

••• PUTTING WITH CONFIDENCE •••

Don't throw away your hard work!

You hit a great drive and second shot lands 20ft from the flag... As you walk towards the green you feel that you have done all the hard work and a par is in the bag, not so fast!!

Your first putt is critical; the pressure is on and you know you must get it to within inches of the cup to guarantee your par. As you take aim at the 4.25inch cup it looks like it is getting smaller and smaller. You slowly take the putter back and through and as you strike the ball and watch it rolling, you realize

that your best efforts have left you with a 4 to 5 footer to save par.

Unfortunately the scenario is all too typical and 3 putting is all too common. To help you build your confidence and lower your score try practicing these drills:

SHORT PUTTS

- Laying the putter on the

- Practice with one hand at a time. Let the putter head swing effortlessly back and forth and be careful not to squeeze the grip too tight. Make several putts with your left hand and

- repeat the exercise using only your right hand and finally use both hands on the putter. This exercise builds feel and gets your hands working seamlessly together. (Picture 1&2)
- The putter head must finish straight on or square to the cup. (Picture 3)
- Listen don't Look; Practice keeping your





head very still and listen for the ball to drop in the cup. Don't watch it, if your eyes and head follow the movement of the putter head your shoulders move and will throw your alignment out.

- Be firm; Take out any break. Strike 3ft putts with conviction and aim straight to the back of the cup.

LONG PUTTS

Visualize the ball rolling towards the target. Focusing on too small a target adds additional pressure that you don't need. Concentrate on the pace and imagine the ball rolling into the target area. You have practice your 3 ft to 5 ft putts already and you are confident that you can make them. (Picture 6)

Why is the Golf Hole Size 4.25 Inches in Diameter anyways? If only it was a bigger!

SUCKER PINS!

Most golfers will look at the position of the flag, work out there yardage and selected the club accordingly. Sounds logical enough, after all you are trying to get around with the least amounts of shots. However take a moment to survey what dangers are lying around. Missing a green on the wrong side can be costly and turn you pars into bogeys and doubles at the blink of an eye. The next time you play a round of golf work out your yardage to the middle of the green and aim for that. I am not saying forget about the flag but if you increase the number of greens you hit in regulation you will have more chance of lowering you score.

Take the 15th hole for example; if the pin is tucked, tight right over the green side bunker forget aiming straight at it. Go for the middle of the green you will be far happier



should your mishit end up slightly left of your intended target but on the green than a few yards right of a the flag and in the bunker or on the slope leaving you no green to work with and a very difficult up and down. (Picture 7)

Or picture hole 17th when the pin is just sitting at the very front of the green just

over the water. Don't be tempted; hit your ball 5 yards over the pin...Your Safe! You have taken out the danger, left yourself a makeable putt and saved yourself the embarrassment of taking a penalty drop out of the water!

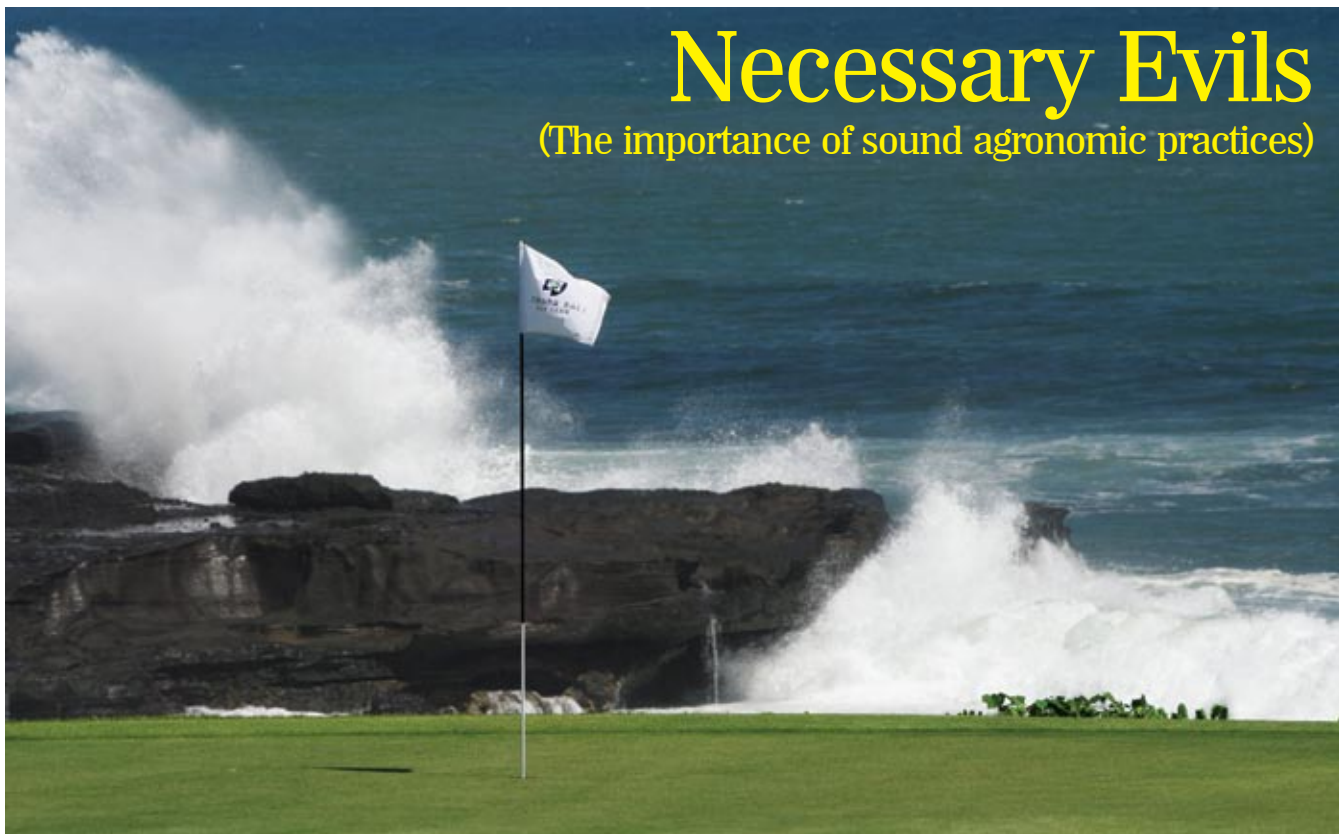
Happy Golfing!

Paul Lightbody



Necessary Evils

(The importance of sound agronomic practices)



Golf Course Superintendents are entrusted with maximizing revenues and enhancing their club's reputation more so than they think. By achieving agronomic excellence which in turn provides superior playing conditions, the Superintendent has the greatest impact on the golfing experience. The necessary evils required in achieving these superior conditions are often overlooked or pushed aside by members or owners due to their disruptive nature to the golf course.

Put the golf course first is a winning approach to long term property management in any region and especially in Asia where the climate allows for year round golf. Focusing the clubs attention on what is required to achieve their playing condition standards will help determine the annual investment or budget required to maintain the facility. Investing and managing the equipment fleet is the foundation to a sound agronomic program. Without the proper tools to perform essential cultural practices the Superintendent and his/ her team will be unable to meet the standards set forth by the club. Basing the equipment replacement plan on the image the club aims to achieve will provide a greater understanding of the importance of this annual investment. If your club is looking to produce poor conditions, use poor quality equipment and if you're looking to produce

exceptional playing conditions, invest in exceptional equipment. Using the philosophy that the back of the house reflects on the front of the house, golf course managers can begin with setting their clubs service standards by setting maintenance standards for their properties and ensure the maintenance compounds are well organized and maintained.

Strong agronomic programs with a healthy nutrient management program will consist of annual and monthly cultural practices such as core aeration, verti-cutting, top-dressing greens, tees and even fairways as well as small scale renovations such as re-leveling tee boxes, re-sodding greens collars or renovating bunkers. All of these practices are essential in producing high quality playing conditions in the future and even more so in Asia where the growing season is 12 months of the year. The ability of each club to block of tee times to allow their Superintendents

and their teams to carry out these programs varies for each region but should be made a priority in their low season.

Maintaining a healthy turfgrass nursery to the same standards as the golf course will allow the Superintendent and his/ her team to carry out simple annual renovations such as re-sodding greens collars which will help combat the encroaching surrounds that too often are allowed to infest the greens resulting in a cross contamination issue that can only be rectified by a complete renovation.

With limited resources, Superintendents working in Asia require the commitment of the clubs to provide them with opportunities for continued education and the equipment to meet the expectations of today's golfers. By maintaining a commitment to agronomic excellence and involving all departments in the maintenance and daily preparation of your

golf course you will ensure your service standards and reputation are upheld.

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