

# United States Golf Association (USGA)

We are sharing the following anticipated Q&A regarding the "The Complete Method©" tie-breaking rule, which our company developed on February 12, 2026 and suggested to the Japan Golf Association (JGA) on February 19, 2026.

## Assumption Q&A:

### "The Complete Method©" Ranking Determination Rules

**Q: Why aren't penalties for playing a "Wrong Ball" included in the comparison?**

**A:** The penalties currently used as comparative elements are limited to OB (Out of Bounds) and RPA (Red Penalty Areas). Including every possible penalty would be exhaustive and would complicate score entry on golf carts for amateur players. Furthermore, even if every possible penalty were compared, it is impossible to completely eliminate the possibility of proceeding to a playoff.

**Q: Why compare the "number of bunker shots" rather than the "number of times entered a bunker"?**

**A:** This is to account for cases where a water hazard forms within a bunker; under the Rules of Golf, a player may take relief outside the bunker for a two-stroke penalty. In such a case, since a shot was not played from the sand, it is not counted. However, if a player takes a one-stroke penalty to play from a different spot within the same bunker, that shot is counted.

**Q: Why are bunker shots ranked after the score comparison rather than immediately after penalties?**

**A:** A bunker shot itself is not a penalty. We prioritize the comparison of performance-based metrics—such as under-par scores or scores of bogey or worse—before looking at specific situational stats like bunker usage. Counting the number of times a ball enters a bunker fails to account for relief situations. A player who takes relief from a water hazard within a bunker and chooses to play from outside the bunker incurs a two-stroke penalty. This player is then compared to those who played from inside the bunker.

Essentially, if that water hazard had not existed, the player would have held an advantage equal to the penalty strokes in terms of total score. To reflect this and ensure fairness, we use the 'number of bunker shots' as a comparative factor.

**Q: Why isn't the "Countback" method applied immediately after the total stroke count?**

A: While a countback increases the likelihood of reaching a decision quickly, our goal is to allow multiple performance factors (such as the number of penalties, birdies, and eagles) to influence the final ranking. The countback method and sudden-death playoffs remain the final steps in the determination process.

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We will provide further updates should we receive any official inquiries.

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