

Off The Fringe

Anchors Away!

GOLF'S GOVERNING BODIES PROPOSE A BAN ON ANCHORING, TO BEGIN IN 2016. **By Seth Jones**

Long putter OK. Anchoring, no way.

Make sense? If not, don't worry, there's still time to get it figured out. In late November the Royal & Ancient and the United States Golf Association announced the proposal of a rule, which, if passed, would go into effect in 2016. Rule 14-1b would state that a player may not anchor the club, either directly or by use of an anchor point.

"One of the most fundamental things about the game of golf is we believe the player should hold the club away from his body and swing it freely," USGA Executive Director Mike Davis said in a statement. "We think this is integral to the traditions of the game. Golf is a game of skill and challenge, and we think that is an im-

portant part of it."

Putting expert Frank Thomas, who worked for the USGA for 26 years and now runs Frankly Golf (www.franklygolf.com), says the rule could add confusion to the game.

"It's the first time they're introducing a method of use of an implement. It'll be difficult to monitor, because golfers call their own infractions, and telling someone how to use an implement is difficult," Thomas says. "If getting rid of the long putter is their objective, an alternative solution would be to say that the putter has to be the shortest club in your bag."

Keegan Bradley, the first to win a Major using a long putter, recently was heckled for his taste in putters. But Thomas, co-author of the new book "The Fundamentals of Putting," said



Keegan Bradley lines up a putt at this year's Wells Fargo Championship at Quail Hollow. It seems likely that this form of putting, in this case anchoring the putter against the stomach, will be outlawed in 2016.

that such greats as Gene Sarazen, Walter Hagen, Billy Casper and even Arnold Palmer at times anchored the putter in some way.

"The game is such a wonderful game, this won't have much of an effect," Thomas said. "It might have some effect on the respect golfers have for the USGA and the R&A."

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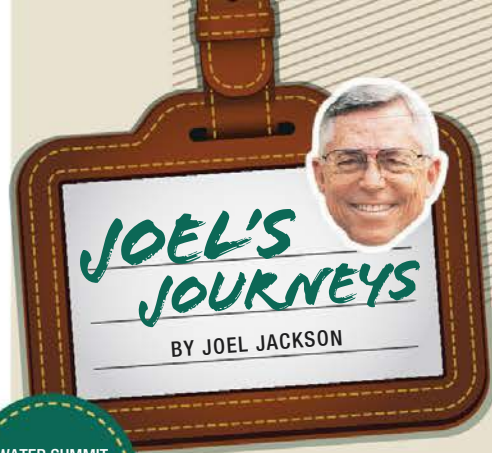
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"I recently asked a group of superintendents how many of them owned an iPad, and I was shocked that almost everyone in the room raised their hand," said Jones. "I'm still a print guy, and this is still a print magazine, but I'm happy to accommodate those readers who own iPads."

Download the app at <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/golfdom-hd/id571962386?mt=8>.



WATER SUMMIT
WHETS APETITE
FOR SOLUTIONS

THE USGA GREEN SECTION tackled the challenge of sustainable water use on golf courses by holding a water summit in Dallas in early November. More than 100 attendees — including members from the allied golf associations, water regulators, academia and media — met for a day-and-a-half to share facts and figures and ideas about improving the sustainability of golf courses emphasizing water use. I met with some speakers to get their impressions of the session.

Q: What was your goal for this summit?

Jim Moore, director, USGA Green Section's Education Program: There are many plans about water use, and many people and organizations have been working on solutions to their problems. We hoped this meeting could help everyone come up with a set of general best management practices that could guide water-use regulations for all customers. There can't be one set of national guidelines, but each region could take the best ideas that fits their needs.

Q: How does the USGA communicate with the entire golf community to reach all audiences about water-use problems within a facility and the industry?

Mike Kenna, USGA Green Section director of research: We tell our Green Section personnel that when they produce electronic media they're writing to three audiences: 1) Golfers. In the first three sentences, they should explain why it's important to their enjoyment of the game. 2) Superintendents and club management. The piece must be of practical interest to them and reveal the problems at stake. 3) Academic, research and regulatory communities. Give them links to complete data.

Q: What stood out at the summit?

Kimberly Erusha, Ph.D., managing director, USGA Green Section: The diversity of the audience and their participation and engagement. Each group faces a learning curve of the challenges facing each discipline. I hope this becomes a turning point in how we work together on environmental issues.

Q: What are you learning about golf and water use?

Veronica Blette, chief of the WaterSense Branch, U.S. EPA: It's exciting to see golf take water issues so seriously. We face similar challenges. Golfers expect to play on nice, lush, green courses, and homeowners expect to have nice, lush, green lawns. We all need to work together to shift that focus to more sustainable residential landscapes and golf courses.

Good Business By Beth Geraci

The 4th Annual Syngenta Business Institute got off to a strong start when 25 superintendents descended upon Wake Forest University Dec. 3-6.

Superintendents are hand-picked by Syngenta for the conference based on their leadership and aspiration, and professors were on hand to enhance the superintendents' skills even more. They educated them on everything from financial management to clear communication.

"This really helps them in their negotiation skill sets, which isn't something they work on daily to de-

velop," said Syngenta Golf Market Manager Stephanie Schwenke.

Highlights included the finance discussion led by associate professor of management Ken Middaugh II, and the social media discussion led by consultant Steve Drake. But no matter what the conversation, the institute impressed superintendents in every aspect. "I've seen ways I can change my habits and become a better human resources professional," said Troy Fink of The Country Club of Virginia. "I've seen how I can address my staff's needs, so they can help us all be successful."

Longtime LESCO Employee Passes

Herbert A. Cole, 82, of Avon Lake, Ohio and formerly of Findlay, Ohio, passed away suddenly on Nov. 2. Cole was a 46-year member of GCSAA and was a longtime member of many other turfgrass and lawn care associations. Cole joined LESCO, Inc. in 1963 as its first salesman. He was promoted in 1977 to Midwest Area Manager responsible for four LESCO trucks, which were the company's innovative "stores on wheels," calling on golf courses in the Midwest. When Cole retired in 1995 as Vice President of Sales, he was responsible for 43 LESCO trucks nationwide with over \$28 million in sales. Cole is survived by his wife of 56 years, Sabra, his four children, Bruce (Trudi) of San Francisco, Calif., David (Stephanie) of Avon Lake, Ohio, Brian (Page) of Fairfax, Calif., and Laurie (Inderjit) of Chicago, four grandchildren, and seven siblings.





Recalling Reed Funk, and Hurricane Sandy

We called Rutgers professor William Meyer, Ph.D., recently about the passing of his colleague and mentor, Dr. Reed Funk. Meyer returned the call a couple days after Hurricane Sandy hit, so he had a lot to say about that, as well as ample praise for Funk.

“Everything I learned about breeding I learned from him — and from doing it,” Meyer said. “He worked on me for five years to get me to apply for a job at Rutgers. I cooperated with him from there.”

Meyer sent us one of his favorite photos of Funk, this one of him collecting centipede grasses in a cemetery in Cherry Hill, N.J. in 1996.

To honor Funk’s life and legacy, Meyer said, Rutgers is holding a memorial symposium for Funk on Jan. 11. “It’s an all-day affair,” Meyer said, “and everything is oriented toward him.” Funk’s former students will present at the symposium, including Chris Carson, Al Turgeon, David Kopek and others.

But the conversation also turned to Hurricane Sandy, which had hit New Jersey two days before we spoke with Meyer, who lives just six miles from the ocean. He described the storm this way:

“It just blew and blew and blew. It was blowing at 90 miles an hour, and the sound of that is amazing. It’s like a train blowing through. I’m telling you, I was scared. It was blowing that hard.

It was amazing.

“No trees snapped off but there are a thousand tree limbs in our yard. It was amazing. I just can’t tell you how frightening it was. And then, of course, everybody in New Jersey along the coast, those poor people. They got so much damage. Their houses are gone. They lost everything.

“I’m six miles up the hill from the ocean. Down the hill, all the boats ended up on the parking lot. Being up on the hill, that made the wind even worse. It was crazy. You know, the weirdest thing now is you can’t buy gas. The lines are 300 cars long. I got two-thirds of a tank of gas left in my car. I’m hoping things calm down soon.”

-- Beth Geraci

PHOTO (TOP) COURTESY: ?WILLIAM MEYER, PH.D.

SETH’S TRAVELOGUE:

NW Golf & Environment meeting

I had the good fortune of being asked to speak in Portland recently. Also speaking at the event, held at the Oregon Golf Club in West Linn, Ore., were Steve Kealy, CGCS, Glendale CC; Kevin Fletcher, Ph.D., e-parUSA; Chava McKeel, GCSAA; Scott Dahlman, Oregonians for Food and Shelter; and Andy Staples, ASGCA, The Golf Resource Group.

Kealy discussed the First Green, a program he co-founded that enables golf courses to host area students and use the courses as learning laboratories. Something as simple as gathering a few buckets of leaves provides an educational opportunity for the students, he said.

“We have a contest to see who can find the most bugs, and how many they can name,” Kealy said. “I couldn’t believe how into finding bugs they were.”

The First Green has been asked by the USGA to apply for a grant that would enable them to expand beyond the Northwest.

GCSAA’s McKeel and Oregonian’s For Food and Shelter’s Dahlman then made two presentations that nicely complemented each other, with McKeel speaking about national regulations and Dahlman speaking more with a local focus.

Dahlman told the group that the state of Portland has some citizens who will file 40 to 50 complaints a year. What are they complaining about? Someone spraying something — anything.

“You guys are more at risk of activists,” Dahlman told the group. “You have a lot of people watching you.”



From left to right, GCSAA’s Chava McKeel; *Golfdom*’s Seth Jones; architect Andy Staples; and e-parUSA’s Kevin Fletcher. And no, we’re really not sure why Seth dressed like a preacher.