



## TOMGC Rules and Greens September 2019

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Have you ever heard the term, “One bad apple spoils the whole bunch”? Well, I just don’t think it’s true at all. Sure, that bad apple might be right there in between a bunch of other really good apples, but as long as you understand it’s just one apple, you’re good to go. Remove it and throw it away, eh? The problem, I think, is one of perception. I think the terms are composition and division. If one is bad, then the whole must be bad, or if the whole is bad, then any one must also be bad.

Just the other day, my bride sent me to the store for groceries. Among the things on my list to buy was a bunch of strawberries. Now, I’m no strawberry expert, but I can usually pick a good one from a bad one, right. Anyway, I did my best to pick out a box of strawberries that all looked nice and ripe to me. You married guys know the odds, right? With a 50/50 chance, 9 times out of 10 you’re going to be wrong! When the bride opened the box and started going through the strawberries, right there in the middle of the other beautiful and wonderful strawberries was one that was about half rotten! Of course, like brides and other folks are likely to do, she was sure to point out the fact that there was a bad strawberry in with the others. After a little reflection, I picked up the bad strawberry, threw it in the garbage, and declared the rest of the group to be disease free! Another lesson learned.

One of our group shared a story with me the other day, and I apologize, because I don’t remember who was telling me the story. But anyway, this club member shared his experience in a recent Senior League match play event in which one player from the other team would always walk up to his ball before making his stroke, and press his foot down just behind the ball so as to flatten out the grass in that area behind his ball. This goes against that basic principal of “play the ball as it lies” right? Well I believe so. While the rules of golf don’t expressly mention a player using his foot to even the surface behind the ball, Rule 8.1, *Player’s actions that improve conditions affecting the stroke* includes subsection 8.1a(3) a player may not ..... *Alter the surface of the ground*, including by: ..... *Creating or elimination holes, indentations or uneven surfaces*. A violation of this rule would result in a loss of hole in match play or a two-stroke penalty in stroke play. So, play the ball as it lies unless the rules allow you to do otherwise, and get rid of the bad apple in your bunch. Thanks for listening. Good day and good golf.