

Explanation for Rule Change for 2019

6. Caddie Standing Behind a Player to Help Line the Player Up

Current Rule: Under Rule 14-2b:

- When a player is taking a stance, the player's caddie is allowed to stand behind to help the player line up to the target and confirm that the player is correctly aligned.
- The caddie must then move away before the player makes the stroke; otherwise the player is penalized if the caddie is positioned on or close to an extension of the line of play behind the ball when the stroke is made.

2019 Rule: Under Rule 10.2b(4):

- The current prohibition will be extended so that, once the player begins taking a stance for the stroke, and until the stroke is made, the player's caddie must not deliberately stand on or close to an extension of the line of play behind the ball for any reason.
- There will be no penalty if the caddie accidentally stands on or close to an extension of the line of play behind the ball, rather than in trying to help in lining up.

Reasons for Change:

- Although a player may get advice from a caddie on the shot to be played, the line of play and similar matters, the ability to line up one's feet and body accurately to a target line is a fundamental skill of the game for which the player alone should be responsible.
 - Allowing a caddie to stand behind a player taking a stance so as to direct the player how to line up undermines the player's need to use his or her own alignment skills and judgment.
- This practice has been controversial for other reasons:
 - Many players and others consider it to be distracting.
 - It may delay play, such as when players wait for the caddie to confirm they are correctly aligned as part of their set-up routine.
- We believe that an appropriate line is drawn between allowing advice from a caddie and prohibiting the caddie from being involved in directing the player in the act of taking a stance to play the ball.