



## For Golf Course Bookworms, *The Rules of the Green* Makes the Rules of Golf More Interesting

By Monroe S. Miller

Gene Haas will probably cringe when (or if) he reads this, but I am willing to confess that I have never found the rules of golf very interesting. It should embarrass me to admit that since one of golf's greatest strengths as a game is the set of rules that govern it the world over.

And although I get lots of agreement from colleagues about a lack of interest in the rules of golf, we all know that good knowledge about them is critical to a well prepared golf course. Great turf is one thing; a well marked, correctly defined and detailed course is also a key ingredient.

Given that, it might seem surprising that one of the better books I have read lately is about...the rules of golf! The book—*The Rules of the Green*—was written by Ken Chapman. He is a professor and a linguist who happens to have a

deep love of golf. The result of his background has produced a book that is scholarly and intellectual, interesting and humorous. It is also useful and practical for golf course superintendents.

Chapman made the book interesting by focusing on the history of the rules. He makes their evolution a story on how and why changes over the years have occurred. Now instead of reading a boring recitation of details, you have a story that unfolds as the pages (and years) go by.

*The Rules of the Green*, which was developed in cooperation with both the USGA and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, is also a very attractive book. High quality paper, scores of exceptional and historic photographs, margin notes, highlighted quotes and interesting graphics give it a presence (for lack of a better word in my vocabu-

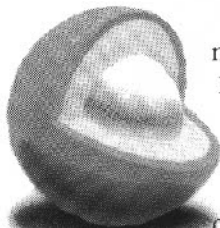
lary) you will not see very often. It is a beauty.

Most of us have seen, and probably own (or should), a rule book done by Frank Hannigan and Tom Watson. Who better than these two could explain and illustrate the rules of golf? It is a good book and a valuable resource, but it is nowhere near the class of *The Rules of the Green*.

One of my most favorite old golf books is, in fact, a rule book. It was edited by Francis Quimet, who is one of the best known amateur golf players of all time. It is a 1948 book, contains less than 100 pages, and amplifies specific rules with drawings. Although I do love it, it also misses the league of *The Rules of the Green*.

Ken Chapman's book isn't an inexpensive one—\$34.95—but it is worth it. It deserves a spot in your golf course reading room. 🏌️

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