



Rule of the Month, Four-Ball Stroke Play Answers, Feb. 2015

For the purpose of this TRUE/FALSE quiz, Players A and B are to be considered partners and Players C and D are partners and fellow-competitors of A and B.

Questions:

1. During the play of the second hole, Player B realizes he has 15 clubs in his bag. Player B must add two strokes to his score for each of the first two holes, but Player A incurs no penalty.
2. On the fourth hole, Player A is in a deep greenside bunker and is not aware that Player B is attending the flagstick. Player A makes his stroke and the ball strikes the flagstick. Player A is not penalized because he was not aware Player B was attending the flagstick.
3. On the sixth hole, Player B plays a wrong ball, which turns out to be Player A's ball. Both Players are penalized two strokes.
4. Player A, growing more irritated with his partner, fails to pay attention on the seventh hole and plays his tee shot from outside the teeing ground. Player A does not correct his error, but Player B plays the hole properly and A and B tee off on the eighth hole. Still, the side is disqualified because Player A did not correct his error.
5. At the turn, Player B is bothered by an upset stomach. He tells Player A to go and begin the back nine without him and that he will rejoin him later. Player A plays the 10th hole. Side A/B should be disqualified because both partners did not play the hole.
6. Player B rejoins Player A on the 11th hole, a par three. Both Players' balls end up in the same bunker. Player B removes a loose impediment from the bunker while both balls lie in the bunker. Both Player A and B are penalized two strokes for B's action.
7. On the 13th green, Player A asks Player B which way he thinks Player A's putt will break. Player B gives Player A an answer. Both players are penalized for asking for/giving advice.
8. Shortly after giving the answer, Player B emphasizes how he thinks the putt will break by touching the green with his putter head to show Player A where to hit the ball. Since Player A did not touch the green himself, he is exempt from penalty.
9. On the 15th green, Player A lies farthest from the hole, and Player B lies closest to the hole, with the balls belonging to Players C and D in the middle. Player B chooses to play first, followed by Player A. Player B should be penalized for playing out of order.
10. After Players A and B have left the scoring area, the scoring official notices that only the marker for Side A/B and Player A signed the score card. Players A and B are disqualified because the score card did not have both players' signatures.

Answers:

1. **False.** In Four-Ball, an entire side may be penalized for a breach of certain Rules. Rule 4 (Clubs) is one of those Rules. See Rule 31-6.
2. **False.** If the flagstick is attended by a member of the Player's side, it is deemed to be with the player's knowledge and authority. Player A incurs a penalty of two strokes and must play the ball as it lies, but Player B incurs no penalty. See Rule 17-3b and Decision 17-3/4.
3. **False.** If a partner plays a wrong ball, only the partner who played the wrong ball will incur a penalty, even if the wrong ball belongs to their partner. See Rule 31-5.
4. **False.** In Four-Ball Stroke Play, except for penalties listed in Rule 31-7, a player is generally disqualified for one hole only. And since only one of the two scores made by a side is counted, one partner could commit a penalty that would normally result in disqualification but the side would be okay if the other partner completed the hole properly.
5. **False.** Rule 31-2 notes a side may be represented by either *partner* for all or any part of a stipulated round; both partners need not be present. An absent competitor may join his partner between holes, but not during play of a hole.
6. **False.** See Decision 31-8/1. Player B would be penalized two strokes, but Player A would be exempt from penalty unless Player B's actions assisted Player A's play.
7. **False.** Under Rule 8-1, partners are permitted to ask for or give advice to each other.
8. **False.** Player B went too far in this case as Rule 8-2b prohibits the partner from touching the putting green in pointing out the line of putt. In this case, the penalty is incurred by the player of the stroke. Player A will receive a two-stroke penalty.
9. **False.** Generally, in stroke play, there is no penalty for playing out of order (with some exceptions). In Four-Ball Stroke Play it is important to remember that balls belonging to a side may be played in the order the side considers best when it is the side's turn to play. See Rule 31-4.
10. **False.** Rule 31-3. Only one of the partners need be responsible for complying with Rule 6-6b (Signing and Returning Score Card).

Senior OGA Rules Officials: Terry McEvilly and Pete Scholz