



For Immediate Publication - Tuesday 4 October 2005

R&A PUBLISHES LIST OF CONFORMING DRIVER HEADS

The R&A, golf's world governing body and organiser of The Open Championship, today announced the publication of a List of Driver Heads that will conform to the new Rule limiting 'spring-like' effect to be introduced from 1 January 2008. Driver heads which currently conform to the Rules of Golf, but which will become non-conforming on 1 January 2008 as a result of the new Rule, are not included on the List.

Work began on the development of this List a year ago, after a formal proposal received enthusiastic support from the Professional Tours, The R&A's Affiliated Unions and equipment manufacturers. The List, which has been compiled and refined in close collaboration with manufacturers, will be an essential guide for golfers preparing for the 2008 Rule – whether it be to ascertain the status of their current driver or to help them in their future purchasing decisions. There are approximately 1700 models, dating back to 1999, on the List at the current time. A club manufactured before 1999 is considered to be conforming and on the List unless specifically ruled otherwise. The R&A already publishes a list of driving clubs that will become non-conforming in 2008.

Commenting on the launch of this List, The R&A's Director of Rules and Equipment Standards, David Rickman, said "The publication of this List should help ease the transition towards the 2008 Rule change. We are appreciative of the support that we have received from manufacturers and we are confident that this List will be of assistance to the golfing public."

The List will be updated weekly and will be maintained jointly with the United States Golf Association. It can be accessed from The R&A's website (www.randa.org) by following the links to 'Rules', 'Equipment' and 'Driving Clubs'. A publicity campaign to increase awareness of the List is planned for individual Golf Clubs in Great Britain and Ireland and via The R&A's 125 Affiliated Unions worldwide.

The decision to introduce a limit on the 'spring-like' effect of driving clubs was first announced in August 2002 and The R&A introduced a test in January 2003. Since 2003, the Rules have allowed Committees to introduce a Condition of Competition requiring driving clubs to comply with the 2008 Rule. Initially, this Condition was only used in Professional events, but in recent years it has been used in top Amateur events. From 1st January 2006 until 31st December 2007, the Condition will be revised to allow a Committee to require driving clubs to have a head which is detailed on the List of Conforming Driver Heads. For most competitions and all recreational play, the use of this Condition is not recommended. Further details of this Condition of Competition and its recommended use are attached, along with further details of the workings of the List.

Questions on the above should be directed to David Rickman or Claire Bates.

LIST DETAILS

1. The R&A and the United States Golf Association (USGA) will jointly maintain a single List of Conforming Driver Heads.
2. The List will include information on driver heads only.

3. For the purpose of the List, a "driving club" will be defined as a club that is designed, primarily, for use when hitting from the teeing ground. Club design features such as loft, head size, face dimensions, head weight and club length will also be considered, as well as any apparent or declared intent of the design.
4. A driver head will only be included on the List if it has been submitted The R&A by the manufacturer and it has been determined to conform to the Rules of Golf in all respects. Driver heads submitted to the USGA will be added to the List by the USGA.
5. Only driver heads submitted and/or manufactured from 1999 onwards will be individually listed. A club manufactured before 1999 would be considered conforming and on the List unless that club has been ruled non-conforming by The R&A or determined to be non-conforming by a Tournament Official.
6. The List will be updated weekly, by 00:01 (GMT) every Monday.
7. If the design of a driver head is modified from the club as submitted, The R&A reserves the right to review the conformance status of that club. Additional samples of the club may be obtained and evaluated for the purposes of verifying its conformance.
8. At present, there will be no expiration date for a club included on the List. However, a clubhead included on the List may be removed if it no longer conforms to the Rules of Golf due to a subsequent Rules change.
9. For the foreseeable future, The R&A will continue to maintain and publish the list of driving clubs that will become non-conforming from 1 January 2008.

DETAILS OF CONDITION OF COMPETITION

From 1 January 2006, Committees may introduce the following Condition:

"Driving Clubs

The driver the player carries must have a clubhead, identified by model and loft, that is named on the current List of Conforming Driver Heads issued by R&A Rules Limited.

Note: Any individual driver on the List, if tested on pendulum testing apparatus approved by R&A Rules Limited, must not have a characteristic time greater than 257 microseconds.

Penalty for Breach of Condition: Disqualification"

Further details of the administration and use of this Condition are as follows:

1. As with the Conforming Golf Ball List, this Condition would only be recommended for use by Committees in charge of competitions involving expert players (including top Amateur events).
2. The Condition specifically refers to driver 'heads'. However, any driving club that a player carries must conform to all other rules for golf clubs.
3. It is the player's responsibility to carry clubs which conform to the Rules of Golf, and all relevant Conditions of Competition. Therefore, players and manufacturers alike should take care to ensure that any modification made to a driver head does not alter the playing characteristics to such an extent that it becomes a different head to the sample submitted for evaluation and which appears on the List.

4. If a driver fails any on-site test (e.g. for characteristic time, grooves, etc.), the individual club would be considered non-conforming and may not be carried by the player even if that model of driver appears on the List.
5. Driver heads manufactured prior to 1999 are exempt from the requirement of this condition.

Further Information: -

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