

Tips abound at Golf Course Expo

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tenure costs courses a lot of money."

Attendees at the Expo's Maintenance Track received a bevy of suggestions and comments from Moore and Green Section colleagues Stan Zontek, director of the Mid-Atlantic Region, and John Foy, director of the Florida Region. Among them:

- "If we could convince golfers that a 1/4-inch height of cut is all right, we could reduce fertilizer and pesticide use by 30 to 50 percent overnight," Moore said.

- "Every golf course has an indicator green — one that sits low, in the shade, with no air movement," Zontek said. "That's where brown patch, Pythium, general wilt, all sorts of disease and pests strike. Every morning, check your indicator green and you'll know what to look for elsewhere."

- "Typical to Florida is the golf course being manicured right down to the bank of a pure water body," Foy said. "We have to stop this. Use buffer strips, shoreline plantings, a 4-inch cut on the rough to filter water. And establish no-spray zones."

- Reduce pesticide use by increasing air movement. "Weak light means weak grass," Moore said. "No air movement, and you have no chance. Remove the trees and add electricity (with fans) if you have to."

- "What looks good design-wise can be a disaster agronomically," Zontek said. "It's a real battle between aesthetics and agronomy. I suggest most golf courses can remove 10 to 20 percent of their trees. They are too close to the greens, tees and bunkers."

"We need to find a balance between the needs of the golf course and what is pretty. For the best golf course you need air, water and sunlight."

- Never exceed one-half pound of nitrogen application per 1,000 square feet, Foy said. Fertigation is a very useful tool, "but watch out where the spray is going," Foy said, showing a slide in which spray went into a body of water.

- Near trees, use solid pipe, not perforated. "You'd be amazed how far tree roots go and what damage they do filling up pipes, etc.," Zontek advised.

- Try more spot treating. "For instance, spot treat for nematodes rather than wall-to-wall, because you don't have the problem everywhere," Foy suggested. "This saves money and could prevent an environmental nightmare."

- When cutting tree roots, Zontek said, "Trench in both directions and the tree root won't re-graft. Do it just once and it can."

- Superintendents used to spray bunkers to kill mole crickets. "Do not do that!" Foy emphasized.

Moore pointed to four areas where golf courses are apt to do environmental damage: wash racks and pads; pesticide storage; fuel storage; and crew education.

He suggested:

- Blow-cleaning equipment, thereby keeping clippings out of sewers.

- Installing pesticide storage buildings, which can be bought for \$50.

- Above-ground storage tanks are a big advantage although, he said, they are "fading fast. The public perception is that ugly pesticide-application equipment means danger."

- Aggressively advancing crew education.

Study focuses on spike impact on surface, compaction

AMHERST, Mass. — With the advent of debate over "spiked-up" golf greens from spiked shoes, University of Massachusetts Turf Program Director William Torello is studying a number of variables including surface quality and compaction.

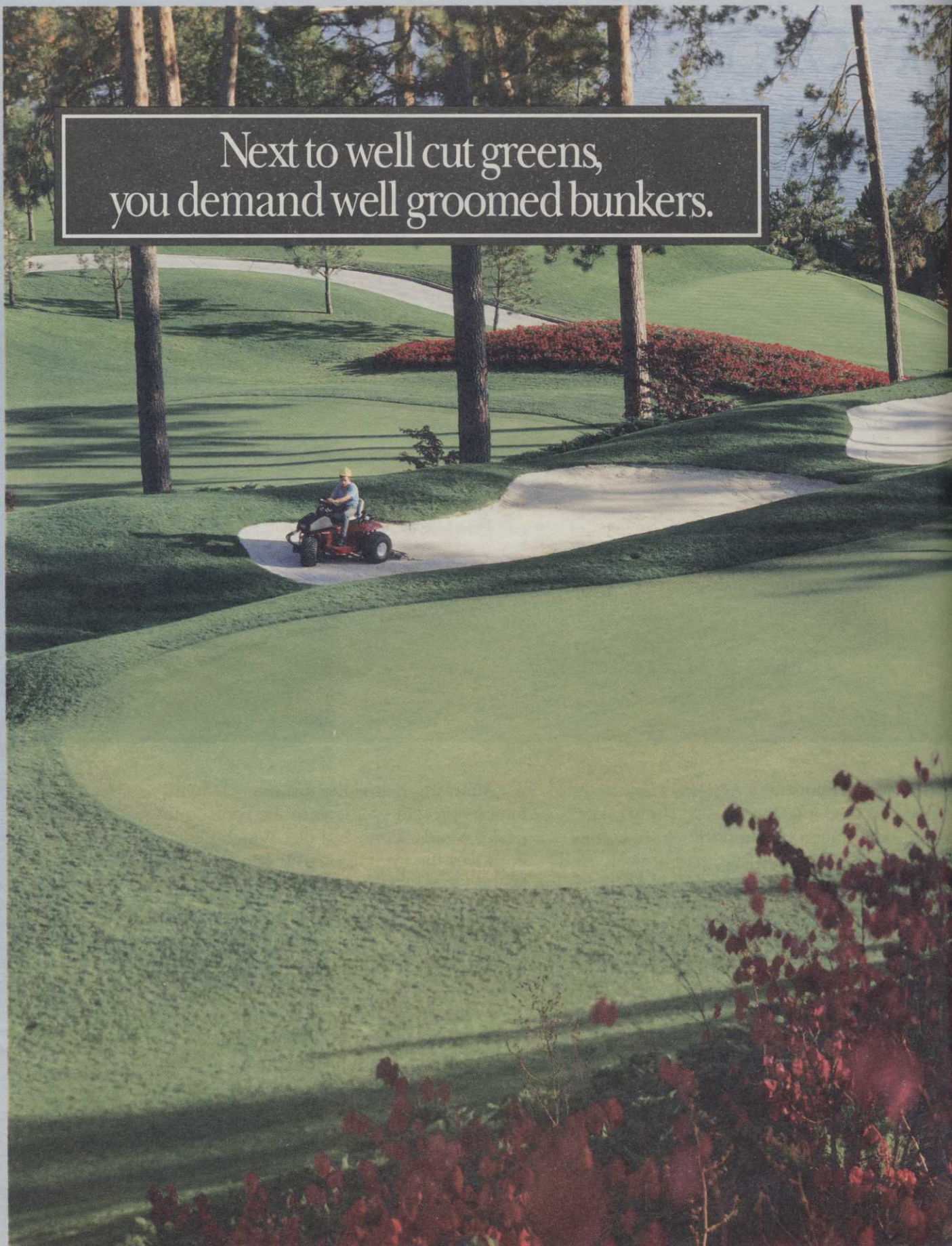
Turf Diagnostics & Design of Olathe, Kan., is involved in the Titleist-funded study, which began in October at the UMass National Turf Evaluation Plots. Turf Diagnostic will define the soil physics of the plots and apply the newly developed STRIPE (Sports Turf Rebound & Impact Performance Evaluation) Program to assess the compaction potential of various spike and non-spike systems.



Stephen McWilliams, president and CEO of Turf Diagnostics, said: "Our concern is the impact on the long-term agronomic operation of golf greens. In my opinion, the long-term cost-benefit-agronomic performance of the spikeless technology needs further examination to deserve the industry's endorsement."

The Titleist research, in part, is needed to determine that the new technology is not pushing the turf toward dysfunction due to surface compaction, McWilliams said. "We will always have the disruption of golf green surface uniformity from foot traffic, whether it is from spikeless depressions or surface eruptions from spikes," he said.

Next to well cut greens,
you demand well groomed bunkers.



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