



## New cry: Hang up and drive!

Imagine, if you will (with me and Rod Serling), a land beyond sight and sound... Golfers on a golf course actually scurrying along... hitting the ball as soon as they get to it, with no closest-to regulations... not plumb-bobbing each putt for a full 60 seconds... not romping through the woods looking endlessly for a lost ball while the next foursome waits... Look closely with me. Do you see in the woods — yes, there — a sniper up in a tree!



Mark Leslie  
editor

OK, I know it's not reality. But I wonder if any superintendent, grounds crew member, or general manager — watching play creep along on their course — ever envisioned a sniper every few holes. Slow down too much and those snipers will "urge" golfers along with a potshot. Knowing that a B-B (not a bullet, please) to the backside might await them if they stayed too long over a shot, might take care of the slow-play problem, don't you think?

But it also might discourage repeat play as well. So people try this way and that way to speed up slow play — a growing nemesis to the industry. National Golf Foundation studies confirm that slow play is among the great distresses of golfers.

And now an instrument that has been quite outside of golf has invaded fairways and added to slow play: cellular phones. What to do? The sniper on your 2nd fairway could blast it out of the hands of the offending golfer. But if you're not into that remedy, how about a simple "No Cell Phones" sign, like the universal circle with the slash through it?

Draw a little cell phone drawing in the middle of the circle and the message is clear: This golf course is for golf, not telephone conferences. Tell the golfers: "Go ahead, take your phone with you, but just for emergencies — like your partner having a heart attack, or your expectant wife calling when she goes into labor. Otherwise, cell calls are forbidden!"

We realize slow play is a mammoth problem — too much, perhaps, to conquer all at once. But this would be a quick and easy way to remove this particular nail in the coffin.

So let's hear the cry from every golf course: "Hang up and drive!"



## Carolina turf groups help distressed

Hurricane Floyd is gone but not forgotten in the Carolinas. Many courses closed, some for almost a month, due to the winds and subsequent rains (see story, page 1). But as tough as that was for the golf industry, it pales next to the suffering of individual Carolinians who lost relatives, friends and personal property.

Two of the Carolinas' major golf organizations realized the personal difficulties faced by those working in the area's golf industry and rushed to their assistance.

In late September, the 2,100-member Turfgrass Council of North Carolina and the 1,300-member Carolina Golf Course Superintendents Association jointly funded a \$50,000 humanitarian aid fund to cover personal losses suffered by their members and their members' employees. The two groups indicated they will seek additional contributions from their members.

Those eligible for assistance include golf course superintendents and their staffs. The direct grants are limited to \$1,000 per person.

"The people who were affected the most just haven't had time to let us know what's going on," said Turfgrass Council Director Gene Maples, when asked how many people were expected to take advantage of the program. "We need to know."

Those needing assistance can obtain the one-page application form by calling the Turfgrass Council of North Carolina at 910-695-1333, or the Carolina Golf Course Superintendents Association at 800-476-4272.

"We don't see ourselves offering aid to businesses themselves," Maples said. "But I have received offers from a number of volunteers saying they would go wherever and do whatever is required at someone's home or golf course."

As for the area's golf courses, Maples said there had been no reports of catastrophic destruction to golf course turf. Most of the flood waters were rising rather than rushing, meaning little erosion was taking place. The flooding has also deposited little silt or mud, Maples added. That left long-term submersion of turfgrass as the major concern of golf course operators.

"People have called to find out how long their grass will live underwater," Maples said. "Generally that's not a problem with bentgrass or Bermudagrass. Centipedegrass is a whole other story, although there is little centipedegrass on golf courses."

Most of the flood damage occurred in the eastern third of North Carolina, Maples said. "It covered at least a dozen counties," he added, "running through the Rocky Mount area, Smithfield, Goldsboro, Clinton, down to Wilmington and points east."

"Anything east of Interstate 95 from Myrtle Beach, S.C., north through all of North Carolina is an ecological disaster," said Carolina GCSA Director Chuck Borman.



Peter Blais  
managing editor

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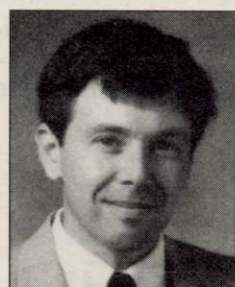
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## Meeting the challenges of golf course development

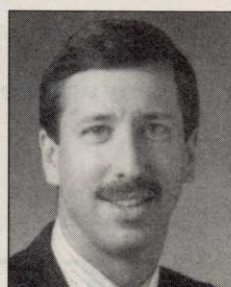
By FRANK J. GETCHELL  
and WILLIAM K. BECKMAN

Whether you personally agree with Mark Twain's view of golf as "a good walk spoiled," or count yourself among the growing number of avid golfers for whom there is nothing finer than playing 18 holes on a sunny day, one thing is certain: developing a golf course is more challenging than ever. The approval process is becoming lengthier as regulatory agencies and the public require more detailed assurances that a new golf course will not adversely impact surface and groundwater systems and the environment overall. But developers can minimize delays and other problems by addressing water and other environmental issues early in the planning process.

One of the major issues is water allocation and public acceptance of the proposed diversion. In the past, if water were drawn



Frank Getchell



William Beckman

from a surface-water source, planning boards typically were not concerned about potential adverse impact on groundwater, and vice versa. But as awareness has grown of the complex nature of hydrologic systems, developers today must evaluate the potential impact of a new golf course on the quantity and quality of both surface and groundwater — whatever their source.

As a result, it may take one to two years to obtain a water-allocation permit, depending on what state the course is located in. This

schedule can be extended due to local planning board approvals, which may be contingent upon receipt of a state permit.

### WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The availability of an adequate supply of potable water for a golf course is of minimal concern in most regions. Instead, irrigation water supply and water resource management are key concerns. Even after the turf-growing period, water consumption for golf course irrigation is significant. Peak irrigation demand tends to coincide with the peak period for community water supply use, as well, and the season when aquifer recharge and surface water flow are at their minimum.

Continued on page 33

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