



DUTIES OF A COMPETITION OFFICIAL

Ray Burniston looks at the roles of officials.

Secretary At Work: August 2000 *(revised April 2012)*

If you have officials around the course when competitions are being played it is important to make sure that they are aware of their duties. Any mistakes they may make will reflect on the club and the general running of the competition. Any decisions made on the Rules of Golf should only be made by a person competent to carry this out. They should have means to refer the matter back to the person responsible for the overall competition which in some cases may well be the secretary.

Any officials out on the course should have an up to date version of “Decisions on the Rules of Golf 2012 – 2013” as provided by The R&A. It is the official interpretation of the Rules of Golf, containing over 1200 Decisions, many based on actual incidents and posed in a question-and-answer format. It was effective from the 1st January 2012 and published every two years. The Decisions book is an essential tool for club managers, referees and those charged with running golf competitions at all levels, or simply for those that are interested in knowing more about the Rules. Copies are available from The R&A priced at £16.99 or downloaded from:

<http://shop.randa.org/index.cfm?action=productdetail&productID=211&cfid=20696457&cftoken=67182134&deptid=2&catid=&free>)

Failing that at least the current copy of the “The Rules of Golf 2012 – 2015” which is produced by The R&A and published through sponsorship from Rolex. It is the 32nd edition and effective from 1st January 2012. A copy can be downloaded from The R&A website:

<http://shop.randa.org/index.cfm?action=productdetail&productID=210&cfid=20715710&cftoken=24688512&deptid=2&catid=&free=1>

In the case of being the referee for match play then a copy of the “duties of the referee” is essential. See page 65 of the “Guidance on Running a Competition”, effective from 1st January 2009. It is available for download only from The R&A website:

<http://shop.randa.org/index.cfm?action=productdetail&productID=183&cfid=20696457&cftoken=67182134&deptid=2&free=1>

The Administration of a Competition with duties of the Committee is set out in Rule 33 of the “Rules of Golf & Rules of Amateur Status 2012 – 2015” and you should make sure that any officials helping on the day are fully aware of this rule and its implications. All regulations and conditions should have been included in the rules of the competition of which each competitor should have a copy. You should also ensure that all local rules on the card are correct. Any

special local rules for the competition must be explained clearly to each player, and all dropping zones and hazards must be clearly defined. Any areas of ground under repair must be clearly marked and in the case of championships it is best to remove all tee markers except those in play. The 'Rules' can be downloaded see:

<http://shop.randa.org/index.cfm?action=productdetail&productID=210&cfid=20715710&cftoken=24688512&deptid=2&catid=&free=1>)

Officials out on the course should only act if called upon by the players. In the event of player breaking the rules they may point this out to them. They may only give information to a player and not advice. They should also be given clear instructions for what action to take in the event of slow play. Often just having officials around the course will speed up play and most players will respond to a warning.

Communication is again important, and if possible issue each official with a means of contacting the Tournament Office.

[This document is prepared for guidance and is accurate at the date of publication only. We will not accept any liability (in negligence or otherwise) arising from any member or third party acting, or refraining from acting, on the information contained in this document.]