

# The Idiot's Guide to the Wrong Ball Law (version 3)

Most players when first reading the new GC Laws book will be very mystified when they read the provisions for wrong ball play and it will make problem solution at club level extremely difficult. There is however a very simple way to resolve such issues.

- It is a matter of application of the law that you can play as many wrong balls as you like and not a single thing will happen until a player or referee says “**Stop, someone has played a wrong ball**” (NOTE *Spectators should keep quiet*)
- Don't bother to go through the process of working out when things went wrong, the law does not require this. Just start at who played which ball just before the game was stopped.

There are only three possible solutions for any wrong ball situation.

**Full Penalty (FP)** – The opponent of the player of the last ball chooses whether all balls moved in the last stroke are left where they lie or replaced where they were before the stroke was played and any points scored in that stroke are cancelled. The same opponent can then choose which of his own balls he wants to play to continue the game.

**Reset and Replay (RAR)**– All balls moved in the last stroke are replaced where they were before the stroke was played and any points scored in that stroke are cancelled. The stroke is then replayed with the correct ball.

**Carry On Play (COP)** – The player who played the last stroke has played a correct ball and condoned all previous errors. Play continues in the sequence set by the last ball and all points scored in previous strokes count.

<b>THE WAY TO DECIDE WHICH SOLUTION APPLIES</b>	
If the last shot was played by:	
<b>SINGLES</b>	<b>DOUBLES</b>
a player who is entitled to play but plays a shot with an opponent's ball, <b>FP</b> applies.	the player whose turn it is to play, as defined by the colour sequence from the previous ball played, but who plays with either his partner's or opponent's ball, <b>FP</b> applies
the same player who played the previous shot, <b>FP</b> applies	a player from a side not entitled to play, <b>FP</b> applies
a player who plays one of his own balls after his opponent has played a ball which does not belong to him, <b>FP</b> applies. <i>(Seems rather unfair that he should be penalised in this matter but that's what the law says)</i>	a player playing a ball he is allowed to play from the side whose turn it is to play but plays a ball that does not follow the colour sequence of the previous ball played, <b>FP</b> applies unless the previous stroke was a wrong ball in which case <b>COP</b> applies
a player who plays one of his own balls out of sequence with the previous ball played but commits a striking fault, <b>FP</b> applies	a player who plays his own ball after the opposing side have played the previous stroke unlawfully in any way. <b>COP</b> applies and the sequence is reset to the last stroke played
a player who is entitled to play and plays a ball he is entitled to play but out of sequence with the previous colour played, <b>RAR</b> applies	all other cases <b>COP</b> applies

**NOTE** *You never have to go back more than one stroke prior to the last stroke except in doubles where it is necessary to check the legality of the penultimate stroke.*