

# Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

## Business briefs

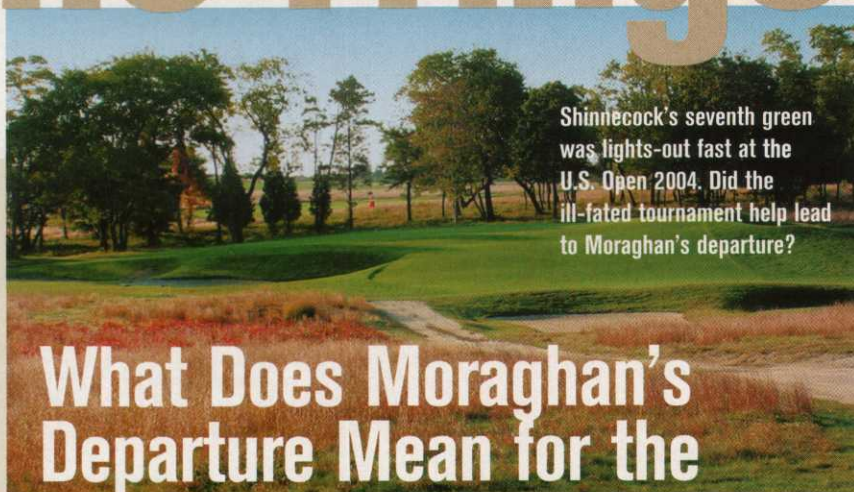
### Deere Announces Changes in Regard to LESCO Acquisition

Gregg Breningmeyer, director of sales and marketing for John Deere Golf & Turf One Source, recently announced a series of changes in regard to Deere's acquisition of LESCO, which was finalized in May. The changes take effect in Deere's new fiscal year beginning Nov. 1. They include:

- LESCO agronomic products, as well as some current One Source partner products, will be available through the One Source program.
- John Deere One Source distributors will carry both equipment and irrigation heads and controllers and provide finance options for those products as well.
- Deere's new golf and turf field employees, formerly of LESCO, will provide the agronomic arm of One Source — with a focus on seed, fertilizer and chemicals.
- Stores on Wheels will continue to provide exclusive golf offerings, as "we have heard loud and clear that they are a valuable service to customers," Breningmeyer said.
- In addition to Stores on Wheels, customers will also be able to purchase golf and turf agronomic products through John Deere Landscapes gold branches (former LESCO service centers).
- While LESCO's headquarters operations and activities will be moved to the John Deere Landscapes headquarters in Alpharetta, Ga., Deere plans to keep an office in Cleveland.

"As you can imagine, merging two companies with rich histories and expansive expertise is not an overnight undertaking," Breningmeyer said. "As such, [these] adjustments are just the beginning."

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Shinnecock's seventh green was lights-out fast at the U.S. Open 2004. Did the ill-fated tournament help lead to Moraghan's departure?

## What Does Moraghan's Departure Mean for the USGA Green Section?

By Geoff Shackelford, Contributing Editor

**T**he United States Golf Association's removal of Tim Moraghan as championship agronomist offers yet another glimpse into the strange and turbulent little cult that is our game's North American governing body.

And not because of the decision to dispense of Moraghan.

After all, USGA President Walter Driver was not exactly eyeing Moraghan for inclusion in his will since the two worked together on the ill-fated 2004 U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club. That's where then-Championship Committee Chair Driver came off as a fool when the USGA's defend-par-at-all-costs setup backfired. Driver convinced himself that Moraghan and then-course setup man Tom Meeks were solely responsible for the course teetering over the edge of sanity, and now both are gone.

No, the real surprise in the Mor-

aghan firing is the USGA's elimination of his position and the organization's plans to rely on the USGA Green Section staff to provide agronomic and construction advice for its championship courses.

The immediate reaction is to assume that this will be nothing but a headache for the section staffers, particularly if they are thrust into the U.S. Open spotlight without the pay and backing of the executive director to weigh in on pressure-filled decisions regarding turfgrass and construction.

However, if handled properly by the USGA Executive Committee (an enormous "if") and supported by the executive director (highly unlikely), this could turn into a necessary endorsement for the USGA's turfgrass consulting service.

*Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the **Golfdom Insider** and can be found in a longer version at [www.golfdom.com](http://www.golfdom.com).*