Due process? Try much ado about nothing, in Humble

R emember the infamous Tour 18, the golf course replicating replicas of famous golf holes laid out amid the power lines and prairie scrub of Humble, Texas? You know, the faux 13th at Pebble Beach next to the near 11th at Merion, just beyond the mock 17th at Sawgrass?

Pinehurst and Harbour Town — will test the limits of federal consumer confusion, and whether that confusion (once proved) fused? Is he standing on an abandoned oil field next to Houston replicated Amen Corner, will the Tour 18 patron become convinced swamp to his left for Calibogue Sound? When he plays the Due process? Try of Augusta National sipping a mint julep?

Letters

GATOR DIED WRONGFUL DEATH

The editor:
The article in the September issue of GolfCourse News regarding the alligator attack at the Cocoa Beach Country Club (page 5) was not accurate as to the individuals involved.

There were actually two young men who were trespassing on the golf course at 11:30 at night collecting golf balls from the lakes. They were wearing wet suits and carrying plastic grocery bags to transport the golf balls they collected.

As a result, one of the young men was seriously injured by an alligator as he was running to defend his friend who was laying on the ground in the reeds, defending his home. The gator was subsequently destroyed by the Florida Fish and Game Commission for doing what he does naturally, and the trespassers — one of whom may have permanent injury — are now facing criminal charges.

Quite rightly, the patrons of the golf course have shown a great deal more concern for the unfortunate demise of their friend Stubby the gator than they have for the intruder who caused Stubby’s unjust and severe punishment.

Dave Manning
general manager
Cocoa Beach (Fla.) CC

USGA: DON’T BARBECUE SUPERS

The letter below, issued by the U.S. Golf Association Green Section North Central Region, was sent to courses in the upper Midwest during the brutal weather pattern this summer.

To the editor:
The prolonged period of high daytime and equally high night-time temperatures has resulted in widespread damage to golf courses throughout the North Central Region of the USGA Green Section - Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana). Poa annua was hit the hardest. The purpose of this letter is to convey the wide-spread nature of this summer’s problems and the fact that, in many cases, the turf loss was beyond the control of turf managers.

It is an established agronomic fact that Poa annua is the one golf course turfgrass which is not inhibited by a cold snap during the winter cold and ice stress. These inherent weaknesses of Poa annua were seen during the winter of 1993-94 along the East Coast and now, during the summer of 1995 here.

The reasons Poa annua, and to a lesser extent bentgrass and perennial ryegrass, declined this summer are many. The catalyst was a hot summer which set records in many areas. In some areas the heat was joined by too much rainfall and yet, in other areas too little rainfall. In some cases, close mowing and/or the use of heavy roller rollers added to the package.

Once grass becomes stressed and weakened, disease problems begin to increase (brown spot, dollar and soil borne), take-all patch, summer patch, brown patch and dollar spot are all seen this summer. The heat and weakened turf made fungicial diseases of more difficult than usual. In a few cases, pesticide applications, made with well-calibrated equipment and at correct rates, added to the decline of overly stressed turf. When the snow balls rolling down the hill, it gains momentum and is almost impossible to stop. Courses with good drainage and well-built greens come through better. Poorly drained greens, tees and/or fairways, especially with high percentage of Poa annua, were hardest hit. What to do?

First of all, recognize that maintenance of dense, healthy turf during prolonged periods of heat and humidity cannot always be successful. Especially, Poa annua turf. Don’t barrel the course superintendent! Rather, understand their plight and when the weather cools, give them the support to begin a comprehensive seeding program. Where drainage is a limiting factor, defer to plan to improve them. These conditions may come again.

It will be a busy fall at most courses. Good luck! If we can assist in any way, give our office a call.

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