



## BUNKER RAKES

(reviewed August 2011)

### Misc./2 Whether Rakes Should Be Placed in or Outside Bunkers (see p 534)

Taken from the R&A, Decisions on the Rules of Golf 2008 - 2009

"There is not a perfect answer for the position of rakes, but on balance it is felt there is less likelihood of an advantage or disadvantage to the player if rakes are placed outside bunkers. It may be argued that there is more likelihood of a ball being deflected into or kept out of a bunker if the rake is placed outside the bunker. It could also be argued that if the rake is in the bunker it is most unlikely that the ball will be deflected out of the bunker.

However, in practice, players who leave rakes in bunkers frequently leave them at the side which tends to stop a ball rolling into the flat part of the bunker, resulting in a much more difficult shot than would otherwise have been the case. This is most prevalent at a course where the bunkers are small. When the ball comes to rest on or against a rake in the bunker and the player must proceed under Rule 24 –1, it may not be possible to replace the ball on the same spot or find a spot in the bunker which is not nearer the hole – see Decision 20-3d/2.

If rakes are left in the middle of the bunker the only way to position them is to throw them into the bunker and this causes damage to the surface. Also, if a rake is in the middle of a large bunker it is either not used or the player is obliged to rake a large area of the bunker resulting in unnecessary delay.

Therefore, after considering all these aspects, it is recommended that rakes should be left outside bunkers in areas where they are least likely to affect the movement of the ball.

Ultimately, it is a matter for the Committee to decide where it wishes rakes to be placed."

Each club must decide its own policy on this matter. However, a view expressed by some clubs is that a rake left in the bunker is far less likely to affect play, as a ball entering a bunker will stay there, whether it hits the rake or not, and the rake can then be lifted without affecting the position of the ball. By contrast, a rake left outside the bunker may well prevent it from entering the hazard.

*Reference:* The R&A – Decisions on the Rules of Golf, (first published in Great Britain 1998) this edition revised & updated 2007, published by Hamlyn.