

NAGC C grade quarter final

On Sunday October 21st there was an unfortunate occurrence, where incorrect golf rule interpretation and incorrect ruling procedure caused a member to resign from the match after the 11th hole.

The details are as follows;

The quarter final match between Raja Jamaledine and Brenton St Clair had reached the 11th green with Brenton three up in the match. Alongside the green, Raja noticed that Brenton had 16 clubs in his bag, two more than the permitted number of clubs. Immediately Brenton admitted that he had too many clubs and that he had inadvertently forgot to remove the extra clubs from his bag prior to the match starting. The playing group looked up the rule on a mobile phone and mis-interpreted the rule thinking it was an automatic disqualification, at which point Brenton resigned from the match.

The actual rule, (4.4) states that the maximum penalty in matchplay is a two hole penalty, after which point the extra club(s) should be nominated and not used again during the round. If the nominated clubs are used again, then the penalty is disqualification.

In this event, a member of the match committee should have been contacted and in the event that no one is immediately available and there is uncertainty about the rule, then play should continue until a ruling is made. Not maybe in this case, but in another round, it could be possible to apply a rule and adjust the score if necessary after the round has been completed and before the card is signed, a timely reminder not to sign your card as soon as it comes off the printer!

Members should carry a Rules of Golf book in their bag at all times to help prevent a repeat of this occurrence. Indeed, with the rule changes and new rules coming into force on Jan 1st 2019, every member will be issued with a new Rules of Golf book and a leaflet explaining some of the more radical changes, may I suggest that you put the book and leaflet straight into your golf bag, after reading them of course!

In no way is Brenton St Clair accused of trying to gain an unfair advantage, he made a mistake that he is regretful of. Both Brenton and Raja should have checked the rule correctly or seek advice from an official, and thus avoid this unfortunate occurrence.