

A Hazard is Always a Hazard

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Occasionally, rules questions may arise when hazards on the golf course become unplayable for one reason or another. Here is some information that every superintendent may find useful with regard to hazards.

The rules of golf define a hazard as any bunker or water hazard on the course. Let's consider what would happen if a ball landed in a water hazard that was under construction with the installation of new bulkheads, or a ball landed in a bunker that was completely washed out and in the process of being restored to its original condition. Surely, you would think there is some relief under the rules for situations like these that temporarily alter the structure and playability of hazards.

Unfortunately, for the golfer, a hazard is always a hazard; and there is almost never free relief from a hazard regardless of its condition, with one exception.


In the first scenario, your greenkeeping staff is installing new bulkheads within the confines of a water hazard, and a ball enters the construction area. Rule 25-1b addresses this situation saying that the ball may be dropped without penalty in the hazard as near as possible to where it lay, in an area that provides *maximum available relief*. Take note that the ball must be dropped in the hazard, and the player is not afforded total relief from the construction, only *maximum available relief*, which by definition allows the player to drop on ground that is most nearly normal.

In order to gain total relief from the construction and/or hazard, the player must add a one-stroke penalty and drop the ball outside the hazard. Because it is usual for a ball in a water hazard to be unplayable, areas under repair should not normally be defined as ground-under-repair. A water hazard does not lose its status as a water hazard just because of the construction.

In the second scenario, your greenkeeping staff is pushing the sand back up in a bunker after heavy rains have washed it out, and a ball lands in the bunker.

The bunker does not lose its status as a hazard because of the rain washout or because the grounds crew is working in the bunker. Once again, rule 25-1b allows the player to drop in the bunker without penalty in an area affording *maximum available relief*, or he may drop the ball outside the bunker taking the one-stroke penalty.

Finally, let's look at a scenario where the greenkeeping staff is completely rebuilding a bunker with new drains, new sod, the works, and the entire bunker is undergoing construction. Decision 25/13 tells us that even this bunker does not lose its status as a hazard, and there is still no free relief. However, it is recommended that the committee should define the bunker as *ground-under-repair* and classify the bunker as *through-the-green*. Reclassifying the bunker as *through-the-green* is the one and only "loophole" that will finally get the player free relief from a hazard.

This article is available in Microsoft Word via e-mail (finney@imagixx.net) 

Crumb Rubber

(continued from page 22)

ject whenever you can. The Illinois Turfgrass Foundation is one avenue for support. Your tax dollars are presently supporting our project. Alan Justice, in the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, has the sole responsibility of finding uses

for crumb and shredded rubber from waste tires. He and his people are the ones who approved and are supporting this project. Come visit the athletic field beside the football stadium of SIU in Edwardsville to get a first-hand look at all the treatments of crumb rubber with Lee Green-

berg of GreenEdge Enterprises (314-863-3444). He is the one who initially proposed the idea for the project to us. Mark Shaw, director of the grounds at SIU, Edwardsville (618-692-2719), has been a facilitator helping to make this happen. 