

United States  
Golf Association



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NOTICE TO MANUFACTURERS  
SYMMETRY RULE

The Equipment Standards Committee (formerly known as the Implements and Ball Committee) has approved a proposal to adopt, on an experimental basis, a modified version of the Symmetry Rule.

The modified standard will be considered by the R&A in May 1989. If the R&A approves it, the modified standard will be applied internationally in 1990.

Attached is a copy of the Experimental Symmetry Standard. It differs from the existing standard in two ways:

- 1) The first clause is strengthened to emphasize the fact that a manufacturer shall not design or manufacture a ball, nor shall anybody intentionally modify a ball, so as to create flight properties which are different from those of a spherically symmetrical ball.
- 2) The balls will be tested only once, and the grid measurement for "peak angle of trajectory" will no longer be measured. In order to meet the standard, the magnitude of the mean difference in carry must be less than 3.0 yards and the magnitude of the mean difference in flight time must be less than 0.2 seconds. It is important to note, however, that in the existing standard only a statistically significant difference (about zero) is required, but in the experimental standard, statistically significant differences in excess of the 3 yard limit and 0.2 second limit are required.

This is a slight relaxation of the Rule which should adequately take into account real manufacturing tolerances while at the same time prohibiting any intentional asymmetry in design or manufacture. The experimental rule will be in effect as long as is necessary to evaluate its effectiveness.

Manufacturers are once again urged to consult with the USGA about new or unusual designs in golf balls prior to tooling for, or marketing, the product.

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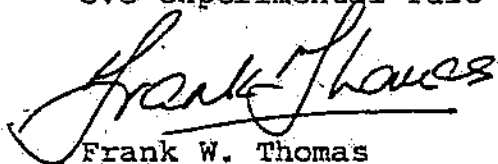
EXPERIMENTAL SYMMETRY RULE

The ball must not be designed, manufactured or intentionally modified to have flight properties which differ from those of a spherically symmetrical ball.

Furthermore, the ball will not conform to the Rules of Golf if it fails to satisfy the performance specifications outlined below:

As described in procedures on file at the United States Golf Association (Royal and Ancient Golf Club), each ball type will be tested using 40 balls of that type, in 20 pairs. One ball of each pair will be launched spinning about one specified axis; the other ball of each pair will be launched spinning about a different, but also specified, axis. Differences in carry and time of flight between the two balls of each pair will be recorded. If the mean of the differences in carry is greater than 3.0 yards, and that value is significant at the 5% level, OR if the mean of the differences in time of flight is greater than 0.20 seconds, and that value is significant at the 5% level, the ball type will not conform to the Rules of Golf.

Please direct any questions or comments regarding the above experimental rule to the undersigned.



Frank W. Thomas  
Technical Director

FWT:gs

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