

**I**f we could have had some mulligans for 2010 it might have been a different year. Here are some results from last year's scorecard — a year some would like to forget but many will remember.

First, Mother Nature scored a triple bogey for the schizophrenic bi-polar growing conditions she teed up as 2010 goes down as one of the coldest, hottest, wettest, driest years in decades. Folks with bentgrass or *Poa* turf seemed to suffer the most, but many regions experienced weather that either stressed the turf or kept golfers off the courses — a double whammy for course budgets.

I have to give birdies to the PGA Tour this year for some of the most dramatic finishes in years, even with Tiger being a “no-show” in the winner's circle for the first time in eons. Missing tee times and grounding a club in a “bunker” outside the ropes made for some head-scratching moments.

Can you think of an instance in the past where an official sand bunker was outside the ropes and the gallery was allowed to tromp through it so that a player would have to deal with a rutted-up lie in a bunker? While my sympathy goes out to Dustin Johnson, the local rule sheet did specify that all of Pete Dye's simulated sheep wallows at Whistling Straits were to be considered as bunkers in play under the rules of golf.

There was high drama with Stuart Appleby's final round 59 at Greenbrier and Jonathan Byrd's amazing playoff ace in Las Vegas and the fairy tale endings of the season for Mark Garrigus, Roland Thatcher and Troy Merritt at the Children's Miracle Network Classic at Disney World — where dreams did come true.

Triple bogey to the research team out at Cal Poly who announced smugly to the whole world that concrete was more environmentally friendly than turfgrass. However, when others brought to their attention that they couldn't do simple math and created a 12-fold error in the data, they didn't go as public with any retractions or corrections. The researchers and the media should have called a penalty on themselves and signed a

## Playing Through 2010

BY JOEL JACKSON



### THE ECONOMY

### CERTAINLY MADE

### 2010 AN UP-AND-DOWN ROUND.

corrected scorecard for all to see.

Birdies go to the allied golf associations for continuing Golf Day in Washington, D.C. and showcasing golf's positive economic and environmental impacts and in embarking on the We Are Golf initiative. Superintendents have been toting the bag alone for too long when it comes to charting the yardage on issues facing the golf industry.

It's high time for course owners, club managers, golf pros and golfers to help read the greens and help decide the line on the issues. Many of our golf club's movers and shakers have a lot more influence with local, state and national rules officials than the superintendents.

The economy certainly made 2010 an up-and-down round. Suppliers, superintendents and club managers all had their share of snowmen and Xs. Saving par for the year was a good score.

Double bogies or worse for the EPA for some of their recent rules decisions and actions as they institute new regulations based on a lawsuit settlement decree instead of science and practicality. These non-elected rules officials are running amok and governing without accountability to the people.

Hey gallery, don't be quiet with your comments to your elected officials about reigning in the EPA, before one of our turf management tools are taken away from us.

This year you might have to tee it up using last year's clubs and balls from the shag bag. But if you keep practicing good fundamentals and work diligently on improving your game you can come out a winner in 2011. Happy New Year!

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*Certified Superintendent Joel Jackson is executive director of the Florida GCSA.*