



LEADER BOARD

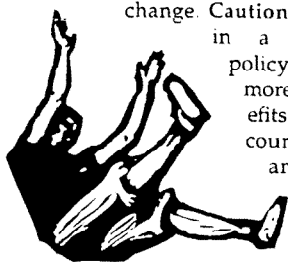
Information Exclusively for Golf Course Decision-Makers

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1997 ■ VOLUME 3, NUMBER 6

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Risk Less When Going Spikeless

During the past year many golf facilities have banned metal spikes; others are considering making such a policy change. Caution: Changes in a spikeless policy involves more than benefits to the golf course greens and may include risks.



wear spikeless shoes, which did not provide sufficient traction to prevent the fall. He or she also will argue that the golf facility was more concerned with the condition of the course than the safety of its patrons. This could be an effective jury argument, especially when the golf facility had no test period, inadequate or no warning signs and no stated policy on spikeless golf shoes. Prevention: Owners and golf course superintendents can help limit risk by proper planning and prudent action prior to implementing the policy change.

Source: Dalton B. Floyd Jr. Esquire, The Floyd Law Firm PC, Surfside Beach, S.C.

Guideline: Legally, a golf facility has a duty to warn of dangers and risks and to manage and operate the golf course premises in a reasonably safe condition. However, the courts have also recognized that there are inherent risks in the game of golf, like other recreation and amusement activities. **Defense:** This will help the golf facility defend itself if a lawsuit is brought by a golfer, who is injured in a fall allegedly caused by spikeless golf shoes mandated by the golf facility. **Trap:** If the ban against metal spikes is mandatory and not voluntary, the injured golfer could claim he or she had no option and was forced to

Ways to Limit Liability:

- ▼ Initiate a trial period when the use of alternative spikes is voluntary.
- ▼ Identify potential areas of danger during the trial use.
- ▼ Adopt and communicate a clear policy prior to implementing it.
- ▼ Allow golfers to choose between tennis shoes or a brand of alternative spikes chosen by the golfer.
- ▼ Post signs, disclaimers and waivers of liability.
- ▼ Inform the facility's insurer in advance of a policy change.
- ▼ Examine your insurance policy to ensure it will cover injuries resulting from a policy change.

Maintenance by Design

Designing a golf course is a fabulous opportunity to create a truly spectacular tribute to nature, where golfers will enjoy the challenge as well as the view. However, the architect must also design a golf course that can be maintained within the desired budget. **Issue:** Most owners have limited knowledge about how design affects golf course maintenance and ultimately, the bottom line. Answering the question, "What do you want to accomplish?" is key to a golf course design that meets all expectations. **Important:** The key to achieving expectations results from two-way communication between the designer and the owner.

Also ask:

- Number of rounds anticipated annually?
- Green fee charge?
- Cost of land?
- Cost of insurance?
- Cost to build course?
- Taxes?
- Overhead?
- Additional sources of revenue?
- Expected return on investment?

Result: The answers will drive the size, style and number of bunkers; the size of greens and tees; number and types of hazards, sculpting and other aesthetic design; irrigation design; the size of the maintenance staff and additional elements that may impact maintenance practices.

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