Golf Course Superintendents
Association of America (GCSAA)

Position Statement Regarding the Use of Alternative Footwear Options to Metal Spikes.

Stephen Potter, CGCS, Golf Course Superintendent Woodholme Country Club

Bentgrass Conversion Strategies at Woodholme
- Impetus - gray leaf spot & understanding membership
- The Process: new contours, Round-up, aeration (2x), slit seeding (various varieties and rates), drop seeding, dragging, and patience
- Higher rate - 5#/M as opposed to 2#/M — significantly better - germination, density, and Poa prevention

Stanley Zontek, Director Mid-Atlantic Region USGA Green Section

Understanding the Turfgrass Options
- There is not one single grass that does not have a list of pros and cons
- All have either disease, playability, or establishment concerns
- Research being done to improve turf varieties and their adaptability
- Each course must determine its needs and budget in order to best select a grass type

The Golf Course Association of America (GCSAA) recognizes there is considerable information establishing the benefits of alternatives to metal spikes. It is GCSAA’s position that facilities should consider requiring the use of these alternatives. GCSAA recognizes that many factors affect the decision to mandate alternatives to metal spikes. These factors may include any or all of the following:
- Design of the golf course
- Perceptions of golfers
- Quality expectations of golfers
- Region of the country
- Turfgrass species and varieties used on the golf course
- Climate
- Level of ability of golfers
- Amount of foot traffic on the golf course
- Maintenance levels and budgets
- Liability or legal issues

While it is the responsibility of each golf course to determine what policy is best for their facility, GCSAA is committed to facilitating the development of these policies through the accumulation and dissemination of information. As a result, it is in the best interest of facilities to consult with the golf course superintendent before making a decision. GCSAA will serve as a comprehensive source of information in the following areas:
- Agronomic questions
- Financial impacts
- Legal questions
- Golf course aesthetics
- Golfers’ perceptions
- Anecdotal information
- Impacts on playability

Where valid information exists in these areas, GCSAA will collect and make it available through its various resources to its members and the industry. Where information does not exist in a particular area, GCSAA will identify and encourage research to obtain this information.

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