Return to ‘traditional’ course design

It was exciting to watch the British Open this year. The nearly flawless play of Nick Faldo was most commendable. However, the more I learn about golf course design, the physical make-up and layout of a golf course attract my attention more than the great play of world-class professionals.

The Old Course at St. Andrews is truly what golf was meant to be played on. I believe a return to the more traditional designs is at hand. For as the battle for survival is being waged where our feet tread, the war may be won in far-off laboratories and test fields.

That is where turf scientists at universities and private companies ply their trade, where they strive to breed the best turf available, to conquer whatever might attack their charges. Sound overstated? Perhaps. But golf is a mega-industry that makes billions of dollars a year for the courses and designers today that many of his designs come as a result of the developer/owner's request. They tell Jack they want a "top 10" golf course. Today, many feel that to be the best it's got to be long and play like U.S. Open conditions.

I disagree. Just play a Donald Ross course and you'll get the feel of what golf was meant to be and, in my opinion, will return to.

This month's editorial feature takes a look at the seed and sod industry, focusing particularly on Zoysia grass sod. I recently got a first-hand look at the great Northwest seed and sod business when visiting a few of our good friends in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. If you've never had the opportunity to visit a seed farm or seed research facility, it's a tremendous learning experience. My experience came courtesy of Turf-Seed Co. Bill Rose and company were kind enough to include me in the rehearsal of their field day event. As a result I'm planning a return trip to attend a few of the field days that are held annually in June in the Northwest.

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Sincerely,
Charles E. von Brecht
Publisher

Researchers know Solomon was right

BY MARK LESLIE
Pests and diseases, droughts and floods, extreme cold and extreme heat. All could endanger quality turf — the kind that golf courses absolutely need. But could is the operative word here. For as the battle for survival is being waged where our feet tread, the war may be won in far-off laboratories and test fields.

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