



Organic management plan offers best results

To the Editor,

Here at Lahontan Golf Club, we strive to be 100 percent organic through sustainable agriculture, by feeding the soil, not the plant ("Organic golf activists score major victory" GCN April 2002 and "The time for organic golf has arrived" GCN May 2002).

Our results have provided exceptional turf conditions, however, we realize that the definition of organic vs. inorganic can be subjective and is open to discussion. Synthetic vs. organic is easy to understand, but if a golf course ever applies "organics" to the course, it could still result in leaching and runoff of phosphorous and nitrogen, requiring addi-

tional best management practices and mitigation to avoid contamination of waterways. Therefore, through all of this, management is pivotal to success, even if the course is organic.

I think Neal Lewis hits the point on the head by describing an "Organic Management Plan." That implies the use of non-synthetic fertilizers coupled with a management plan that understands the agriculture of turf grass wholly and holistically."

Take care,
Martyn Hoffmann
DMB/Highlands Group, LLC
Truckee, Calif.

Moss article covered bases

Editor's note: The following is contributor Kevin Ross' response to Neil Goldberg's letter in last month's issue that raised several questions about Ross' article "Moss hits Colorado hard, more research needed" (GCN April 2002).

To the Editor,

I would like to address a few issues from Neil Goldberg's response and offer additional information concerning the Colorado moss symposium.

As far as the Ultra Dawn issue, I stated

that Ultra Dawn gave the most consistent results, which is absolutely correct. The Oregon State study is the only study that had poor results using Ultra Dawn. However, their technique used Ultra Dawn as a broadcast application through a boom sprayer and not a drench application. It is widely believed that the broadcast application was the reason for the ineffectiveness. In Frank Dobie's Moss Network (cited in Goldberg's letter), Ultra Dawn was determined as the most effective control for moss. As far as the discoloration issue, the research shows that only slight discoloring happens with temperatures above 80 degrees. This is consistent with most all products, including Terracyte.

On the subject of research, I did mention Dr. Frank Rossi at Cornell University as a site where independently funded research was taking place. Rossi's conclusions to date showed Junction ranked first and Terracyte ranked second in his trials to control moss. Neither of these products are a one-time fix for moss and neither provided 100 percent control.

Concerning Terracyte, the article did indicate that Terracyte was one of the

potential products that looked promising. I also stated, as did Dr. Koski, and Matt Nelson, USGA, at the symposium, that more research is certainly needed. As mentioned above, Terracyte has only been tested in university research by Dr. Rossi, with quantifiable results.

The climatic conditions in Colorado are certainly much different than that of Ithaca, N.Y. It appears there will be moss research conducted at Colorado State University, led by Dr. Koski, starting this season. This research will be sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association.

The purpose of the article was to call attention to a problem that requires additional research to find a solution. I interviewed many superintendents at the symposium, and most all stated they went home more confused than when they arrived. This should tell everyone something concerning moss.

Let's hope that we do find a cure-all for moss, no matter what product it is, and no matter who makes it.

Best regards,
Kevin J. Ross, CGCS
The Country Club of the Rockies
Edwards, Colo.

GCN NEWS POLL:

What impact will advancements in golf ball and golf club technology have on the golf course industry?

❖ "Whenever one is able to improve the average golfer's performance, it will raise the level of excitement about our game. We do need to be certain that we make the marketplace aware of the fact that there are rules that govern our play, and as long as we remain in the context of the rules we will all benefit."

— Jeremy P. Leon, chief operating officer, Royce Brook Golf Club, Hillsborough, N.J.

❖ "Overall, I predict minimal impact. The USGA has limited initial velocity of the ball (for a set club head speed) for 20-something years. I doubt that dimple patterns (aerodynamics) can add much more.

The biggest increase in length has been and will be clubs, particularly in the hands of bigger, stronger, more dedicated, and therefore more talented, players. So what if a few professionals and talented young amateurs are able to hit the ball farther? If we don't make new courses significantly wider, that length will ultimately translate into less accuracy and curb itself. The vast majority of us baby boomers are going to lose distance and we will be just fine playing enjoyable and strategically stimulating courses that are of the same dimensions as today."

— Mike Dasher, member, American Society of Golf Course Architects, Dasher Golf Design, Orlando, Fla.

❖ "Improved technology, although a positive influence in most fields, is not necessarily the answer for golf. Technological advances tend to make the current state obsolete, thus

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Uihlein: Golf ball not to blame

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Woods stands 6 feet 2 inches tall, weighs 180 pounds and can bench press in excess of 270 pounds.

Today's chiseled professional athlete who plays on the U.S. PGA Tour is using longer, lighter drivers with oversize clubheads featuring faces that trampoline at impact. The golf ball does not act alone, conspiracy theories notwithstanding.

NEWER COURSES WOULD BE A BETTER TEST

The U.S. PGA Tour plays 44 events per year. Since 1960 the USGA Men's Open has been played at 20 different courses. If it is the professional game that we are concerned about and this involves, at best, only 60 to 70 courses annually, why is there a debate that 16,000 golf courses are at risk due to the advances in the golf equipment technology?

In 1960 there were 6,000 golf courses in the United States. Today, there are more than 16,000. Over the past 42 years, more than 10,000 golf courses have been constructed and opened. Since these golf courses have been built anticipating the evolution of technology, why have only two (Bellerive in 1964 and Hazeltine in 1970) been selected to host a USGA Men's Open? Doesn't it seem logical that a modern course would be the best test of the modern player and the modern power game?

Continuing with the assumption contemporary designs anticipated the arrival of today's power game, why have we not considered selecting contemporary sites to host a USGA Men's Open? For example why not consider staging an event at Pumpkin Ridge GC or Bandon Dunes GC in Oregon, Double Eagle GC in Ohio,

Bulle Rock GC in Maryland, or Whistling Straits in Wisconsin?

Why is it that courses designed by Pete Dye and used by the PGA Tour (TPC Sawgrass and PGA West) hold up so well as contemporary challenges for today's professional golfers, but not one of Mr. Dye's venues ever has been selected by the USGA to host one of its men's championships?

And why is it that we only hear from player/architects such as Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and Greg Norman concerning "limited flight" golf balls and a "one ball fits all" solution, but we do not hear from PGA Tour commissioner Finchem or players such as Tiger Woods, David Duval, Phil Mickelson or Davis Love on the subject?

After all, it is the equipment used by the contemporary PGA Tour players where the crusaders are demanding change.

Former USGA technical director

Frank Thomas states that we should not worry about major distance changes in the future because the laws of physics will continue to prevail. Why is his research and viewpoint (www.franklygolf.com) being ignored?

Each and every equipment rule in place has resulted from a working give and take relationship between the game's rulers (the USGA and the R&A) and those who are ruled (the golf equipment manufacturers). We have ideas about the direction of golf equipment-related issues. Unfortunately, with political white papers and a blatant media bias, the innocent golf ball has already been found guilty of crimes against the game. This situation makes any attempt at discussing where we go from here ineffective.

Walter Uihlein is the president and chief executive officer of the Acushnet Co.

A line in the sand

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safety reasons then construction, growth and maintenance costs increase up to 17 percent. How many developers will be discouraged from including a golf course in their future projects if acreage requirements continue to escalate?

Wally Uihlein's comment recently that the golf industry is flat and "mired in the same recession as the rest of the U.S." is true, but the primary problem is cost. It is a simple equation. The farther players can hit the ball, the more length and width we need for safe and enjoyable golf courses. This additional acreage means more development costs and greater maintenance budgets. These additional expenses are most likely going to be passed on to the golfer in the form of higher greens fees.

We are not attempting to roll back the clock on the game. We just want to keep it affordable so golfers of all ages can enjoy it. Making golf more expensive, time consuming, and more intimidating is not the way to grow participation rates.

Damian Pascuzzo is the president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects and is a partner in Graves & Pascuzzo, Ltd., a golf course design and development firm in El Dorado Hills, Calif.

We want to hear from you

Letters to the editor are an integral part of GCN, so let your voice be heard. Send all correspondence to:

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