

Two rulings made at the U.S. Amateur championship this year:

Ball at Rest Moved – A player was standing near his ball that was lying just off the green in the rough. As he was waiting for another player in his group to play, his club was leaning against his body and the club slipped off his leg and fell onto his ball moving it slightly. He consulted with a Rules Official and the Official explained to him that he incurs a one-stroke penalty and the ball must be replaced to its original place. ([Rule 9.4](#))

If he had not replaced his ball he would have been assessed a two stroke penalty for playing from the wrong place.

Ball at Rest Moved – A player was on the 18th green putting for birdie. His putt missed, but left him with a tap-in par. When the player addressed his ball for the tap-in, the ball moved slightly. Uncertain what to do, the player moved the ball back to its original location and tapped in the short putt. Minutes later at the scoring table, he brought up the incident. After gaining all the facts, it was found that the ball moved immediately when the player placed his club behind the ball. The Committee determined that the player had accidentally caused his ball to move and since the ball was on the putting green there is no penalty and the player must replace the ball. The player scored a four on the hole. ([Rule 9.4 Exception 2](#))

If the player had not caused the ball to move that it had been moved by” natural forces” such as wind he would not have had to replace the ball. If he did replace it he would be playing from a wrong place and would be assessed a two stroke penalty.

When the ball is moved by “natural forces” you play the ball from its new location without penalty with one exception: If you are on the putting green and have marked, lifted and replaced your ball you MUST replace the ball if it is moved by natural forces. Again, if you don’t you would be assessed a two stroke penalty for playing from the wrong place.