

USGA Tour Agronomist Moraghan shares knowledge

SOUTHAMPTON, N.Y. — In preparation for the 1995 U.S. Open here at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club June 15-18, we caught up with Tim P. Moraghan of the United States Golf Association (USGA) for a Q&A session. Though he started as the USGA's championship agronomist, his role for all 13 national championships has been expanded with each passing year. Moraghan is 38 years old and holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Niagara University. To further his education, he attended the Stockbridge School of Agronomy at the University of Massachusetts and the University of Dallas, where he majored in personnel management. Prior to joining the Rules & Competitions Department headquartered at Golf House in Far Hills, N.J., Moraghan was a regional manager for American Golf Corp. in Florida; golf course superintendent/contractor at the Las Colinas Sports Club in Dallas; and associated with the Tournament Players Club at Sawgrass in Florida. Moraghan is a member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America; Texas, New Jersey and Florida golf course superintendent associations; and the American Society of Golf Course Architects. Terry Buchen, the Savvy Superintendent himself, caught up with Moraghan prior to this month's Open.

Savvy Super: What are your duties and responsibilities with Rules & Competitions?

Tim Moraghan: My primary responsibilities include: 1. golf course setup; 2. golf course preparation; 3. site selection; 4. input on architectural changes; 5. the Rules of Golf; and 6. all remaining on-site preparation.

All this work begins as soon as a contract is signed for our three Opens, two Amateurs and the remaining amateur competitions.

SS: How far in advance do you go to championship venues and how many follow-up visits do you usually accomplish?

TM: I begin my visits as soon as a contract has been signed. That can be anywhere from one to five years in advance of an event. The number of follow-up visits depends on the event and the needs of the club. For example, with the U.S. Open, I will make as many visits as necessary, even weekly, to prepare the golf course for the event.

SS: Has it helped your job being a former golf course superintendent?

TM: Yes. I have a better understanding of how difficult it is to bring all aspects of the golf course into prime condition for a major event. No one knows how hard it is unless you have been through it... I feel that my relationships with the golf course superintendents of each club are excellent. The golf course superintendent is the VIP of the event. Without their work, the golf course and the event would not be successful.

SS: Tell us about your champi-

onship specifications and do they differ at each championship site?

TM: The basic guidelines for course preparation are the same for all 13 national championships. The only difference will be the length of the golf course, the height of the primary rough, the width of the landing zones in the fairways, and the speed and firmness of the putting greens.

SS: What are the top five issues and concerns from the players during the U.S. Open Championship and how are they

typically handled by you and the Championship Committee?

TM: There are so many items to cover during the week of the event and there are so many volunteers and dedicated staff to handle these concerns. But in my opinion, the top five concerns from the players are as follows:

1. Consistency in playing conditions from the first tee to the 18th green.
2. Pace of play.
3. Access to the club, an example being a player missing a

starting time due to difficulty in getting to the golf course.

4. Accommodations for the players and their families.

5. Player services such as child care are becoming increasingly important.

SS: Tell us about the bunker maintenance philosophy. Have there been any changes?

TM: There has not been any change of philosophy for bunker maintenance. According to the Rules of Golf, a bunker is a hazard. Players are fortunate

SAVVY SUPERINTENDENT

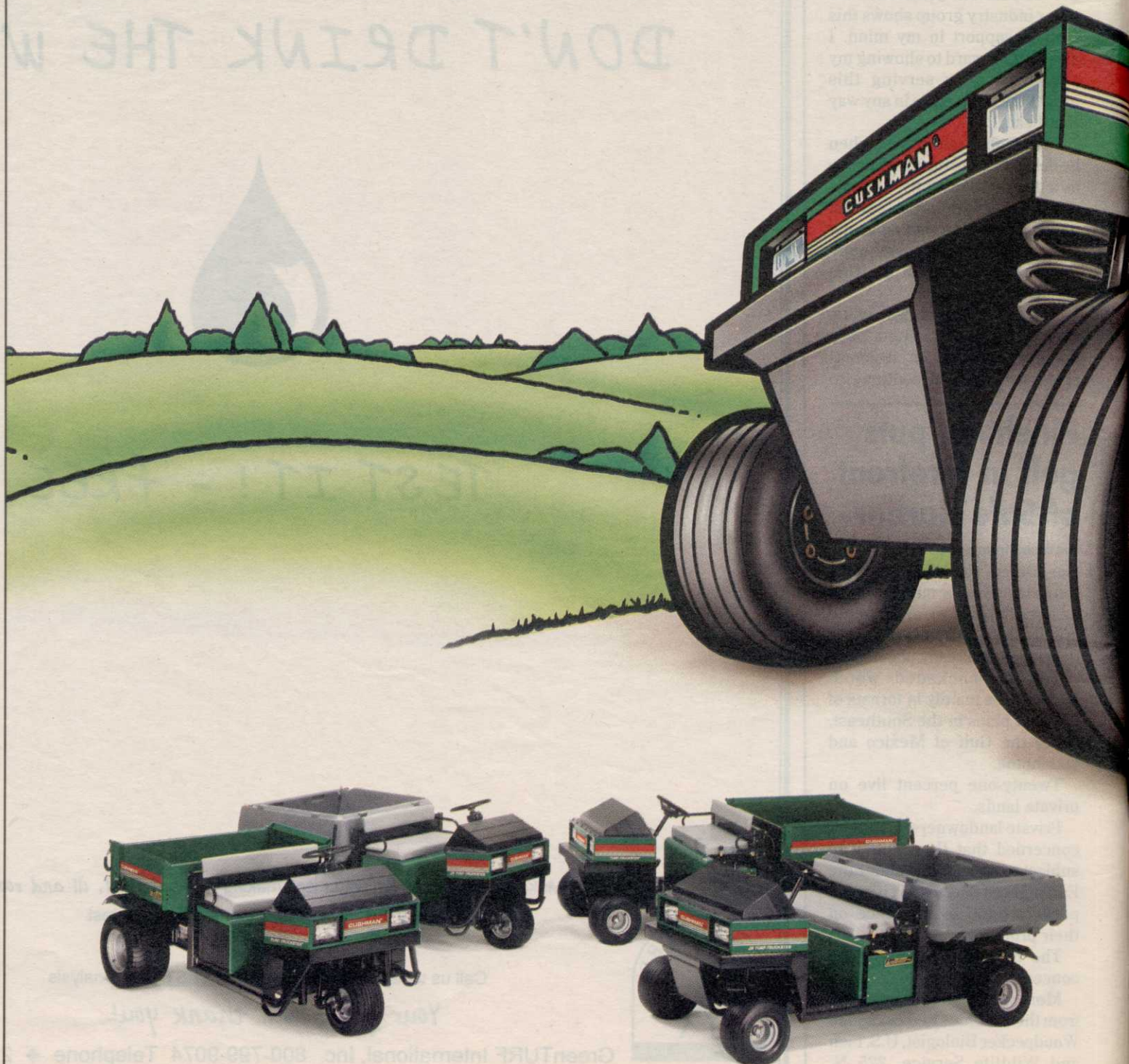


that they are raked for them during the week of the event.

SS: What is the easiest part of your job?

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Keep On



Insecticides don't rub off

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irrigation of 0.2 inches of water. The third sample was taken five hours later at the end of the day. The next day, a fourth sample was taken.

As one would expect, most of the pesticide was dislodged from the turf onto cotton cloth immediately after the application was made. Think of a small four-inch square of treated turf with which your knee may come in contact. Immediately after the pesticide

application, 0.26 percent of the chlorpyrifos would come off onto cotton cloth. This amount is equal to 1.5 micro grams of pesticide. After the light irrigation following the application, approximately 0.04 percent or 0.24 micro grams was dislodged. The amount dislodged at the end of the day was 0.02 percent or 0.11 micro grams, and 24 hours later, no chlorpyrifos was detected at all.

It should be noted that the amount of pesticide dislodged is a very, very small amount. For example, the chlorpyrifos was applied at the label rate of 0.75 ounces of active ingredient per

1000 square feet or 0.057 grams of active ingredient per square meter, which is the same as 57,000 micro grams per square meter. The maximum amount dislodged immediately after application was 1.5 micro grams or 0.26 percent of the total amount applied. To put 1.5 micro grams into perspective, consider that a small paper packet of Sweet'n Low weighs about one gram or the equivalent of one million (1,000,000) micro grams. How small is a buck and a half compared to a million dollars?

At the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, dislodgeable residues were determined

by vigorously wiping a one square foot area of pesticide treated turf with a piece of moist cheese-cloth to remove pesticide residues. The samples were taken 15 minutes, three hours, and eight hours after application on the first day; and at noon on all other sampling days during the studies.

The largest amount of dislodgeable residue for MCPP was measured 15 minutes after application and amounted to less than 1 percent of the total amount applied. At three hours after application, when the leaf was dry, residues had dissipated to only 0.14

percent of the total application.

Fifteen minutes after application, dislodgeable residue found for triadimefon (Bayleton) was 2.4 percent of the total amount of applied product. Residue levels decreased to about 1 percent at three hours after application. As with MCPP, dislodgeable residues were substantially reduced once the spray solution had dried.

Irrigation following the isazofos (Triumph) application reduced dislodgeable residues from 1.8 percent of the application when measured 15 minutes after application to almost none (0.01 percent) three hours later. Immediate post-application irrigation of trichlorfon (Proxol) provided a rapid decline in dislodgeable residues similar to that observed with isazofos. Trichlorfon applied without irrigation resulted in dislodgeable residue levels four times higher than for the same pesticide treatment receiving a light irrigation after application.

Be sure to water-in pesticides immediately after application if the label says to do so. Light applications of water move the pesticide deeper into the turf where it can bind to thatch and soil. Allowing the turf to dry thoroughly before golfers use the area will further reduce the amount of pesticide that will rub off the leaves.

Dr. Michael Kenna is director of Green Section research for the United States Golf Association. He works out of Stillwater, Okla.

CORRECTION

The headline for the May *Off the Record* column erroneously stated fungicides were found in runoff when applied before a heavy rain. The study was performed on three herbicides — 2,4-D, mecoprop and dicamba.

Moraghan

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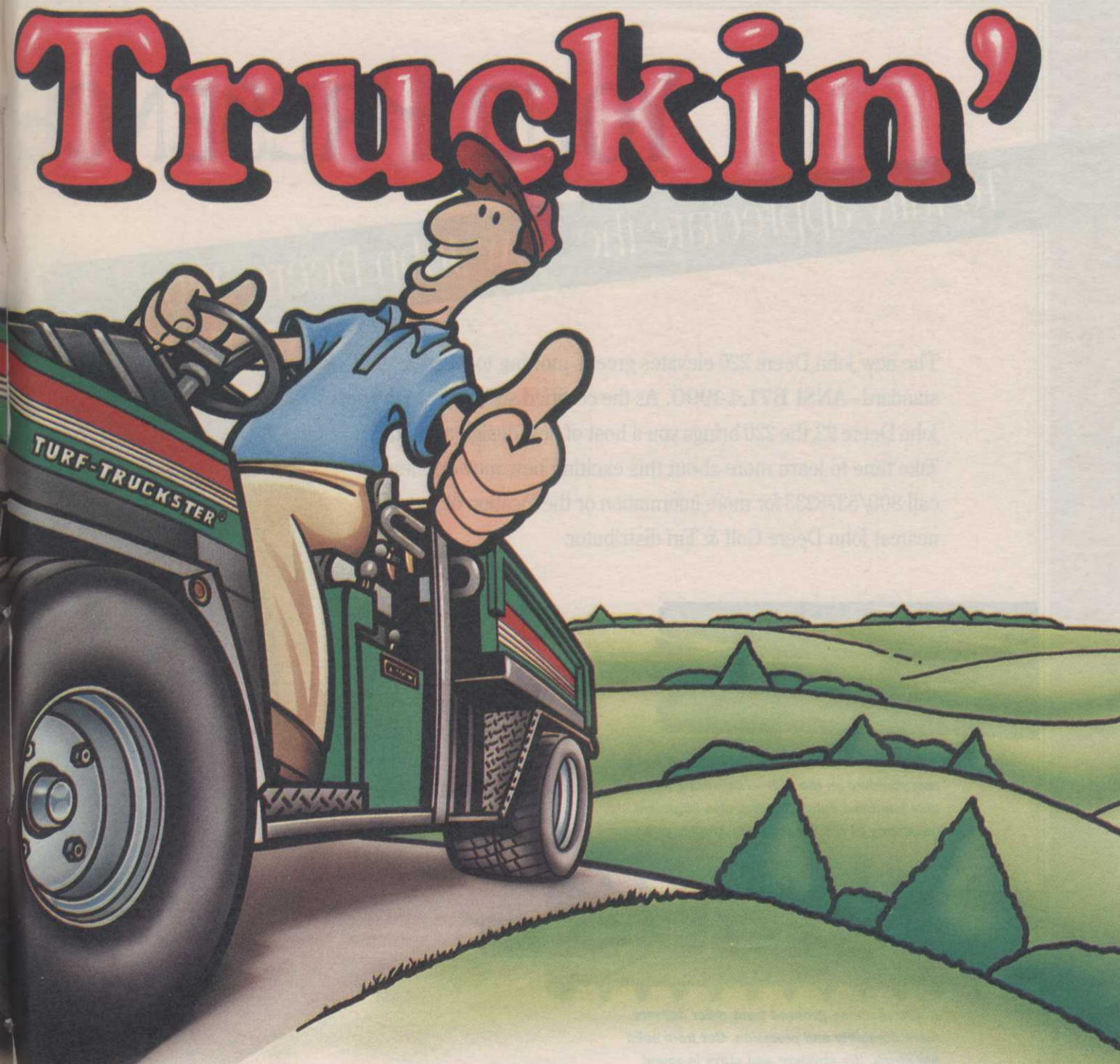
TM: Working with golf course superintendents such as Bill Spence from The Country Club, Patty Knaggs from Hazeltine National Golf Club, Mark Kuhns from Oakmont Country Club and Paul Latshaw from Congressional Country Club. They are individuals who are so meticulous and professional that their job is done well before the event arrives and it makes it very easy on me.

SS: How involved do you get with David Eger, senior director, Rules & Competition, regarding golf course setup during any of the championships?

TM: I work very closely with David Eger in all areas of preparation for each event. I have David's proxy on all golf course-related decisions.

SS: Tell us a funny story about something that happened during any one of the USGA Championships.

TM: Without going into too much detail, it involved an assistant golf course superintendent, several volunteers and a television tower.



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