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BTH/662

USGA Relaxes Pro Status Rules on Caddies, Others

It is no longer a violation of the amateur status rules for persons of any age to receive compensation for working as caddies, caddiemasters, assistant caddiemasters or shop assistants, according to a recent USGA ruling. Formerly, amateur status was forfeited when any person 21 or over worked in these fields.

It was decided last fall by the USGA executive committee that persons who serve as caddies, caddiemasters or shop employees have no more advantage over the amateur golfers than do those who are employed as club managers, supts., etc. The latter always have enjoyed amateur status.

Under its new ruling, the USGA describes shop employees in this manner: "Persons engaged in making, repairing or cleaning clubs or selling golf merchandise in a golf shop at a place where golf is played, practiced or taught."

Chaperons Are Exempted

The USGA has revised the language of the exception to Rule 1, Section 3 (Instruction) prohibiting giving instruction for compensation. The revised text makes it

quite clear that the exception only applies to faculty members of educational institutions whose instruction is incidental to academic duties and is given without additional compensation. This applies, for example, to a history teacher who may double as a golf instructor without being reimbursed for doing so. Usually, a teacher in this case plays more the role of a chaperon than an instructor.

Hits P.E. Teachers

Regular physical education teachers and camp counselors who teach golf, however, are classified as professionals under USGA rules. The National Golf Foundation, which seeks to enlarge golf instruction in high schools and colleges, long has protested the USGA's stand in this connection, maintaining that it stifles the promotion of Junior golf, but the Association hasn't seen fit to rescind this rule.

The executive committee also sought to clarify its stand on "professional intent". Less than overt action to turn professional actually is a violation of USGA rules under the amateur status code. A player only has to state that he plans to turn professional at some time in the future to trespass against this rule.