



COMPETITIONS - RULES OF GOLF

Ray Burniston writes about The R&A's publications.

Secretary At Work: September 2001 *(revised April 2012)*

How can the club secretary try to ensure that those playing the course especially in competitions and matches have a working knowledge of the rules of golf? Some clubs go to great lengths to ensure this but at many clubs only lip service is given to seeing that members are aware of the basics. The Royal & Ancient Golf Club strives to provide clubs with details of the rules.

Recently the manufacturers of my car sent me a revised copy of the Highway Code. Rather like the rules of golf we assume we know the answers but browsing through this latest version was very interesting. Quiz evenings during the winter on the rules are useful but often you find only the converted turn up. If you have a club newsletter then highlighting a golf rule(s) can be done. Encourage members to carry the pocket edition in their golf bag at least this way they may be able to deal with most problems on the course.

You should supply each section of the club with a copy of the "Decisions on the Rules of Golf 2012 – 2013". Always make sure that you keep a copy in your office so that you can give advice if called upon. Copies are available from The R&A priced at £16.99 or downloaded from:

<http://shop.randa.org/index.cfm?action=productdetail&productID=211&cfid=20696457&cftoken=67182134&deptid=2&catid=&free>

For the secretary there is also another important booklet entitled 'Decisions on the Rules of Amateur Status 2012' which is a must for every office.

<http://shop.randa.org/index.cfm?action=productdetail&productID=213&cfid=20696457&cftoken=67182134&deptid=2&catid=&free>

A copy of the "Quick Guide to the Rules of Golf" can be downloaded from The R&A website. It is very helpful for those taking up the game because it highlights the main problem areas and is not difficult for the beginner to pick up the rules at an early stage.

<http://www.randa.org/en/Playing-Golf/Quick-Guide-to-the-Rules.aspx>

Today a car driver taking the driving test has to take a written test based on the Highway Code before they take the actual driving test. There is at least one country in Europe that does not accept members into their national federation until they have passed an examination on the rules of golf.

Most clubs will have competitions, which require a referee for at least the final if not the semi-final. It is important to see that anybody undertaking this has a copy of the rules and is fully aware of their responsibilities. They need to have read it before they proceed to carry out their duties. Also remember to brief them on any local rules that might be in force at the time apart from those on the card. See page 65 of the “Guidance on Running a Competition”, effective from 1st January 2009. It is available for download only from The R&A website:

<http://shop.randa.org/index.cfm?action=productdetail&productID=183&cfid=20696457&cftoken=67182134&deptid=2&free=1>

Try and avoid having major finals during the winter months when forward tees are in place. It seems a great shame to me to start a competition in the spring and summer but when you get to the final winter has set in and the course is not going to be at its best.

The secretary can have a strong influence on the knowledge of rules of golf in a club. If the members generally regard him or her as something of an expert then this can greatly help. The membership as a whole will be more informed and will often make more effort to learn at least the basics.

A full list of publications are available for purchase and/or downloaded from The Royal & Ancient website: www.randa.org

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