

United States Golf Association

Golf House
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June 30, 2004
Notice to Manufacturers

Proposed Publication of a USGA Conforming Driver Head List

INTRODUCTION

The USGA is considering the publication of a List of Conforming Driver Heads (the List). Such a list has been suggested by several equipment manufacturers, by competition organizers and rules officials, and by golfers who contact the USGA to determine the conformance status of golf clubs.

The USGA recognizes that club manufacturers should have an opportunity to voice their opinions and recommendations about the publication and details of a List of Conforming Driver Heads. This Notice to Manufacturers is intended to elicit opinions and comments.

As currently envisioned, the List would be established and maintained in a similar fashion to the List of Conforming Golf Balls which the USGA has published for over two decades. The ball list is now published on the USGA website, and is updated monthly.

LIST DETAILS

Following are some further proposed details regarding the List of Conforming Driver Heads:

1. The List would cover only driver heads.
2. A clubhead would be added to the List only if it has been submitted to the USGA by a manufacturer and the USGA has determined that it conforms to all USGA rules related to clubheads (not merely passing CT measurement for spring effect).
3. The USGA would consider including on the List driver clubheads that have been ruled conforming by the R&A, but which have not been submitted to the USGA for evaluation.
4. The USGA would continue to maintain and publish the Non-conforming Driver List for the foreseeable future.

5. Only driver clubheads manufactured since 1995 would be included on the List. Driver clubheads manufactured prior to 1995 would be considered conforming unless already determined to be non-conforming by the USGA, or determined to be non-conforming by a rules official. Any driver clubhead made since 1995 that has not yet been submitted to the USGA for a ruling would need to be submitted for evaluation if the manufacturer wants to have that clubhead included on the List.
6. For the purpose of the List of Conforming Driver Heads, a “driving club” is generally considered to be a club with a loft of 15 degrees or less. However, the USGA may also deem a club with a loft greater than 15 degrees to be a driving club if it has features or characteristics that are otherwise similar to a driving club. This can include, but is not limited to, such things as head size, face dimensions, head weight, and club length. (Please note: clubs other than “driving clubs” with lofts above 15 degrees may also be subject to CT testing and limitation by the USGA, but will not be included on the List of Conforming Driver Heads.)
7. This List would be updated monthly or on some other periodic basis.

CONDITION OF COMPETITION

It is also proposed that a Driving Club Condition of Competition be added to the USGA Rules of Golf to state that:

“The *Committee* may require, in the conditions of a competition (Rule 33-1), that any driving club that the player carries must be named on the current List of Conforming Driver Heads issued by the USGA.” (Please note that this is proposed wording and that it could be further revised.)

Following are some further proposed details of the Condition of Competition addition:

1. As with the Conforming Golf Ball List, the revised Condition of Competition would be recommended only for use by *Committees* in charge of competitions that are restricted to highly skilled players (including top amateur events).
2. It is possible that the addition of the Condition of Competition would not coincide with the initial publication of the List of Conforming Driver Heads. It is expected that the initial List would be distributed to club manufacturers marked “for reference only,” to allow an opportunity to ensure that the information included is accurate and up to date.
3. Clubs are evaluated for conformance in the as-manufactured condition. If modifications are subsequently made to an individual club, it is the responsibility of the player to make certain that the modifications do not render the club non-conforming. A modified club is not automatically deemed conforming merely because it appears on the List of Conforming Driver Heads.

4. A clubhead's presence on the List of Conforming Driver Heads does not eliminate the possibility that an individual club may be evaluated for conformance to the Rules as authorized by the *Committee*. For example, an individual club may be evaluated at a competition site for club length, groove dimensions, CT measurement, or anything else authorized by the *Committee*.

TIMETABLE

The USGA has not yet established a firm timetable for publication of the List, but January 2005 is the earliest possible date for the new Condition to the Rules to be added. A more definite timetable for both the List and the Condition of Competition addition will be established after the USGA has received and considered comments.

COMMENTS

Written comments should be sent to the USGA, attention Dick Ruge, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, NJ 07931, Fax 908-234-0138, e-mail: drugge@usga.org. Comments are welcomed as soon as possible. Comments received later than August 31, 2004 will not be considered.

For your information, The R&A is concurrently issuing a similar notice to manufacturers.

This is a proposal, not yet an implemented change. It is possible that provisions of this proposal could change prior to adoption or the proposal might not be adopted at all.