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**Editors note:** What follows is a new column that will appear each month in this newsletter.

### IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT

As the irrigation season winds down, it gives us a chance to relax (a little) and think about some of the lessons we've learned in the past few years. For many golf courses there has either been some pressure to conserve water due to public opinion, or a great deal of pressure because of higher water rates and lower water availability. As a result of this pressure to conserve water, there has been an opportunity to relearn some of the basics of irrigation management as well as explore new ideas and concepts of how to irrigate our golf courses more efficiently.

To many people, water management means cutting back their water usage—they do this by reducing water run time by 20% on a specific part of the golf course (example-roughs) or just reducing run time over the complete course. Irrigation management, however, means that you conserve water by making your whole irrigation system more efficient. It means making sure that operating pressure is correct for the sprinkler, that spacing is consistent throughout the golf course, and that programming is designed to the flow characteristics in the irrigation system allow the system to last longer with a minimum of problems.

The purpose of this column will be to explore the different areas of irrigation management. Some of the areas we will cover include spacing, pressure and programming. Mostly, however, we would like to answer questions that you have relating to irrigation. Whether you have a specific question or would like a general discussion of a particular aspect of irrigation, just drop a card in the mail to the editor and we will try to respond with the best information available. Send your questions to :

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## SWING LOW AT SPANISH BAY

### *Pebble beach's new course calls for smart, "bump'n run" play*

Not more than a tee shot from the sandy shore of the Pacific Ocean, and several long drives and a wedge or two north of picture-post-card perfect Pebble Beach and Carmel Bay, along fabled 17-mile Drive, lies a golfing layout that's growing to be one of the trickiest thickets this side of old Scotland.

The Links at Spanish Bay, nearly two years old, is patterned after those ancient courses by the sea. It's a true links layout, built upon sand, some roughs rising in the form of sand dunes 24 feet high.

With its narrow, rolling fairways, all fescue grasses (even on the greens), coastal marshes, and blustery ocean winds, Spanish Bay's 18 holes play considerably longer than their 6,078 total yardage. (From the back markers, for single-digit handicappers only, the par-72 course stretches 6,820 yards.)

Designed by Tom Watson, Robert Trent Jones Jr., and Frank (Sandy) Tatum, Spanish Bay is a "bump'n run" course, the "exact opposite" of the "air golf" to which Americans are accustomed. Holiman notes. "They're not used to a lot of roll on the fairways—they are used to a soft green holding the shot. There's not a hole here where you can pull that off, the surface is so hard."

Because of this and the stiff winds, "the perfect way to play is ten feet off the ground," he says. Drive the ball low and let it bounce, including up and onto the green. Putting on the wiry fescue (or "fes-GLUE", he kids) requires a harder rap than on typical creeping bent. Tip: For a lower score, play in the morning, when the wind's not as strong.

Article by Pat Holiman, head pro at Del Monte GC