

Do you know the rule.....

.....marking an opponents ball

Carmelo and Lebron are opponents in one-on-one match play. Carmelo plays his chip to 6 feet directly in the path of Lebron's putt. Without asking, Lebron marks Carmelo's ball, lifts and hands it to him before Lebron buries the 12 footer for par. Has an infraction occurred?

Yes, under Rule 20-1 a ball can be marked by a player, their caddie, or another person authorized by the player. In this case Lebron did not ask for, nor did he have Carmelo's authority to mark his ball so Lebron sustained a 1-stroke penalty. If this were stroke play, there is no penalty and the ball must be replaced.



What if Carmelo had marked and lifted his ball but accidentally dropped his ball which fell onto the marker and moved it. Is Carmelo penalized?

The rule says that there is no penalty for moving the ball or ball marker provided it is directly attributable to the specific act of marking the position or lifting the ball. The ball or marker is replaced to its original position without penalty.

But in this case Carmelo dropping the ball on his marker was not part of the act of marking the position or lifting the ball and *it will cost him a 1-stroke penalty*. Similarly, the same would be true if he had inadvertently kicked his marker while approaching his ball position. If Carmelo had dropped his marker on his ball before marking it and it moved the ball this would also result 1-stroke penalty.

THE KEEPERS



(You can find further information on Rule 20-1 in the USGA Rules Handbook)