

## My ball moved as I took my swing

### Question

This happened in the general area ie not in the teeing area, a bunker, a penalty area or the putting green. I started my backswing. As I did my ball moved. There is no doubt that I caused it to move. I wasn't able to stop my swing and proceed to play my shot and hit the ball. I know that I incur a penalty for causing the ball to move, but is there any additional penalty for not replacing it?

### Answer

What you did is permitted by the rules.

Our journey through the Rules starts at Rule 9.1. Rule 9.1a says, with some exceptions, that a player's ball must be played as it lies. We then go to 9.1b.

#### 9.1b What to Do When Ball Moves During Backswing or Stroke

If a player's ball at rest begins moving after the player has begun the stroke or the backswing for a stroke and the player goes on to make the stroke:

- The ball must not be replaced, no matter what caused it to move.
- Instead, the player must play the ball from where it comes to rest after the stroke.
- If the player caused the ball to move, see Rule 9.4b to find out if there is a penalty.

There are 4 possible causes for your ball moving.

1. Natural forces, (Rule 9.3)
2. The players or their caddie's actions, (Rule 9.4)
3. The opponent (in match play) or their caddie's actions. (Rule 9.5)
4. Actions of an outside influence (which includes the actions of a fellow competitor in stroke play). (Rule 9.6)

Rules 9.4a and 9.4b are the relevant Rules for this question. Rule 9.4a tells us that normally, if a player causes their ball to move it must be replaced. An exception however is the we don't have to replace it as already determined by Rule 9.1b.

Rule 9.4b tells us that if a player causes their ball at rest to move, they incur one penalty stroke. There are a number of exceptions, but none would apply in your situation. You therefore incurred one penalty stroke and were not required to replace your ball.

If you had been able to pull out of the shot that you were playing then the ball would have had to have been replaced. Failure to do so would have incurred two further penalties.

*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](mailto: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*