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**I**t looks like 2008 will be the year of restoration bashing.

After all, way too many good restorations have taken place. Worse, several architects have carved out a rewarding niche that other plan scribblers wish they had gotten in on now that the new course business is slowing down.

Still, others are irked by the possibility that their office-drawn catch basins, stadium mounding and inconveniently routed designs are not clicking with golfers who still relish the old-style lay-of-the-land sensibility.

If you can't design like 'em, bash 'em.

The trend has been quietly building with odd little commentaries popping up like thunderheads on the horizon. The skeptics giggle at the notion that a Donald Ross course is worth restoring meticulously while howling at all this attention given to the dead guys who assuredly would do things the way the moderns do.

Consider what "Golf World's" Ron Whitten recently wrote: "Restoration is the narrow-minded substitute for imagination. It doesn't honor Ross, it insults him. It presumes the man never grew, never evolved as an architect in his 50-year career."

Perhaps Whitten feels guilty for having glorified the old guys through his magnificent research and impressive book, "The Architects of Golf." Yet, Whitten should be proud for bringing pleasure to hundreds of thousands of golfers who have enjoyed rounds over restored classics that were salvaged in no small part due to his and co-author Geoffrey Cornish's book.

Perhaps Whitten has read one too many press releases from architects proclaiming that they meticulously researched and put themselves in Seth Raynor's shoes when Whitten knows better. However, when was the last time you heard of an older, neglected course regretting the decision to restore? If anything, it's just the opposite.

Layouts where members elected to modernize would make a much longer list of regrettable mistakes, with Augusta National topping most people's ranking of "courses that wish they could go back."

Yes, there will always be internal debates

## Let's Not Rewrite the Classics Yet

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



RESTORERS

DESERVE CREDIT

FOR SETTING THEIR

EGOS ASIDE TO PUT

UP THE GOOD

FIGHT FOR THEIR

PREDECESSORS

over restoring certain bunkers or whether adjustments should be made to deal with changes in the game.

But most of the sensitive restorers are not the stodgy diehards that progressives make them out to be. These uniquely talented architects are not threatening to quit when clubs fail to retain an old toilet seat cover once graced by William Flynn's tush. They are typically making the best of a tricky situation involving a rapidly changing game where strategic design has not been taken to another level. The classic courses do more than represent a point in time. They provide great joy and just enough challenge to many golfers.

Sure, several of the old architects predicted their courses would be surpassed by more intricately designed strategic and aesthetic master works, leaving those 1920 designs feeling primitive. Yet today, no jury in the world would convict the "old masters" of design malfeasance, particularly considering how few worthy-of-study courses have been crafted since the Golden Age.

Restoration bashers might be right in suggesting the old guys would have grown as artists and taken their work to another level. But would you rather trust a restorer to fine-tune a course by strict restoration guidelines, or to put himself in A.W. Tillinghast's shoes in hopes of channeling Tilly's design genius?

Restorers deserve credit for setting their egos aside to put up the good fight for their predecessors. Especially since sympathetic restoration work is not exactly lucrative — nor very much fun when answering to an angry mob of unsympathetic club members.

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*Geoff Shackelford blogs daily on the state of the game at [www.geoffshackelford.com](http://www.geoffshackelford.com).*



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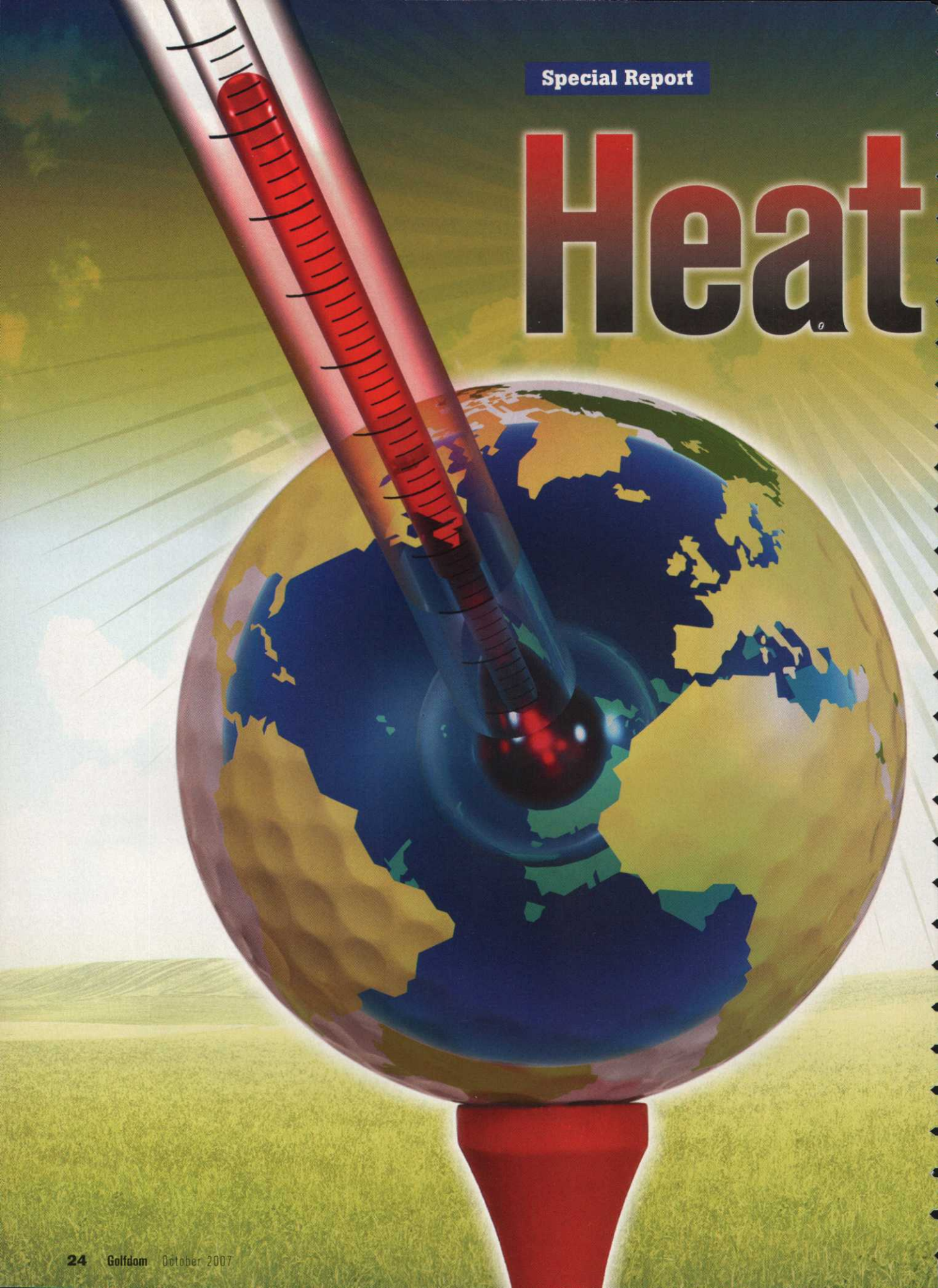
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Special Report

# Heat





# ed Debate

Will global warming change the golf course industry?

BY LARRY AYLWARD, EDITOR IN CHIEF

**I**t is certainly one of the most burning news stories of the year. Everybody's talking about global warming, from government leaders to golf course laborers.

But if you ask Brian Ferrier, the owner of Washakie Golf & RV Resort in North Branch, Mich., global warming has become so hot of an issue that its pot is boiling over with half-truths. Ferrier says global warming — the increase in the average temperature of the Earth's near-surface air and oceans — is more hype than substance. He blames the mainstream media and left-wing environmental groups and politicians for fanning the flames of global warming and frightening folks with tales of harrowing hurricanes and devastating droughts, among other earthly disasters.

"Doom and gloom sells," Ferrier says.

Ferrier, who says he has studied the topic of global warming on his own for several years, believes the concept is occurring naturally and without dire consequences. And he dismisses the notion that human beings and their carbon dioxide-spewing Chevrolets are creating greenhouse gases that are trapping solar heat and causing the Earth to warm up like a toaster oven.

But Dana Lonn, director of the center of advanced turf technology at The Toro Co. and a respected industry researcher, takes the threat of global warming more seriously and believes something needs to be done to manage it. Lonn trusts the findings of scientific organizations, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which says the world will

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“We’ve had an ice age before, and we will probably have an ice age again.”

— **BRIAN FERRIER**, OWNER OF WASHAKIE GOLF COURSE & RV RESORT IN NORTH BRANCH, MICH.

*Continued from page 25*

endure increased hunger, water shortages, massive floods and species extinction unless nations take steps to halt global warming.

“I have no reason to not believe the scientists who know a lot more than I do about climate,” Lonn says.

Although he professes not to be an expert on the subject, Lonn also subscribes to the IPCC’s theory that humanity is contributing to global warming through the production of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels, as well as methane and nitrous oxide.

“We’re putting a lot of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, so it only makes sense that humans are causing global warming,” Lonn says. “That seems to be more the consensus than not.”

The golf course industry is rife with opinions about global warming (sidebar page 29). Some like Lonn say global warming is an imminent threat. Others like Ferrier dismiss it. Others say global warming is real, but nothing to be too worried about. Still, others aren’t sure what to make of reports that the planet has a fever.

But no matter where they stand, the people who constitute the golf course industry are concerned about the impact global warming could have on their business. Those who believe global warming is real are concerned, among other things, that a change in the

weather could influence golf course maintenance. For instance, will warmer weather mean more bugs, weeds and turf disease? And what impact could global warming-caused drought have on golf course irrigation?

Those who believe global warming is junk science also wonder what the future holds for the industry. That’s because they know political leaders have been working on initiatives to address climate change, including legislation that restricts emissions.

Even though Ferrier and others dismiss global warming as a threat, they realize the government has more of a say in the matter than they do. So if government leaders decide to take measures to combat global warming, they wonder what regulations golf courses might face. For instance, what if government leaders decide to mandate electric golf cars and turf equipment to reduce carbon emissions on golf courses?

### To what effect?

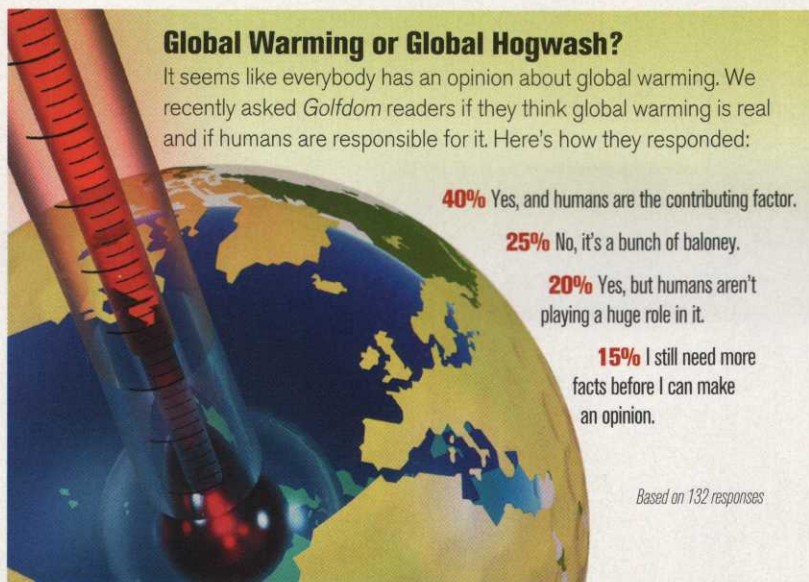
The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America takes neither a “yea” or “nay” stance on global warming, which it includes under the broader topic of climate change. But the GCSAA began studying the issue and its possible impact on the industry about a year ago. Carrie Riordan, the GCSAA director of information and public policy, says the GCSAA decided it needed to look into the matter on behalf of its 21,000 members.

“Our board decided we needed to address how golf could be impacted by legislative and regulatory actions to address climate change,” she says.

Riordan says the GCSAA doesn’t want to debate the topic because such a discussion would get nowhere with so many differing views among its members. But she says the association felt obligated to make members cognizant of potential regulatory changes that could occur.

Riordan says climate change could impact the golf course maintenance industry in several ways. Equipment manufacturers could be hit with more stringent regulations to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Hence, superintendents could end up paying more

*Continued on page 31*





## Opinions Abound on Global Warming *By Larry Aylward*

How bad is it and who's responsible?

The major debate among people in general, as well those employed in the golf course industry, centers on the severity of global warming and whether humans are responsible for the earth heating up.

Brian Ferrier, the owner of Washakie Golf & RV Resort in North Branch, Mich., believes the earth's climate is changing now as it has in the past because of naturally occurring weather cycles and patterns, including *El Nino*. Humanity has nothing to do with it.

"To say we have something to do with it is pretty egotistical because we aren't much on this big orb," he adds.

Tim Hiers, certified superintendent of the Old Collier Golf Club in Naples, Fla., doesn't doubt the Earth is warming up slightly, but he says the temperature increase is insignificant and has nothing to do with humans.

"I'm not afraid to stand up against anybody, anytime and anywhere and say, 'I absolutely and unequivocally don't believe that man is causing global warming,'" Hiers says.

Like Ferrier, Hiers embraces the stands taken by scientists who oppose global warming, including those who are among the nearly 18,000 signatures of the Oregon Petition, a document stating that a scientific consensus does not exist on global warming. The petition opposes the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, a 1997 amendment to the international treaty on climate change which assigns mandatory emission limitations for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

"A review of the research literature concerning the environmental consequences of increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide leads to the conclusion that increases during the 20th century have produced no deleterious effects upon global weather, climate or temperature," the Oregon Petition states.

Ferrier and Hiers cite studies that say the temperature has increased slightly simply because the sun is giving off more heat due to increased sunspot activity.

But Dana Lonn, director of the center of advanced turf technology at The Toro Co., says there's too much evidence that humans are causing global warming to dismiss it. Lonn trusts reports, such as recent findings by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, that say greenhouse gas emissions likely accounted for more than half of the widespread warmth across the continental United States in 2006, which had the

second-highest average temperature since record-keeping began in 1895.

Lonn, who says he's not an expert in the area, believes the climate change in the past 10 years to 20 years has been so significant that it's not normal and suggests solid evidence that humans are helping to cause global warming.

Kevin Fletcher, executive director of Audubon International, also believes the science is strong that humans are contributing to global warming. So does Dave Gardner, an associate professor of turfgrass science at The Ohio State University, who says "it's unlikely that humans aren't the cause" of global warming.

"If this is truly a natural phenomenon, it's a big blip on the time scale," Gardner says. "I think the preponderance of the evidence indicates that humans have something to do with it."

Jim Husting, certified superintendent of Woodbridge (Calif.) Golf & Country Club, also believes there's something wacky happening with the world's weather. Husting, who has been at Woodbridge for 22 years, says he's noticed more extreme weather, something scientists say is another sign of global warming. "It's always something different, like the hottest summer in 100 years, the driest spring in 100 years or the coldest February in 100 years," he says.

Husting also believes mankind is affecting global warming. "I don't see how we can't be," he says.

Jim Nicol, certified superintendent of Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn., says humans are partially to blame for global warming, but he's unsure just how much they should be held responsible. "Is it to the extent that some people are saying? I'm not so sure," he says.

Joe McCleary, certified superintendent of Saddle Rock Golf Course in Centennial, Colo., believes the Earth is slowly warming as part of a natural cycle and that human activities are impacting the cycles in a small way. But McCleary believes there's no reason to panic over global warming.

"But it's time to start making sure that we're doing things in an environmentally responsible way," he says. "Because you can get to a point where you can't turn back."

Ferrier says recent studies show that Mars is also warming up.

"Who they going to blame for that one?" he asks. ■



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