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TO: ALL MANUFACTURERS

Informational Database

Since the adoption of the additional groove and punch mark specifications on 1 January 2010, The R&A has published an online “informational database” of pre-2010 golf club models, to help golfers ascertain whether or not their clubs meet the new specifications. This information was particularly important for the elite professional game, where the condition of competition (the “condition”) was immediately introduced requiring players’ clubs to conform to the Rules of Golf effective 1 January 2010.

As you may know, from 1 January 2014, the groove condition is recommended for use at the next level of the game (i.e. the elite amateur level) and The R&A will be adopting the condition at all of its Amateur Championships conducted during 2014 and beyond, except that introduction at the Junior Open Championship has been delayed until at least 2016. In an effort to enhance what is already a valuable information source to our Championship entrants, as well as entrants of other competitions around the world where the condition has been adopted, The R&A, in partnership with the USGA, has decided to temporarily expand the database to also include all models of post-2010 clubs which have been submitted for evaluation.

The database will remain purely a searchable reference tool of irons, fairway woods with lofts of 25 degrees or higher, and hybrids with lofts of 25 degrees or higher, which have been submitted to The R&A and/or the USGA for evaluation of conformance to the Rules of Golf. For the benefit of golfers who are not yet required to play clubs which meet the 2010 groove specifications, the database will continue to display the conformance status of clubs in relation to the groove Rules in effect both prior to and after 1 January 2010.

We plan to update the online database with post-2010 clubs by 14 March 2014. Once published, we hope that we can count on your assistance in checking that the information listed under your company name is accurate. We would also encourage you to consider submitting samples of models which are notably absent from the database – especially those models of clubs which are regularly being used at the elite level. The expansion of the scope of the database will remain in place until such time as The R&A and the USGA determine that it is no longer necessary.

I hope that this information is of assistance, but please let me know if you have any comments or concerns.

Yours faithfully

CLAIRE BATES
Assistant Director – Equipment Standards

ES2014GCM