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Notice to Manufacturers

Club Adjustability

On March 30, 2005, the USGA indicated an interest in considering allowing more types of adjustable features on woods and irons. As stated at the time:

“The Rulebook currently states that wood and irons must not be designed to be adjustable except for weight. The USGA is considering allowing more types of adjustable features to be used in woods and irons. It is possible that a proposal to allow more types of adjustable features on woods and irons could be made in the future. An important consideration of any such proposal would be to continue to disallow any adjustments being made during a stipulated round.”

The USGA is now proposing to amend the current rule to permit some additional forms of adjustability of woods and irons. The USGA believes that permitting this type of technology is a change that can serve to help many golfers obtain clubs that are well suited to their needs without causing any harm to the game.

The proposed change to the applicable Rule: (Appendix II, 1.b. Adjustability).

From (current rule):

Woods and irons must not be designed to be adjustable except for weight. Putters may be designed to be adjustable for weight and some other forms of adjustability are also permitted. All methods of adjustment permitted by the Rules require that:

- (i) the adjustment cannot be readily made;
- (ii) all adjustable parts are firmly fixed and there is no reasonable likelihood of them working loose during a round; and
- (iii) all configurations of adjustment conform with the Rules.

The disqualification penalty for purposely changing the playing characteristics of a club during a stipulated round (Rule 4-2a) applies to all clubs including a putter.

To: (proposed rule)

All clubs may incorporate mechanisms for weight adjustment. Other forms of adjustability may also be permitted upon evaluation by the USGA.

The following requirements apply to all permissible methods of adjustment:

- (i) the adjustment cannot be readily made;**
- (ii) all adjustable parts are firmly fixed and there is no reasonable likelihood of them working loose during a round; and**
- (iii) all configurations of adjustment conform with the Rules.**

The disqualification penalty for purposely changing the playing characteristics of a club during a stipulated round (Rule 4-2a) applies to all clubs including a putter.

Under this proposal, the following terms would also apply:

1. No adjustment would be allowed to be made during a stipulated round.
2. It should not be assumed that any and all adjustable features will be considered conforming by the USGA.
3. A manufacturer should communicate its adjustable feature concept as early as possible to the USGA, preferably prior to beginning any volume production. A manufacturer should then submit to the USGA a sample of a club which is to be manufactured, for a ruling as to whether the club conforms with the Rules. If a manufacturer fails to submit a sample or to await a ruling before manufacturing and/or marketing the club, the manufacturer assumes the risk of a ruling that the club does not conform with the Rules.

Implementation:

It is proposed that this rule change become effective for clubs submitted to the USGA for conformance evaluation after January 1, 2008. Any clubs with currently non-conforming adjustable features that are submitted to the USGA prior to January 1, 2008 would not receive a conformance decision until after January 1, 2008, and in any case would not be eligible for play where USGA Rules apply prior to January 1, 2008, if this proposal is approved.

Written comments regarding the proposed change to the rules governing adjustability should be sent to the USGA, attention Dick Rugge, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, NJ 07931, Fax 908-234-0138, e-mail: drugge@usga.org. Written comments received later than May 1, 2007 will not be considered.

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