

**T**he 186 typewritten pages arrived in a Manila envelope with no return address. Finally, after years of denials from Far Hills, N.J., that it even existed, we've got the goods. I'm talking about the confidential manual known as the USGA's "Guidelines for Championship Course Preparation."

I'm going to save your eyes the pain of reading things like Rule 13-B: Dealing with the media after a course setup debacle at Olympic Club; or Rule 16-D: How to dress like a USGA committee member. We know how to coordinate a white shirt, gray slacks, red-striped tie and navy blazer.

But you *must* read these policy excerpts that the USGA course setup gurus have to adhere to for the U.S. Open:

**Rule 1-A:** You shall pledge to do all that is humanly possible to protect, preserve and defend the integrity of par.

**Amendment C to Rule 1-A:** No golf course shall play to a par above 70, except for Pebble Beach Golf Links. Par reduction shall be the first alteration to any tournament layout.

**Amendment Z to Rule 1-A:** Passage during October 1999 Executive Committee meeting states that you may reduce total par at Pebble Beach Golf Links to combat perceived changes in equipment, which are strictly "perceived" since Iron Byron is hitting new balls the same distance he did in 1976 — and with the same per-simmon-headed driver.

**Rule 2-B:** Under no circumstances may fairway widths exceed 35 yards, regardless of slope of ground or length of hole or par of hole.

**Amendment A to Rule 2-B:** Passage at the October 1982 Executive Committee meeting states that widths may not exceed 30 yards, while 20 yards to 25 yards is recommended as a response to perceived but not factually provable technological and maintenance advances. Fairway widths may also be reduced below 20 yards in key landing areas if said course is giving players the opportunity to experience a reward for courageous play, such as a birdie.

**Amendment F to Rule 2-A:** Fairway edges must be straight. Orderly lines should be created by any means necessary, including use of survey

## Have I Got An Exclusive for You

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



I'M TALKING  
ABOUT USGA'S  
'GUIDELINES FOR  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
COURSE  
PREPARATION'

equipment to foster straightest possible look. Do not mirror lines of nature, nor incorporate interesting natural features into the creation of contour lines, nor should the committee regard existing hazards when creating fairway boundaries. Use of the word "contour" after reading this amendment is forbidden unless when granted an executive committee waiver.

**Rule 12-B:** The Championship Committee shall not resort to incorporating unfair hole locations, nor make overnight or mid-championship design modifications, except under the following conditions: the 18th green at Olympic Club, and any hole that contestants such as Lon Hinkle play in alternate fashion (see appendix VI: "How to Plant Trees at Inverness Club in the Middle of the Night").

**Rule 14-A:** The committee shall recommend without putting in writing that the host site appoint a well-known architect for the *pro bono* role of official course design consultant — to be known as the "Open Doctor." With the inclusion of a "Doctor," the Championship Committee is absolved of all wrongdoing when USGA-mandated changes are deemed regrettable.

**Rule 27-B:** In using all means necessary to protect par (Rule 1-A), the Championship Committee shall in no way concern itself with the long-term agronomic harm to host site. All post-championship agronomic disorders should be directed to the USGA Green Section as outlined in amendment F to Rule 27-C, "Deflecting Blame." Do not acknowledge complaints from golf business personnel such as superintendents, pros and architects, since any such discussion could ultimately undermine the vital enforcement of Rule 1-A.

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