

# Golfers' questions are 'an opportunity'

By TERRY BUCHEN

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — Golfers have questions, superintendents have answers!

It is always fun talking "golf course maintenance" with the players. It makes for good public relations and provides answers to questions of a technical nature from an expert. Many friendly debates, between golfers and superintendents, concern the way that a sand bunker is supposed to be maintained. That is, should the bunker be maintained in the traditional way as a hazard, or the way many are maintained today: on the firm side. It seems the more time goes on, the firmer golfers want sand bunkers maintained. The reason? To make playing conditions as easy as possible.

Another popular question asked of supers is how should a fairway divot be replaced. Supers explain the obvious: that if roots and soil are still attached, replace it properly; if not, do not. An interesting strategy that really works is to tell the golfer to use a wooden golf tee(s) to hold the divot in place so it will not be knocked out from the fairway mower or by crows, being the curious birds that they are.

Many superintendents mention this in their course newsletters, further explaining this excellent idea. In the United Kingdom, greenkeepers recommend "divot anchors" that are made of plastic and are used with the same principal as a wooden golf tee holding the divot in place. They are given away in the golf shop and golfers take a handful and put them to good use.

How hole locations are determined always causes a lively discussion. The biggest question is, is a hole location "illegal"? That is, how far can the cup be from the edge; how far should it be from the beginning or end of a slope, and so on.

One of the best ways to explain this dilemma is to refer golfers to the USGA Recommendations Regarding Hole Locations, which offer only recommendations, not anything from the Rules of Golf, which many supers put in their monthly newsletter column as well.

Another interesting frequent question is whether a bunker rake, used by golfers, should be placed "inside" or "outside" of a bunker. Again, there is no Rule, but the USGA recommends that bunker rakes be placed outside of the bunkers laying down as close to the bunker as possible without causing any undue interference with golf balls.

In closing, golfers like to ask

many questions about how to improve their home lawns and many supers answer in person and then follow it up with a letter of recommendation to further help them with their lawn. During the face-to-face discussions, many supers

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take the opportunity to explain the hardest part of growing grass on a golf course anywhere in the country, which are usually: 1. Shade; 2. Traffic; 3. Air Movement; 4. Budget Limitations; 5. Drainage, et.al.

ENVIROTRON CLASSIC

## Tournament raises \$45K for research

HOMOSSA SPRINGS, Fla. — The 5th annual Envirotron Golf Classic, held April 21 at World Woods Golf Resort here, raised \$45,000 for the Envirotron Research Laboratory at the University of Florida. Barbaron, Inc. was the highest-level sponsor with a donation of \$12,500. The Envirotron is a 3,100-square-foot field lab that includes a greenhouse, four climate-controlled glass houses and two walk-in growth chambers designed to study and develop new technology on the relationship of turfgrass with biological, environmental and cultural factors.

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