the ____ hole, the stroke is canceled and the player must play a ball as nearly as possible at the spot from which the original ball was played in accordance with Rule 20-5 (Making Next Stroke from Where Previous Stroke Made)." In some cases the Committee may wish to include in the Local Rule the towers or poles supporting such lines when the towers or poles are positioned such that they interfere with the play of the hole.

• Question: A player lifted his ball for identification purposes without announcing his intention to his opponent, marker or a fellow-competitor. Thus, he was in breach of Rule 12-2. He also failed to mark the position of the ball before he lifted it in breach of Rule 20-1 and cleaned the ball more than was necessary for it to be identified, a breach of Rule 21. The penalty for breach of each of these Rules is one stroke. Does the player incur a penalty of three strokes?

• Answer: No. The player incurs a penalty of one stroke for failing to act in accordance with Rule 12-2. An additional penalty under Rule 20-1 or Rule 21 is not justified -- see Rule 12-2 and Exception under Rule 21.

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Winter question: New golf clubs or effective lessons?

Too many times throughout each year, we have potential clients that ask this question: "I've got money to spend on either golf equipment OR golf instruction, so what should I do?" Our staff asks them several questions to determine what is best for their needs, and unfortunately, the mass majority of them believe they can buy a new and improved golf swing by simply purchasing new equipment. Be fair with yourself and consider that if you're willing to invest in upgrading your clubs, invest some money into making your golf swing better, too.

One thing I've noticed over the years, is amateur golfers have no hesitation when shelling out \$300-500 for the newest driver or \$800-1,200 for a new set of irons. Will buying new clubs help you make a more consistent and repeatable golf swing? That's a NO. However, those same amateurs have a heck-of-a-time investing



Brett Wilkinson

a few hundred dollars into making their whole golf game better by getting some quality lessons from a proven golf instructor.

I know it is important having golf clubs that fit you...all good instructors know having the proper shaft, length, and lie angle are essential to helping make consistent contact with the golf

ball. But, let's think for a moment: Do you have a repeatable swing to warrant new equipment?

We do a lot of club fittings, and they are not fittings where you hit five balls with a few different clubs and then make a decision. Normally, in our fittings, we expect you to hit 20-25 balls with several different clubs, and the toughest fittings we have to conduct are when the player has inconsistent motion. Data is skewed and our ability to be as precise as possible with finding a precise match is difficult to achieve.

Countless times, I have been put in a position to do what is right for a client and suggest spending a few more hours on the lesson and practice tees to ingrain a more dependable and repeatable golf swing. However, almost every one of them appreciates the candor and awareness that you are willing to make them a better golfer for the long haul.

Then, when they go through the club fitting process, it is far more realistic and beneficial because their consistent swing motion promotes a more credible read for finding the ideal match for clubs.

If you're thinking about getting new equipment and your golf swing is inconsistent, I would suggest taking several lessons to gain some consistency. If you're already the owner of a consistent and repeatable swing, then schedule a club fitting and upgrade your equipment. And, do yourself another favor, have a qualified club fitter oversee your fitting to make sure the equipment you're thinking of purchasing matches your budget, golf swing, and body type.

Brett Wilkinson is a teaching professional with GolfTEC in Bellevue. He can be reached at 425.454.7956 for questions or appointments.

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Rules of the Game: With a new year comes some news revisions to the rules you will need to know

In December, we covered Rule 7 (Practice) in our continued journey through the Rules of Golf, but for January and February I'm going to explain some of the more important revisions to the Rules that have been made for the 2012-2015 version of The Rules of Golf.

The body that studies and revises the Rules every four years is known as the Joint Rules Committee (JRC), composed of members from the United States Golf Association and the R&A. One of their overriding philosophies over the last few revisions has been to make the Rules simpler, fairer, more intent-based and action-based, and more common sense – all while still preserving the integrity of the game as it was intended to be played.

One of the major changes that was made involves the changing of a Definition and an attendant Rule. The Definition of "Addressing The Ball" has been simplified to merely state that a player has addressed the ball when he places his club directly in front of or behind the ball. The Definition used to state that the player had addressed the ball when he had grounded his club and had taken his stance. It never did say where, in relation to the ball, that the club had to be grounded. Also, the previous Definition stated that a player had addressed the ball in a hazard when he had taken his stance (since the club could not be grounded). Under the new Definition, a player never really addresses the ball in a hazard. If he does ground his club in a hazard, he is penalized under Rule 13-4 for grounding his club in a hazard.

The corresponding Rule to this Definition is Rule 18-2b, which used to state that a player is penalized one stroke if his ball moves after he has addressed the ball. The change to this Rule was brought about primarily because of



Mike Peluso

the problem of the ball moving in the wind on the putting green at tournaments such as the British Open after the player had grounded his club. An Exception to Rule 18-2b now states that if the ball moves after address, and it is known or virtually certain that the player did not cause the ball to move, he is not penalized. However, be aware that if there is any doubt or question as to whether you caused it to move, the ruling goes against you and you are penalized.

Another major departure from a time-honored Rule is what you can now do if your ball is in a bunker (Rule 13-4). Previously, if your ball was in a bunker and you raked the bunker before you played your stroke, you were penalized two strokes – regardless of how far the raking was from your ball and regardless of your reason for raking it.

However, under the new Rules, if your ball is in a bunker and you rake footprints or damage for the purpose of tidying up the course and it is not near your ball or stance and doesn't affect your play, you can rake it without penalty...even before you play your stroke. Again, a word of caution: This is allowed for the purpose of tidying up the course (and, it speeds up play), but if

you are over-zealous in how vigorously or how often you take advantage of this Rule, you will be deemed to be testing the sand and will still receive a two-stroke penalty. Again, any doubt will be resolved against you.

Another major change is to Rule 12-1 (Seeing Ball; Searching for Ball). This Rule has been greatly expanded in its wordiness, but also greatly simplified. Under the old Rules, if you were searching for your ball anywhere on the course except in a water hazard, bunker, ground under repair or obstruction, you were penalized if you moved your ball, even if it was covered by leaves or anything else. However, if you were searching for it in a water hazard, bunker, ground under repair or obstruction, you

weren't penalized if you accidentally moved it if it was covered by sand, leaves or other loose impediments. It was quite convoluted. But in 2012, the Rule is very simple: If you're looking for your ball that's covered by sand anywhere on the course, and you accidentally move it, you're not penalized and the ball must be replaced. But if your ball is visible or covered by anything else, such as leaves, anywhere on the course (except for ground under repair or obstructions), and you move it during search, you're penalized one stroke and the ball must be replaced.

Mike Peluso is a rules official with the USGA, PNGA, WSGA and other organizations. He can be reached at mikepeluso@comcast.net.

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