

## Grip It and Rip It

The signature hole on the South Course of Grand Cypress GC in Orlando stretches out before golfers like a lion unwinding his muscles after a long nap. The long 543-yard, par 5 is marked by grass mounds on the left side and water on the right. Bunkers guard what director of golf course maintenance Tom Alex calls "a fairly sizable green." As if that weren't enough, the water also snakes its way in front of the green.

Sounds intimidating, doesn't it?

"It's really not as hard as it would appear at first glance," Alex says. "It's a matter of playing it smart and using the right strategy to get you home."

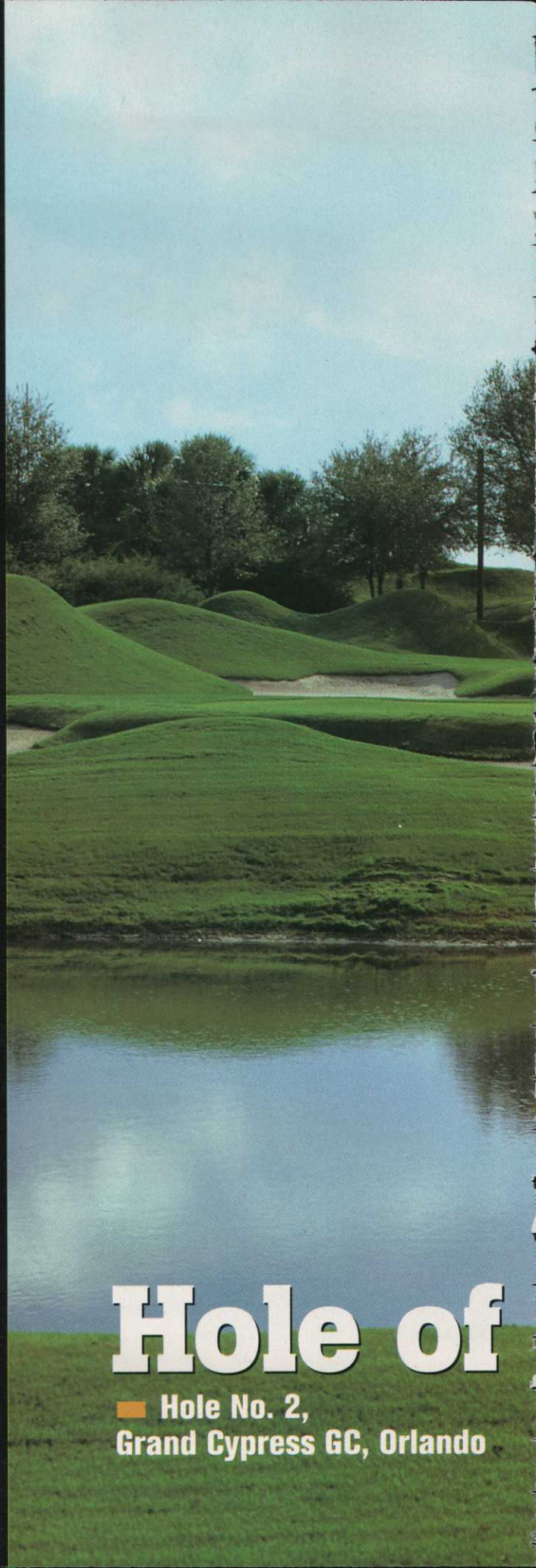
Jack Nicklaus and his associates designed Grand Cypress Golf Club in Orlando in 1983, and the No. 2 hole on the South Course has remained true to their vision of creating challenging – but playable – holes. For big hitters – and Alex emphasizes big hitters – there is the possibility of reaching the green in two. For mere mortals, Alex suggests two other ways to play the hole: hit your ball (or balls) into the water that wends up the right side of the fairway and eventually give up; or drive, hit a three wood and then lay up for an iron shot 100 yards from the green.

But the hole doesn't pose challenges only for golfers. Nicklaus' design behind the green consists of steep slopes to lead golfers over a bridge to the next tee. While the visual effect is stunning, Alex says it forces his crews to do handwork around the bunkers with a fly mower.

"There's just no easy way to mow around those, so the bunker faces have to be done by hand," Alex says. "That's the most challenging maintenance issue we have to deal with."

The fairway soil, which changes from heavy clay to sugar sand halfway through the hole, also presents a test of the course's irrigation system. Alex says that because of the flexibility he has with his irrigation system, the courses can adjust to the different soils to prevent overwatering.

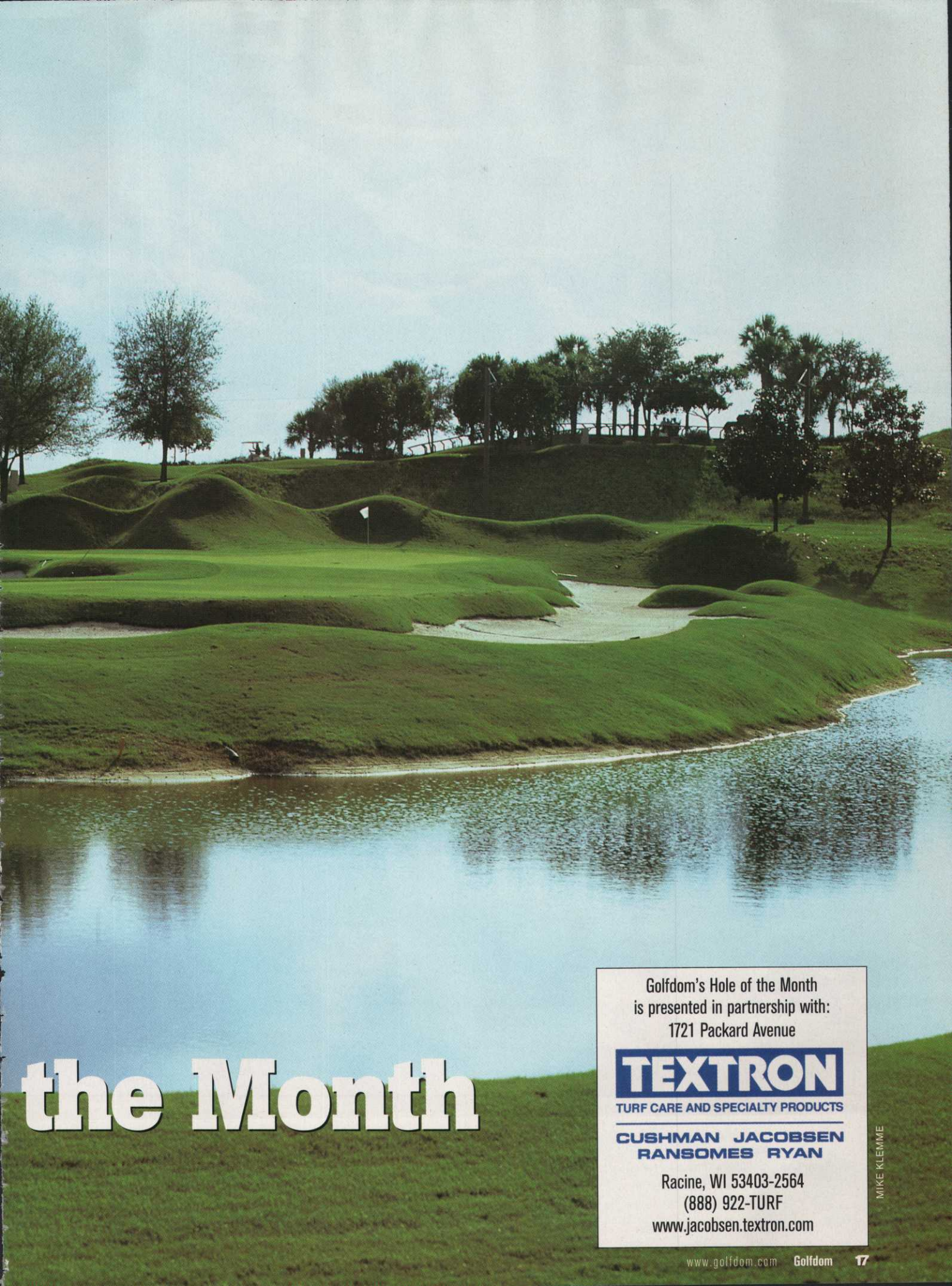
"It keeps the hole playing consistently," Alex says. "It's a fun hole if you pay attention and don't try to be a hero."



# Hole of

■ Hole No. 2,  
Grand Cypress GC, Orlando





# the Month

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