

Bell suggests settling for less-than-perfect course conditions

By MARK LESLIE

LAS VEGAS — Saying that “in a hot-house maybe you can get perfection,” U.S. Golf Association (USGA) President Judy Bell hailed “the charm” of golf courses and the superintendents who maintain them.

Speaking at a press conference at the International Golf Course Conference and Show here, Bell said the USGA and other organizations should educate golfers to see the beauty in the natural versus the unnaturally perfect.

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— Judy Bell
president, USGA

“If we want perfect,” she said, “we can just stay at home and putt on a rug.”

“I quite thought Shinnecock was perfect because it wasn’t quite perfect and around

the edges of the bunkers. That’s why it was so good... One of the charms of our game is, it isn’t like basketball or football, where the field is the same... Our playing field is different every time we play. Golf courses are natural, not contrived. They look like they belong — and that is an art, retaining the charm of the game.”

Bell paraphrased golfing great Byron Nelson, who said it is not the golf balls or equipment that has changed the game as much as the golf courses.

“That has been the variable,” she said.

Joining Bell at the podium, outgoing Golf Course Superintendents Association of America President Bruce Williams said: “We strive for a high level of perfection to achieve what people expect of us. If you don’t, the next person will...”

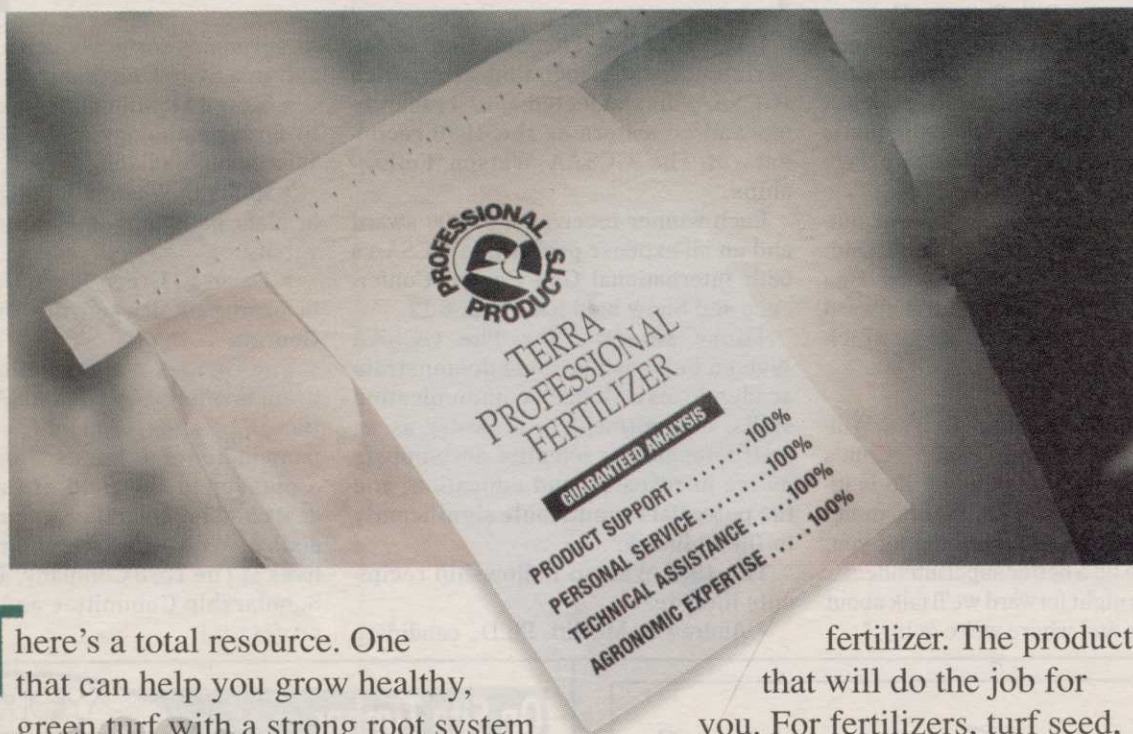
“I think we’ve peaked technologically. There will be more tools out there, but I don’t think we can take the mowing and care of turf any higher...”

Hesitating, Williams added, “Then, again, we probably said the same thing 20 or 30 years ago. But right now we’re mowing in the one-thousandths of an inch.”

Bell predicted that 10 to 15 years from now superintendents’ staffs will be much better educated and trained.

She added: “I’d like to see superintendents have more identity [with the public], what they do and how unusual their job is. It’s like throwing darts, in a way, because you don’t know what the weather, etc. holds. And they have to do their job with limited resources. Using all this technology ... is translating that and retaining the simplistic side of the game.”

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Suess wins

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team winners.

Other tournament winners included:

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Gross: William Hanna, Royal Brunei Golf and Country Club, Jerudong Park, Brunei
Net: Scott Young, Palos Verdes Golf Club, Palos Verdes Estates, Calif.

First Flight

Gross: Kevin Downing, CGCS, Stuart, Fla., Willoughby Golf Club, Inc.
Net: Ross O’Fee, CGCS, Country Club of Salt Lake City, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Second Flight

Gross: D. Scott Wagner, Leisure World of Maryland, Silver Spring, Md.
Net: Donald LaPierre, Elks Country Club, Muncie, Ind.

Third Flight

Gross: Randy Hisey, City of Albuquerque, Albuquerque, N.M.
Net: Ken Flisek, The Club at Nevillewood, Nevillewood, Pa.

Fourth Flight

Gross: Tim Cann, CGCS, Harbor Ridge Yacht and Country Club, Palm City, Fla.
Net: Gregg Stanley, CGCS, Hudson National Golf Club, Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.

Fifth Flight

Gross: Brian Chalifoux, Fort Wayne Country Club, Wilmington, Del.
Net: Bob Land, Oconee Country Club, Seneca, S.C.

Sixth Flight

Gross: S. Daniel Pierson, CGCS, Wilmington Country Club, Wilmington, Del.
Net: Tim Hatfield, Willow Ponde Golf Club, Rantoul, Ill.

Seventh Flight

Gross: John Rodriguez, Chaparral Country Club, Palm Desert, Calif.
Net: Alan Jarvis, Belvedere Plantation Country Club, Hampstead, N.C.

Eighth Flight

Gross: Mark Esoda, CGCS, Atlanta Country Club, Marietta, Ga.
Net: Trevor Oxtoby, Colony Club Gutenhof, Himberg, Vienna, Austria

Senior I Flight

Gross: James Fulwider, CGCS, Century Country Club, Purchase, N.Y.
Net: Elmer Stone, Longview Country Club, Georgetown, Ky.

Senior II Flight

Gross: Ted Martinez, Odessa Country Club, Odessa, Texas
Net: Edward Mena, Shadow Ridge Golf Club, Vista, Calif.

Super Senior Flight

Gross: E.P. Bengfort, CGCS, Denison Golf and Country Club, Denison, Iowa
Net: Paul Voykin, Briarwood Country Club, Deerfield, Ill.

Affiliates Flight

Gross: Jesse Vance Reins III, CGCS, Southern Agri Insecticides, Wilkesboro, N.C.
Net: Milton Taylor, Island Park Golf Course, Salt Lake City, Utah