



MEDIA NOTICE: USGA Statements on Round 4 Course Conditions and Setup, Ruling Clarification

SOUTHAMPTON, N.Y. (June 17, 2018) – The USGA has issued the following statements regarding course conditions and setup for round 4 of the U.S. Open Championship:

In preparation for today’s forecasted dry and windy conditions and to maintain a challenging yet fair U.S. Open test, we applied appropriate levels of water to all putting greens last night and this morning for turf health and firmness. Similar to the preparation we took for round 1, green speeds will be, on average, 10-12 inches slower than rounds 2 and 3. We also adjusted some hole locations in a manner similar to what we did in Round 1, reviewing our initial selections and comparing them against our weather forecast and other agronomic data.

In addition, the USGA also provided clarity on yesterday’s ruling:

There appears to be some continued uncertainty about the basis of the ruling with Phil Mickelson during the third round of the 118th U.S. Open, and we would like to further clarify previous statements. During play of the 13th hole Mickelson made a stroke on the putting green at his ball which was moving. As a result, he incurred a two-stroke penalty for a breach of Rule 14-5; the stroke made at the moving ball also counted. His score for the hole was 10. Rule 14-5 does not include a serious breach clause or disqualification as part of the penalty statement.

Rule 1-2 did not apply in this situation because Mickelson made a stroke at the ball (defined as the forward movement of the club with the intention of striking at and moving the ball) as opposed to another act to deflect or stop the ball in motion, which are two acts covered by Rule 1-2. Additionally, Exception 1 under Rule 1-2 states that “an action expressly permitted or expressly prohibited by another Rule is subject to that other Rule and not Rule 1-2.” As the act of making a stroke at a moving ball is expressly covered by Rule 14-5, that Rule and the penalty associated with that Rule were applied. The Committee looked at the facts of the situation and determined that there were no grounds under the Rules of Golf for any further penalty, including disqualification.

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