

Can I move it?

Loose impediment, dead bird

Question

I recently played my ball to a position within the sandy waste on the left of the 4th. It came to rest sort of under half of a dead bird. Unfortunately i couldn't remove the partial carcass without my ball moving so I played my shot. Unfortunately the bird went further than my ball! Did I have to play it or could I have removed the carcass?

Answer

What you did was correct.

We start with the definite of Loose Impediment at the back of the rules.

Loose Impediment

Any unattached natural object such as:

- Stones, loose grass, leaves, branches and sticks,
- **Dead animals and animal waste,**
- Worms, insects and similar animals that can be removed easily, and the mounds or webs they build (such as worm casts and ant hills), and
- Clumps of compacted soil (including aeration plugs).

Such natural objects are not loose if they are:

- Attached or growing,
- Solidly embedded in the ground (that is, cannot be picked out easily), or
- Sticking to the ball.

“Dead animal and animal waste” would clearly apply to part of a dead bird. We therefor move to Rule 15.1 regarding Loose Impediments. Rule 15.1a tells us that we can remove a loose impediment without penalty, but rule 15.1b also tells us that if the ball moves whilst removing loose impediment we must replace the ball and also incur one penalty stroke.

Your only alternative to playing the ball as it lay would have been to take unplayable ball relief under Rule 19.2.

NOTE: This information is of a general nature and is not intended to cover every possible situation. If you are unsure of your situation please either check the Rules of Golf, or seek specific advice from a Rules Official.

If you have any questions about the Rules of Golf or how they apply at Royal Adelaide, I'm happy to do my best to answer them. Questions can be submitted to me arnewman1949@icloud.com

All questions will be attempted to be answered in a manner that doesn't identify the asker, unless you indicate that you are happy to be identified.

Tony Newman