



Rules of the Weird

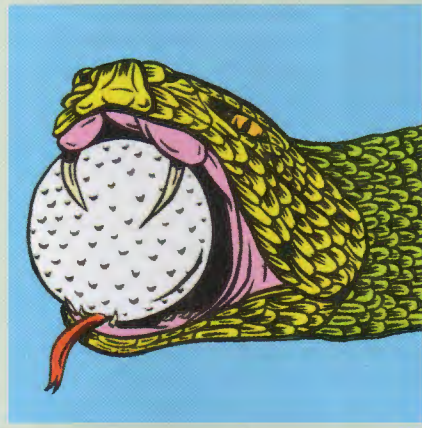
They might sound odd, but these decisions are based on actual events

Considering the *Decisions on the Rules of Golf* has almost 600 pages of on-course situations and how to deal with them, it stands to reason some of those address extremely rare events. If you're looking for a conversation starter, here are several of the most unusual rulings in the book. —RON KASPRISKE

1

DECISION 23/6.5

If you encounter a snake during your round—and are brave enough to inspect it up close—remember this distinction: A snake that's alive is considered an outside agency, but a snake that's dead can be treated as a loose impediment.



2

DECISION 27/6

You and your buddy hit blind tee shots that seem to land in roughly the same area. Your buddy finds a ball and hits his second shot. You then search for your ball, but you find his instead. You realize he hit your ball. What happens next? In match play, he loses the hole. In stroke play, your buddy gets a two-shot penalty

and must play his ball. Because you began to search for your ball, you would have to find your buddy's ball within five minutes of the time you began searching. After five minutes, your ball would be considered lost, and you would have to put another ball into play under penalty of stroke and distance.

3

DECISIONS 26-1/7 & 26-1/8

If you hit a shot into a water hazard and the ball flows out-of-bounds, the ball is out-of-bounds. Conversely, if you hit your shot out-of-bounds, and it flows back onto the course, it's in play.

4

DECISION 13-2/32

Even if a wall looks ready to collapse, you can't improve your line of play by removing loose stones from it. It's a two-shot penalty in stroke play and loss of hole in a match.

5

DECISION 1-2/10

If you have to play a shot near a cactus, and you're worried about getting pricked by needles, you may pad your body with a towel as long as you don't violate Rule 13-2 (fairly taking a stance). But you can't cover the cactus with the towel. The penalty is two shots in stroke play or loss of hole in match play.

6

DECISION 24-2b/14

You look on in horror as your tee shot caroms off a tree and bounces inside the clubhouse. Good news: So long as the building is not considered out-of-bounds, one of your options could be to open a window and hit your next shot outside. Similarly, if your shot somehow wound up inside a barn that wasn't O.B., you could open the barn doors to hit it out.



7

DECISION 1-4/3

If someone impales a flagstick into the green away from the actual hole, you don't get to replay your shot if you unknowingly play toward the flagstick. Your shot stands.

8

DECISION 23/3

A half-eaten pear found in a bunker is a loose impediment and cannot be removed before you play your shot from the sand. It doesn't matter that there are no pear

trees anywhere on the course, or that you're certain it was left there by another golfer. It's a natural object, and because it's a natural object, it's a loose impediment.

9

DECISION 14-3/16

You can't use a device during the round to calculate the effective distance between two points (factoring in wind or elevation). But you can use one to determine what a 10-percent increase in yardage means or for converting yards to meters.

