

# Rule Tip of the Week

## What Goes Up ...

... must come down! And that is exactly what Camilo Villegas experienced when playing the 15<sup>th</sup> hole during the first round of the Hyundai Tournament of Champions at Kapalua, Hawaii last month.

As illustrated in the adjacent sequence of photographs, Camilo was faced with a tricky bump-and-run shot up a steep slope to a front hole location on the 15<sup>th</sup> green. Unfortunately for Villegas, this was his second attempt at the shot. When his ball reached the crest of the hill, gravity again won out and started pulling his ball back down the hill.

As Camilo watched in agony as his ball slowly worked its way back toward where he was standing, he noticed the remnant of a small divot left in the vicinity of his last stroke. Camilo, not wanting his ball to come to rest against that divot, walked over and casually flicked the loose pieces of grass away with his wedge.

In flicking away those loose impediments, Camilo breached Rule 1-2 [Exerting Influence on Ball] which, in stroke play, calls for a two-stroke penalty. Decision 1-2/8 [Player Presses Down Turf as Ball Is Rolling Towards Area] very nearly describes precisely what happened to Villegas:

**Q.** *A player's ball lies through the green at the bottom of a slope. The player makes a stroke and sees that his ball is rolling back down the slope towards the spot from which he last played. Before the ball reaches that spot, the player presses down a raised piece of turf in that area with the intent of ensuring that his ball will not come to rest against the raised piece of turf or in the divot hole. Is the player in breach of Rule 1-2?*

**A.** *Yes, as he took an action with the intention to influence the movement of the ball.*

*If the player had not realized his ball was returning to the area, there would be no breach.*

PGA Tour officials were not made aware of this infraction until after Camilo had returned his score card for the round. Because Camilo did not include the two-stroke penalty incurred under Rule 1-2 when he returned his score card, he was disqualified under Rule 6-6d [Scoring in Stroke Play – Wrong Score for Hole] for returning a score for the 15<sup>th</sup> hole that was lower than actually taken.

