

Spokane municipal supers defended

To the editor:

I read with interest the article on the winter damage to the Spokane golf courses (*Golf Course News* July issue).

It's true I am a civil service employee. The remark made by the unnamed person and his/her insulting remark shows how little he/she knows the three supers for the city of Spokane.

For myself, I put in more than 40 hours per week in our busy time. I invite anyone to follow any of my crew members for a day.

The winter was bad, but the spring weatherwise was worse. We had no growing weather until late in June.

Every golfer thinks it his duty to take digs at golf course crews when something happens to mess up his game, but very few ever tell us "Good Job" when conditions are to one's liking.

We all take pride in our courses and do the best we can.

Tell your griper to ask sensible questions and listen. He may learn something, maybe.

Sincerely,

Horace E. Ramsey

Willow Springs wonderful

To the editor:

I have just finished playing Willow Springs Golf Course for the third time. If there is an executive length course which can match what Al Janish has created adjacent to West Friendship's Livestock Road in Howard County, Md., I would sure like to know where it is.

I am in the industry, but have no connection either to Al or the course. I just think excellence should be recognized.

The course plays only 4,253 yards from the blue tees, with a par of 62, but I don't think the pros can tear it up. The premium is on accurate shot making and is extremely fair, if you can keep the ball in play. Surrounding areas are planted to weeping love grass and wild flowers.

Most greens either are two or three-tiered, so that pin placement can be as difficult as they want to make it, but remain continually interesting.

The course is new and was built during the worst drought here in the past ten years. Fairways need to develop more, as is generally the case.

My purpose in writing is to encourage other golf course architects, land planners and developers to visit, just to see what can be done with a piece of land if you have the right vision and skills to develop what I think is the best short course in the United States.

Sincerely,

Bill Appel

Ellicott City, Md.

Don't let players go on par-3s

To the publisher:

Regarding your commentary in the July issue on slow play:

Several years ago it was demonstrated that it does not speed play on a par 3 course to let players hit after you've reached the green.

It's very unsafe to have people standing near a par 3 while people are approaching. Many people get hit. It's especially dangerous if you're looking back toward the tee into the sun.

It's also distracting to have people walking and riding up next to the green while you're putting out.

Oh, by the way, you have a great publication.

With respect,

"Stay Green" Dean Fagerlind

Superintendent, Byrnes Park Golf Course
Waterloo, Iowa

Education the answer

To the publisher:

In your "Publisher's Note" in the July issue, you discussed slow play and some of the issues surrounding it, and even made some suggestions as to how we might speed up the game and make it more enjoyable for everyone.

In general, I agree with you in that there are many ways in which we can educate the playing public, especially beginning golfers, in how to play faster. However, I think you missed the mark in a couple of areas.

In your first point, you mentioned that more signage might help. I agree that signs should be posted to allow faster players through the slower groups. This works well if the golf course is not full, but on today's jam-packed public courses that start players at seven and eight-minute intervals it does no good to let anyone through unless there is an open hole in front of the slow group. Signage to that effect and to encourage groups to keep pace with the group in front will help considerably.

Also in your first point, you suggest letting groups on the tees of par 3s hit their shots before the group on the green is through putting. I strongly disagree unless the next hole is open and the group on the green is playing slow. Otherwise all you do is create a backup at the green or the next tee.

This is especially true if the group on the tee is in carts. I will give you this, if the players on the tee are all walking and they would have to walk around a lake or some other circuitous route, then it may be of some help to let them hit up to the green.

In your third point, it is my understanding that we should get used to playing five-hour rounds because of the busy public facilities. Maybe that is so, but I think that if we were all told that every time we teed it up, that we wouldn't finish the 18th hole until five hours later, fewer of us would even bother to go to the course.

Advertising that the five-hour round should be the norm is bad for golf. Think about it. Say you drive 30 minutes to an hour to get to the course, it takes you five hours to play and then another hour to get home and you have invested seven hours. Not to mention the fact that you usually get there 15 to 30 minutes early and then hang around another 15 to 30 minutes (or more) to have a drink with your friends. That is OK, unless their wives don't want them to be gone from daylight to dark for one round of golf.

You are on the right track as are many others in our business by saying that educating the playing public in how to play faster is the key. Encouraging players to be ready to hit their shot when it is their turn, lining up their putt before it is their turn, leaving your bag or pull cart or riding cart on the side of the green closest to the next tee, putting out instead of marking every short putt, and not marking down scores while standing on the green are just a few of the ways that players can make that round of golf closer to a four hour round than five. Now that would be great and it can be done.

I look forward to reading your publication every month as there is always something either stimulating or informative between the covers. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

David Whelchel

P. S. — A twosome rarely has the right-of-way on a golf course. On busy days, it is my contention that they should be paired with at least one more player. That twosome takes up the same eight-minute tee time as four players and usually winds up being frustrated just like you were.

Golf course architecture feature gave special insights

To the editor:

I am an intern at South Seas Plantation, Captiva Island, Fla. I attend Lake City Community College Golf Course/Landscape School.

My major is landscape design/maintenance, but I am working on a golf course now.

Next year I will transfer to Florida A&M to earn a B.S. degree in landscape architecture. I will graduate in the spring of 1993. I have a very diversified education — architecture, golf course and landscape — because I am pursuing golf course architecture.

I enjoyed the article on golf course architects in the July issue. It gave me an in-depth view on what pros want, average golfers want, and the need for landscape design

education as well as needing to know and understand the game of golf and golf maintenance.

I appreciate the thoroughness of the articles; very informative. Thank you.

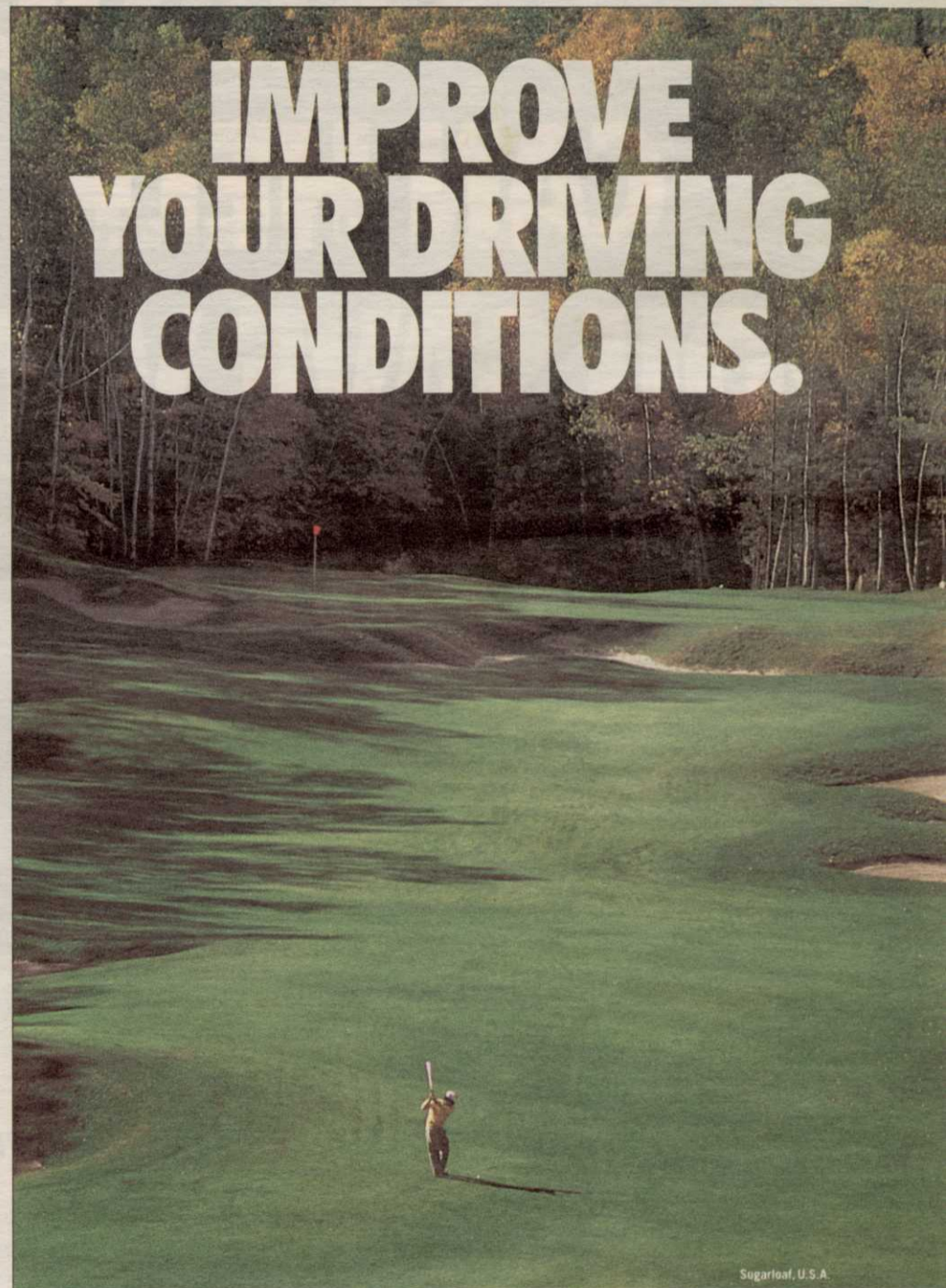
Your publication is so educational, I look forward to reading it every month. Not only is it educational, it is a marketplace for new ideas, equipment and products — not to mention job opportunities.

Keep up the good work.

Daleann Linton
Branford, Fla.

Please address your letters to: Letters, *Golf Course News*, P.O. Box 997, Yarmouth, ME 04096.

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