



October 11, 2017

Notice to Manufacturers

Rule 4-1b of the Rules of Golf, addresses wear of clubs and states that:

A club that conforms with the Rules when new is deemed to conform after wear through normal use. Any part of a club that has been purposely altered is regarded as new and must, in its altered state, conform with the Rules.

Club damage that occurs prior to the round is addressed in Rule 4-3c of the Rules of Golf, which states that:

A player may use a club damaged prior to a round, provided the club, in its damaged state, conforms with the Rules.

For the purposes of Rule 4, wear is defined as the *erosion of material* from a solid surface. Damage is defined as the *structural weakening of a material* caused by a single load or repeatedly applied loads.

The purpose of this Notice to Manufacturers is to advise you of an update to the interpretation of Rule 4 associated with pendulum testing which may be performed in the field on used clubs. Under this updated interpretation, which will take effect on January 1, 2018, when a used club is tested in the field and a result in excess of 257 μs is attained, the specific club will be deemed to be damaged into a non-conforming state, based on the presumption that it conformed when new and was included on the List of Conforming Driver Heads. As such, any individual club tested in excess of 257 μs will not be permitted to be used in play during any subsequent *stipulated round* since it does not conform to the Rules of Golf (See, Appendix II, 4c)¹. The damage will be deemed to have occurred after the start of the previous stipulated round (i.e., prior to the field test), so that no retrospective penalties would be applied, unless the player had knowledge, prior to the field test, that the club did not conform.

We would also like to remind you of the March 11, 2016 announcement that the characteristic time limitation of 257 μs (the CT limit plus tolerance) applies to all points within the impact area for clubs submitted after this date.

Questions and/or comments regarding this notice are welcome and should be forwarded by e-mail to: John Spitzer, Managing Director of Equipment Standards, at jspitzer@usga.org

¹ The limit on characteristic time is 239 μs . A tolerance of 18 μs is applied to ensure that the result definitely exceeds the limit. Clubs in this warning area are considered to be over the limit.