Experts say science played little part in Klein's research work

By MARK LESLIE

Richard Klein's springboard to national acceptance and recognition as an expert in protecting the aquatic environment was a speech to the United States Golf Association. His invitation to speak came as a result of a paper he authored: Protecting the Aquatic Environment from the Effects of Golf Courses. Yet scientists say that paper is "an unscholarly work written by a layperson who selectively chose phrases and passages to make points and reach conclusions which were invalid."

Referring to the basis of Klein's study — 11 golf courses he tests in Maryland — Daft McCune Walker Vice President David Locke said Klein tested a stream at Baltimore Country Club that is the conduit for city water. "He tested a portion of a stream that uses chlorinated water from the city to supplement their irrigation ponds, so I'm not surprised he didn't get good counts."

"Also, he only tested at the courses. He didn't test upstream. Plus, the courses he tested tend to be in the lowlands downstream of farming communities ... most of which are fed by hundreds and hundreds of acres of drainage areas draining agricultural fields."

Locke said his firm therefore discounted a lot of what Klein reported. "He is extremely bright and pretty much self-taught," said Howard King, program chief for recreational and commercial fisheries at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. "To a layperson, they think he [Klein] knows what he's talking about. To a scientist, he's often wrong," he said.

Klein on the attack

Continued from previous page

Klein has to do is confuse the uncertainties associated with pesticides coming from a golf course."

Klein has to do is confuse the uncertainties expressed in that publication, but added: "I tried to be as honest as I could in interpreting the data and interpreting the feedback that I got from people who knew much more about the specific part of the golf course than I do..."

Klein said he thought he did "a pretty good job in the publication making it clear that there are a lot of uncertainties associated with pesticides associated with pesticides coming from a golf course."

A SOFTENING?

Diamond Ridge's Murphy, who has worked with Klein in Save Our Streams for eight years, said, "In the beginning it was Richard's natural presumption that superintendents were bad actors. Over the years he asked questions on how you did this and that and techniques of eliminating pesticides, things like that."

"He's a long way."

Murphy said Klein and a member of the Audubon Society recently studied a stream on his course and "it is the first documented case of a golf course use accelerating water improvement."

"He's [Klein] making a living on one side of the equation. But I think he was pleasantly surprised when he did this study," Murphy said.

For his part, perhaps Klein is coming around.

"I'm impressed with all the great work the USGA (United States Golf Association) is doing, and the GCSAA (Golf Course Superintendents Association of America)...

Klein said. "Frankly, I believe pesticides are a relatively minor concern. Unfortunately, there is a big emotional reaction to them on the part of people who come to me as clients."

Does he tell his prospective clients that? He did not return repeated phone calls made to ask him that and other questions.

Read our clippings.

up to 12 weeks. And it is especially effective on perennial ryegrass turf. Because Scott has been working with TGR technology for more than 10 years, our Tech Reps offer unsurpassed experience in managing growth regulator applications. Why settle for anything less?

Your Scott Tech Rep is ready to show you how TGR Turf Enhancer can improve the playability of your golf course as part of a total turfgrass program. For more information, contact him today. Or call 1-800-543-0006.

Growing better through technology.