Mr. Chuck Alsdorf  
The Toro Company  
8111 Lyndale Avenue South  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55420  

Dear Chuck,  

The Toro Training School sponsored by Toro and Zaun,  
and conducted at Lake City Community College this past April  
was an overwhelming success. Your training team of  
Dale Atkinson, Mike Bina, Tom Dooley and Fred Greening  
was outstanding, They represented Toro in a most profes-  
sional image with their classroom and shop presentations.  
You would have been extremely proud of them.  

This type of presentation will not only help our students to  
better understand your products but will greatly benefit  
those “front-line” mechanics in the field who are going to  
determine the future of golf course maintenance as we know  
it today.  

If it is at all possible and economically feasible to continue  
this type of session on an annual basis, we would welcome  
this type of industry relationship.  

Thanks for your part in making this happen. Your  
continued interest and support of our program is very much  
appreciated.  

Sincerely,  

Jerry H. Cheesman, Director  
School of Golf Course Operations  
Lake City Community College  

Edgar (Ed) Combest, Instructor  
School of Golf Course Equipment Mechanics  
Lake City Community College  

Interview  
With  
Jerry Cheesman  
By DAVID BAILEY  

Lake City Community College is the leading higher level  
institution in the state for producing golf course superinten-  
dents. It is also nationally recognized for its School of Golf  
Course Equipment Mechanics. Jerry Cheesman, director of  
Golf Course Operations, discusses the following issues.  

What is your enrollment policy?  
Cheesman: We accept 40 students per year. We would like  
to have 20 with a turf emphasis and 20 for mechanics. We  
do not fill our quota of mechanical students. Thus we fill  
the remaining openings with turf students.  

How many mechanical students apply?  
Cheesman: Generally about 10. Here is the major problem.  
That total itself is too small and probably six of the 10 will  
switch to the turf program after one year. So we actually  
produce only around four mechanics per year.  

There is a separate mechanical program?  
Cheesman: Yes, we give a certificate for mechanics only.  

Do all golf operation students take mechanics?  
Cheesman: Yes, all turf students do. The program is for two  
semesters. Landscape students do not take this program.  
Some of our early turf students did not have the mechanical  
exposure and have come back after graduation to receive  
this important knowledge.  

How can the college overcome the mechanical recruiting  
problem?  
Cheesman: We need to recruit at the high school level  
more “mechanic shop” oriented people. We need to work  
the leading vocational schools for this student. We do not  
need a strong scholastic oriented student. Lake City needs  
to place advertisements in high school journals targeted to  
make this student aware of us and the job being done here.  

How can the superintendents help?  
Cheesman: Local and national associations tell us they  
need mechanics. It’s rated the top problem in the field. I  
challenge the associations themselves to work the local  
schools. Inform students there is a program at Lake City  
and a good job when they leave Lake City. Superintendents  
are good salesmen at budget time. The mechanic’s image,  
position and salary must be upgraded to keep trained  
people in the business.  

How should local associations recruit at the local high  
schools?  
Cheesman: Send good speaking superintendents to the  
schools with appointments arranged ahead with the principal 
and shop instructor. Show quality slides of the beauty of  
a golf course, the equipment to be worked, and stress the  
dependable job status and importance. We can no longer  
have underpaid mechanics and then wonder why we have a  
problem. Go for the top mechanical students and count on  
paying them just that way!  

Tell about Lake City’s facility for mechanics.  
Cheesman: We have as good a staff as there is in the  
country. We have an excellent shop with over $250,000 in  
equipment and parts inventory. If you want to learn about  
golf course mechanics this is the place to come.  

If a golf club wanted to send a mechanical student to Lake  
City what would it cost and what is the time factor?  
Cheesman: Total housing, school meals, fees, and books  
will cost about $2,500. The time span would be from August  
to July for a mechanics certificate.  

What do you see in the future for golf course mechanics?  
Cheesman: The age of hydraulics makes the mechanic even  
more important. The technical knowledge must be there and applied daily. In the future the equipment will  
have computer analysis. This will tell the exact problem.  
Ten years from today the mechanic will need equipment  
and knowledge we do not now have. We must have progress-  
sive people for these times.