



The Rules of Amateur Status:

Policy on Gambling

An official publication of R&A Rules Limited

General

An "amateur golfer" is one who plays the game as a non-remunerative and non-profit making sport. Financial incentive in amateur golf, which can be the result of some forms of gambling or wagering, could give rise to abuse of the Rules both in play and in manipulation of handicaps that would be detrimental to the integrity of the game.

There is a distinction between playing for prize money (Rule 3-1), gambling or wagering that is contrary to the purpose and spirit of the Rules (Rule 7-2), and forms of gambling or wagering that do not, of themselves, breach the Rules. An amateur golfer or a Committee in charge of a competition where amateur golfers are competing should consult with the Governing Body if in any doubt as to the application of the Rules. In the absence of such guidance, it is recommended that no cash prizes be awarded so as to ensure that the Rules are upheld.

Acceptable Forms of Gambling

There is no objection to informal gambling or wagering among individual golfers or teams of golfers when it is incidental to the game. It is not practicable to define informal gambling or wagering precisely, but features that would be consistent with such gambling or wagering include:

- the players in general know each other;
- participation in the gambling or wagering is optional and is limited to the players;
- the sole source of all money won by the players is advanced by the players; and
- the amount of money involved is not generally considered to be excessive.

Therefore, informal gambling or wagering is acceptable provided the primary purpose is the playing of the game for enjoyment, not for financial gain.

Unacceptable Forms of Gambling

Other forms of gambling or wagering where there is a requirement for players to participate (e.g. compulsory sweepstakes) or that have the potential to involve considerable sums of money (e.g. calcuttas and auction sweepstakes - where players or teams are sold by auction) are not approved.

Otherwise, it is difficult to define unacceptable forms of gambling or wagering precisely, but features that would be consistent with such gambling or wagering include:

- participation in the gambling or wagering is open to non-players; and
- the amount of money involved is generally considered to be excessive.

An amateur golfer's participation in gambling or wagering that is not approved may be considered contrary to the purpose and spirit of the Rules (Rule 7-2) and may endanger his Amateur Status.

Furthermore, organised events designed or promoted to create cash prizes are not permitted. Golfers participating in such events without first irrevocably waiving their right to prize money are deemed to be playing for prize money, in breach of Rule 3-1.

Note: The Rules of Amateur Status do not apply to betting or gambling by amateur golfers on the results of a competition limited to or specifically organised for professional golfers.

January 2008.

The R&A is golf's world rules and development body and organiser of The Open Championship. It operates with the consent of more than 130 national and international, amateur and professional organisations, from over 120 countries and on behalf of an estimated 30 million golfers in Europe, Africa, Asia Pacific and The Americas (outside the USA and Mexico). The United States Golf Association (USGA) is the game's governing body in the United States and Mexico.

For further information or advice, please contact:
The Amateur Status Committee,
R&A Rules Limited, Beach House, Golf Place, St Andrews, Fife, Scotland, KY16 9JD
Tel: 01334 460000 Fax: 01334 460003