

The Great Bunker Rake Debate

Do your golfers place the bunker rake inside or outside the bunker when not in use?

The USGA does not have a ruling on this issue. However, its guideline for placement of bunker rakes is "out and down." The rake should be placed outside the bunker, lying flat on the ground, and pointed in the direction of play (parallel to the likely flight of the ball). It should be left far enough away to avoid stopping or deflecting a ball into or out of the bunker, but close enough to encourage players to use the rake on their footprints.

Some courses have their players place the rake inside the bunker, but this can present challenges. A rake left on the inside edge may stop a ball on the slope, preventing the ball from rolling into the flat part of the bunker and creating a more difficult shot. If the rake is placed in the middle of the bunker the only way to get it there is to throw it, causing deep depressions in the sand.

Some courses have tried to eliminate rakes on the course by putting the rakes on golf cars. This presents problems for golfers who walk, and golfers who ride may forget to use them. Other courses use stands in the bunker to keep the rake above the sand or in-ground receptacles that hide the bunker rake from view, other than the head.

Every facility has different needs and reasons for their policies concerning bunker rakes. The superintendent should communicate the policy and any reasons behind it to all golfers and the maintenance staff. *Source: GCSAA Talking it Over discussions Forum, USGA.*

Cell Phones Going to the Birds?

As useful as cell phones are to most people, their presence on golf courses, especially when the ringer goes off in the middle of someone's shot.

Now, according to The Washington Times, it appears that Nokia and the London-based Royal Society for the Preservation of Birds are working to at least make cell phone ringers a little more acceptable in an outdoor environment, like a golf course. And perhaps make them a little more pleasant all of the time.

They have produced 38 ring tones for cell phones that sound like the pied wagtail, lesser whitethroat, red-breasted flycatcher, spotted crane and black-tailed godwit, among others. The sounds are available online <http://www.rspb.org>, and have gotten good reviews from some people who think regular cell phone rings are irritating. For the complete story, visit <http://www.wash-times.com/national/20020228-5292254.htm>

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