

# Golf By Design

■ ARCHITECTURE

**I**t requires the use of 45 or higher UVA/UVB sunscreen when within 15 feet of its wrath. In certain counties of South Florida, Tony Montana could've passed it off as a "good product." UVA-ray protective sunglasses are required within 500 yards of the substance, sun or no sun.

Still don't know which lovely trend I speak of? Think for a minute, and you'll realize it's fluorescent bunker sand.

Has there ever been a more excessive, needlessly expensive or offensive trend in golf than the recent widespread incorporation of blinding white bunker sand? Has any fad ever arrived on the golf scene that has captivated golfers for similar unknown reasons?

Its popularity is remarkable considering it makes hitting bunkers shots difficult because it's so bright. One Southern California course requires its staff to wear sunglasses when raking bunkers after a mishap. Yes, that's right, an innocent bunker raker in California had to be treated for snow blindness (a temporary or partial loss of sight caused when the eyes are directly exposed to the sun's ultraviolet light reflected off snow or ice — or in this poor lad's case, bunker sand).

Besides being dangerous to the eye, unattractive and offensive to non-golfers, the white sand craze has taken on financial significance for courses. Adding the really white stuff means at least *double*, and usually *triple* the cost just to get it out of the quarry and onto your property.

On top of the excessive cost to buy the lily-white stuff, there's the lining that some architects insist must be installed to keep the white dust "pure." And in areas where the frosty fill can't be too easily found (which is plenty of places), dolomitic lime is added at additional cost and effort to turn natural sand into blinding sand. But that dolomitic dying process has to be repeated yearly to keep things bleachy, err, peachy, and we all know this is just a pure waste of money and resources.

Yet, golfers inexplicably crave this stuff like pathetic junkies. And so far, the golf business is providing the fix.

## Golf's Latest Flaw Is Literally Glaring

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



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But like a junkie, the golfing public can be rehabilitated if the golf business would just stand up to this trend and say: "No more — this unnecessary fad is adding thousands of dollars to construction and maintenance budgets, and it wastes money."

Worse than the financial implications, though, is the message to the environmental community.

The best golf courses blend into their surrounding environments to give golfers the feeling that they're battling nature. It's like the thrill people speak of when on fishing or hunting expeditions. It's just you vs. Mother Nature and her elements. In other words, the best-looking layouts don't have brown waste areas contrasting with blinding white bunkers, like all too many new courses create for intentional "effect."

Incorporating blinding white bunker sand into environments where it didn't exist before merely takes golf one more level away from that enchanting feeling of playing the game in a natural setting. Worse, the bright stuff provides another item of evidence that golf doesn't care about fitting in — all because some golfers or courses want layouts to stand out and make a statement or be like Augusta.

It's time for the golf business to take a stand and say no to its customers when it comes to the white sand craze. The use of offensively bright sand will prove over time to be a disastrous one for the business. It says to the world, "We just don't care what anyone else thinks."

Is that a statement golf can afford to make?

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