

# Our Greens Are Putting Greens, Not Landing Strips

One of my "better members" came into my office the other day and handed me a copy of the *USGA Green Section Record*.

An article, written by William G. Buchanan, was entitled "Why Don't The Greens Hold?" If anything had ever been godsent, it had to be this article. I had just received a lecture on not watering my greens sufficiently by one of my "better players."

You know the type. A 5-handicap who plays a 15, fluffs the ball up at every opportunity and hits fliers to the green running 10' 6". This fellow expects every green to accept his poorly hit shots as if they were hit by the likes of a Tom Watson. No matter to him with problems arising from over-watering. Damn the compaction, disease and whatever else we superintendents invented to make our job seem complicated. Just drop his blasted Pinnacles 20" from his ball mark (preferably in front).

Well, I now have some ammunition, thanks to Mr. Buchanan and the USGA, and for this, I am truly thankful. Had this article appeared in *Green is Beautiful*, the *Greensmaster* or *Golf Course Management*, my "better golfer" and his like would surely dismiss it as superintendent propaganda. He will now treat the information as gospel and expound its virtues from tee to tee, as its source is not a superintendent's trade magazine but the prestigious USGA. I am not above accepting charity.

The article is too lengthy to repeat in its entirety, but I will directly quote the summation offered at the end of his paper.

1. Putting greens can be constructed to grow grass that is best for putting.
2. Not all putting greens are created equal; some may be firmer than others.
3. Depending on maintenance practices, some greens will putt faster than others.
4. The coefficient of restitution is a measure of how much a ball will bounce on a green, but not a good factor in determining if the green will hold.
5. Backspin on a ball will make it stop quickly, generally on the third bounce.
6. Golf balls make a difference in the amount of spin a player can impart on the ball. Two-piece balls spin slower than surlyn-covered balls.
7. Close, frequent mowings on fairways and tees will help the putting greens hold.
8. Hardness testers for greens will not solve the problem. They will only give us more numbers to use. (Has the Stimp-meter made putts for everyone?).

In conclusion, all aspects of golf must be considered with any problem relating to the golf course. Large numbers of golfers have been raised on soft putting greens. They have

(Continued on Page 27)



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## Putting Greens—

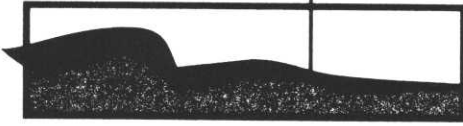
(Continued from Page 26)

not played on firm putting surfaces. Golf courses of the future will be forced into conserving water, and the game will be better for it.

Players who have not played under firm conditions are in for a treat, once they learn to adjust for the roll. In golf, the player should adjust his game to course conditions. The superintendent is employed to maintain the grass so it will best suit the play of the game. It is both unfair and unreasonable.

—Neil Acton, *Green is Beautiful*

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## Methyl Bromide Case Reinstated

A Florida appeals court has reinstated a product liability action against seven manufacturers and distributors of a pesticide containing methyl bromide.

According to the court, only claims alleging inadequate labeling and warning are pre-empted by federal pesticide law. The court based its decision on a Supreme Court cigarette labeling case.


The ruling overturns a previous circuit court decision, which found all the plaintiff's claims—for negligence, breach of warranty and strict liability—completely pre-empted by FIFRA.

However, the appeals court ruled that the cigarette labeling case it cited vacated the earlier case by which the circuit court judge rendered his decision.

Plaintiff alleges a product containing methyl bromide is unreasonably dangerous because of faulty testing, research, labeling and warnings.

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## Court Upholds Citizen's Right To Sue Under EPCRA Rules

A citizen's right to sue under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act was upheld recently by a Pennsylvania court.

The plaintiff in the suit alleges that a decorative foil manufacturer was late in filing reports required under EPCRA. The manufacturer did not contest the charge, but asked that the suit be dismissed on ground that Congress had unconstitutionally delegated executive power by allowing any citizen to sue, thereby violating the separation of powers doctrine.

However, a U.S. District Court judge for the District of Eastern Pennsylvania ruled that citizen lawsuit provisions similar to EPCRA have been incorporated into environmental statutes for more than 20 years and never have been declared unconstitutional.