

The '2 Rule' rules in the maintenance business

By TERRY BUCHEN

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — "Standards of the industry" is a term we hear more and more often as people reach for goals of perfection. Golf course maintenance has its own set of standards, including several easily remembered through the "2 Rule."

Here are a few:

- The two-day rule for mowing greens is one of the better standards to rely on — as when greens are not mowed on a typical Monday, it will take two days for them to be the same firmness and speed as they were on Sunday. I have researched these findings over many years of testing with the Stimpmeter and with a prototype United States Golf Association (USGA) firmness testing device designed by Dean Knuth, formerly with the USGA. Even if the greens are double-cut on Tuesday, they still will not be the same as they were until Wednesday. The same holds true for firmness.

- After a significant rainfall and thunderstorm, extra turf growth is not experienced until two days later. The nutrients from the rain and nitrogen from the thunderstorm take two days to "kick in." A slight amount of growth is normally experienced the next day, but the second day is when more growth is noticed, especially on greens.

- When adding new sand to a bunker, the normal standards are 2 to 3 compacted inches on the slopes and 4 compacted inches on the bottom. When adding sand to the bottom of bunkers, the 2-inch rule takes effect as 6 inches of sand are needed, which will settle 2 inches down to the desired 4-inch depth over a 90- to 120-day period. On the slopes, add 1 extra inch to achieve the desired 2- to 3-inch compacted depth.

- The "2" rule also is significant when double-cutting greens since they will play much smoother and faster with a second mowing. This is witnessed on the better conditioned courses in the country as well as during amateur and professional tournaments and championships.

- When mowing greens with a triplex greensmower, the "2" rule comes into effect. Using two Whiele-type rollers on the front and rear will provide a better and lower height of cut by providing a better bed-knife angle. Two Whiele-type rollers can also be used with the same

results on fiveplex fairway mowers and utility triplex mowers. Be careful of the extra wear that can take place during stressful times of the year.

There are none-2 rules as well, such as:

- When setting the mowing height on a triplex greensmower to cut the same

height as a walk-behind greensmower, the triplex will have to be set one "notch" below the walk-behind model because of its floating head versus a fixed head. That is, 9/64 inch on the triplex mower equals 5/32 inch on a walk-behind.

- Methyl bromide can still

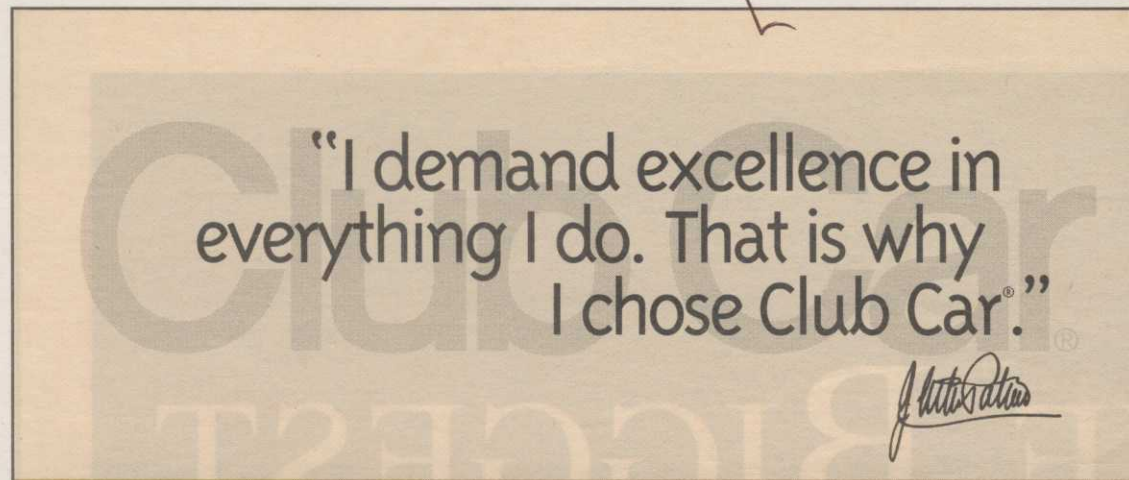
be manufactured until Dec. 31, 2000.

It is hoped that it can be sold on a de-escalating scale from 2001 until the year 2005, but this has not yet been determined and approved by the EPA and United Nations.

- The USGA Green Section agronomists are now using

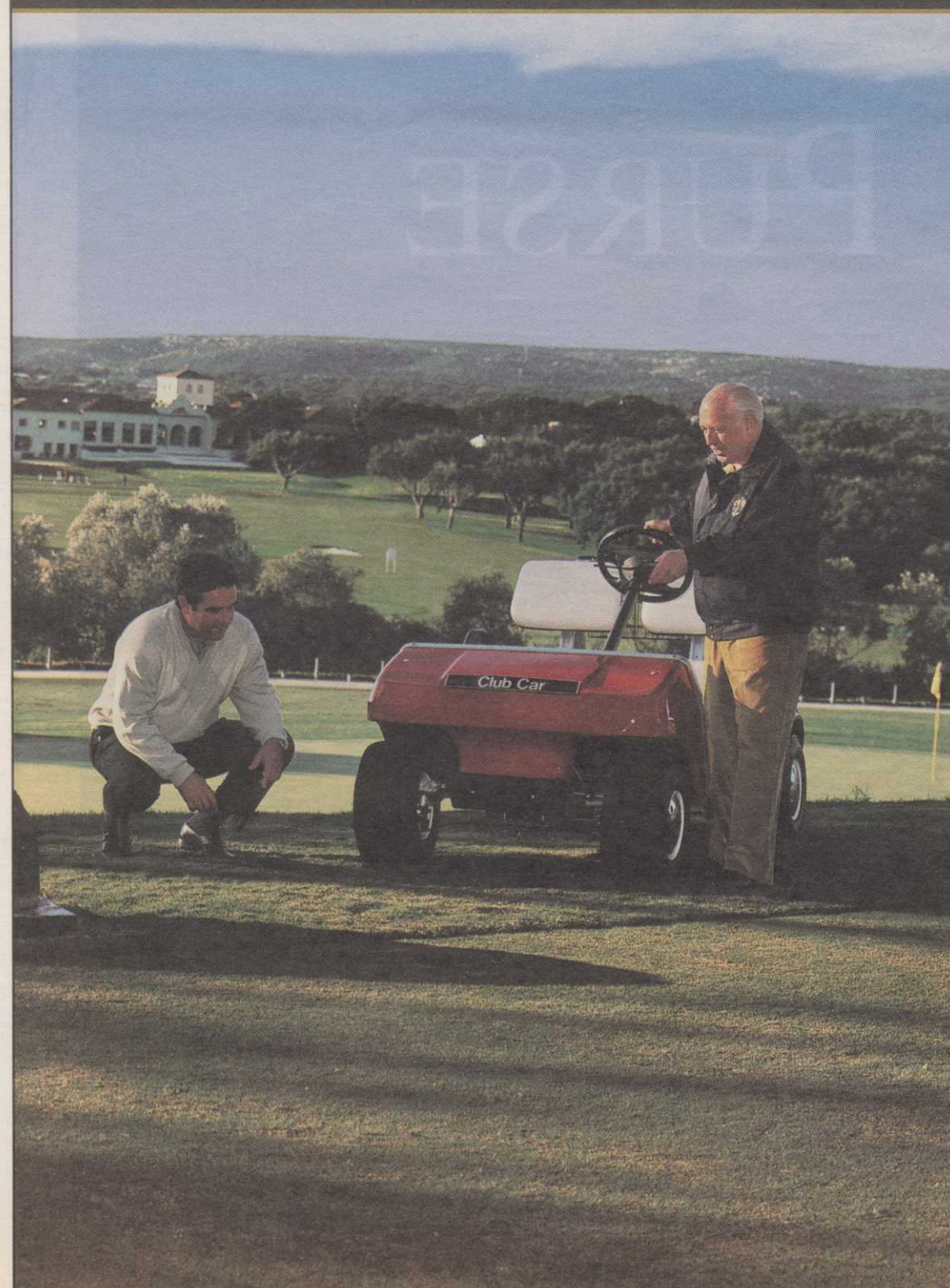
digital cameras to

further enhance their reports, which helps course officials further understand the complexities of agronomic conditions on their golf courses.



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