

# Let's talk golf

## Green Side Up



*Joel D. Jackson*

Joel D. Jackson, CGCS  
Editor

We keep saying we're tired of preaching to the choir. Let's take the plunge and reach out to that mass of viewers that tune in to the plethora of talk shows on television. They crave the dysfunctional! Let's give them the sordid story of bermudagrass "off types!"

Their morbid curiosity unsated, we can show slides of nematodes feeding on mole cricket cadavers. For something really disgusting, we could show a slow-motion video of my golf swing. It might go something like this:

**Fade In:** Camera pans audience assembled in corporate hospitality tent left over from the Classic Invitational Open. Sound track from the movie Caddy Shack is playing.

**Announcer's voice:** And now ladies and gentlemen it's time for Let's Talk Golf with your host, that lady of the links, a scrappy thirty-six handicapper who has never conceded a putt, Miss Okra Windtree!

Okra enters tent from right. Wearing a Fuschia, Optic Yellow, Chartreuse, and International Orange golf outfit from Ultimate Insult of Redondo Beach. Camera pans wildly cheering audience. Okra bows. Waves. Blows kisses.

**Okra:** Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. Ya'll are great! Thank you. OK! OK! Enough already! We've got a great show today and I want to introduce our panel of guests right now. We are very fortunate to have three golf course superintendents from the area here today. They are going to give us the down and dirty of golf course maintenance.

On my left is Brad Blazer, CGCS, from the Wine Cellars Country Club. In the middle is Gene Denim of the city course, Divot Acres Golf Club, and on the far right is Dave Docker, CGCS. Dave is the Director of Golf Maintenance for the Rest and Relax Resort chain. Gentleman, welcome! We look forward to visiting with you today. For the benefit of the three hundred people jammed in this 20 by 20 tent, I'd like each of you to tell us a little bit about your course and how you

manage turf. Brad, would you please start?

**Brad:** I'd love to Okra. Wine Cellars Country Club is a private club with just 300 members from all over the world. Mostly bankers, lawyers, doctors, celebrities, and tycoons. We have 151 male members and 149 female members. Mr. Elliott Sureshank is our 47th Green Committee Chairman this year. Our diversity programs have been sanctioned by the NCAA, NOW, Hard Copy and Geraldo Rivera.

We have 12 teeing areas on each hole to allow for people of varying abilities to enjoy each hole. The most forward tees are affectionately called, The Putting Course.

I facilitate a crew of 54 people for 18 holes. This does not include our two assistant superintendents, two pest control technicians, two Irrigation technicians, four mechanics, one lawyer and my administrative assistant, Zelda.

We contract out the maintenance for the clubhouse grounds, tennis courts, pool area and roadways in order to save money. We hand mow greens, tees, collars, approaches, and fairways. We mow the roughs with triplexes. We hand rake all of the bunkers and hand trim all of the runners. We are closed from June 1st to October 1st and every Monday the rest of the year. Our first tee time is 9 a.m. and shotgun starts are not permitted.

We have closed circuit television on every hole to monitor golf etiquette. Any players not filling divots or fixing ball marks have their playing privileges suspended for 30 days. We also have the satellite tracking and communication system on our golf carts and maintenance equipment.

I can monitor where everyone is instantly. We can also tell if a cart is violating "Cart Paths Only" and "90 Degree Rule restrictions." Violators have been successfully prosecuted in small claims court and video tapes of the incidents have been shown on the TV show, "Cops." It wasn't pretty!

**Okra:** Since we always speak frankly on this show Brad, I can tell you I didn't appreciate the Geraldo comment. Next,

from Divot Acres, Gene Denim.

**Gene:** Hello Okra, it's nice to be here. I'm afraid my operation isn't quite as exotic and high tech as Brad's. In the first place, my membership is anybody with the ten bucks green fee in their pocket. There are six of us on the course, not counting the community service folks that Judge Gavel sends over from the courthouse. They aren't much help because we have to go pick them up and bring them to work. Suspended licenses. Things like that. Once we had a serial killer that was mistakenly put in a work release program. Didn't know it at the time. Maybe that's why I didn't see any armadillos that summer.

I am the mechanic, pest control operator and irrigation man. The only thing we hand mow is the mayor's yard. Oops, I guess I shouldn't say that should I? We're never closed. We just yell "fore" and run that aerifier across the green. We all wear hard hats and flack jackets anyhow. Shoot, last year we had three old coots out there playing in Hurricane Hepsibah! At the last city council meeting they were talking about installing floodlights on all the holes so we could stay open 24 hours. When I mentioned something about irrigating at night, Councilman Pinchpenny suggested we just yell "fore" and turn it on! He was peeved because we ruined his brand new Titleist X-out ball with our aerifier last week. The Council is also considering leasing the driving range for the annual Tri-county Tractor Pull. Needless to say they keep us pretty busy.

Our budget is \$50,000 per year which covers all the salaries, materials and equipment. If it wasn't for the adopt-a-hole program by the local Neighborhood Watch Committee we couldn't mow down those hiding places in the roughs that used to attract an occasional mugger. On top of all that, local radio personality, Saul Garvey, is suing to have all golf courses banned in the city limits. Something to do with wanting to take a walk in a sterile environment and his cashmere sweater being ruined by bird poop. He claims that golf courses are nuisances



## NEW PUTTING GREENS!

PLAYABLE IN THREE WEEKS!

### HAVERLAND BLACKROCK CORP.

The innovators in Golf Course Construction can rebuild and recontour your greens and have them back in play immediately!

THE

BIG ROLL

SOD

PEOPLE

LASER  
GRADING

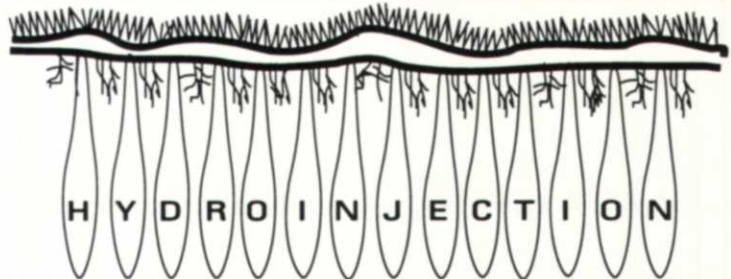
#### INSTALLATION:

Tees, Greens, Fairways, and Athletic Facilities

- USGA PUTTING GREEN RENOVATION ■



9819 STATE ROAD 7 • BOYNTON BEACH, FL 33437  
(407) 369-7994 • FAX (407) 364-1118



*Relieve compaction this winter without disturbing play.*

**Schedule any appointment during the 95-96 season  
before Dec. 1 and pay only**

**\$850.<sup>00</sup> (19 Greens)**

Save even more with multiple dates

*Wetting agents injected at no cost*

**Call for more information**

**TURF Concepts**

OF ILLINOIS

Specializing in fine  
turf cultivation

Day,  
Night or  
Weekend

2 Toro  
Hydroject  
3000's

**1-(800) 553-6320**

that attract wildlife. I think Saul has been sitting too close to the transmitter for too long if you know what I mean!

**Okra:** Wow! Gene your plate sure is full! On this program we also like to interfere in people's lives and dispense unfounded advice. So Gene, believe me when I say you'd better update that resume. I understand Mack Willis of the 30 Minutes Show is headed over the the Mayor's house right now to film his yard. And last but not least, Dave Docker. Hi Dave!

**Dave:** Hi yourself, Okra. Thanks for asking me to be on the show. In this totally open atmosphere that has been created by some of the audience cutting out the sides of the tent, I want to make a confession. As you see me today, and believe me I have noticed the stares, I stand 3 feet 9 inches tall. I was 5 feet 10 inches before our Golf Division was downsized. I consider my self very lucky compared to poor old Sherm over in Marketing, which experienced downsizing and FLATTENING!

As for golf course management, I travel the world coordinating and consulting the various courses we operate as part of our resorts. To be more effective, I have learned to speak French, Spanish, Russian, German, Japanese, Chinese, Portuguese, Swahili, Farsi, Yiddish and Bronx. One of my responsibilities is to coordinate corporate purchases of equipment and make sure all the safety decals are translated properly and put on the machines going to the different countries. One year we had some Swahili labels on the equipment going to Brazil. We are still mitigating that part of the rain forest.

## To be more effective, I have learned to speak French, Spanish, Russian, German, Japanese, Chinese, Portuguese, Swahili, Farsi, Yiddish and Bronx.

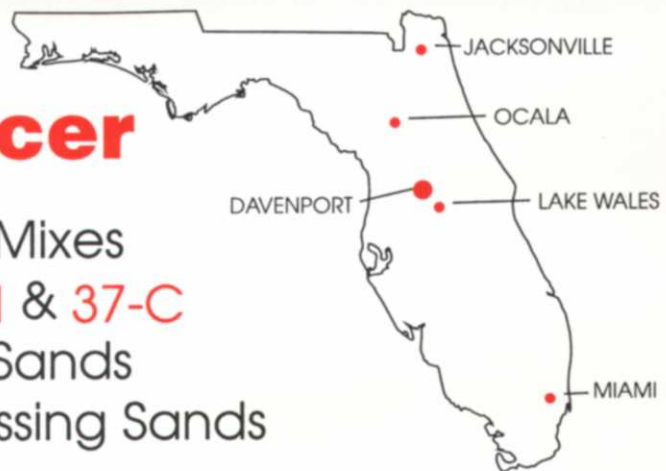
Unlike Brad and Dave, I do not engage in the mundane matters of turf management on a daily basis. I do act as a consultant when visiting our resorts and have learned many unique skills such as Gazelle Stampede Damage Recovery Methods; Bavarian Botulism Prevention On Tall Fescues; The Shortcomings of Rice Paddies As Temporary Greens. The list goes on.

**Okra:** Dave, I hate to cut you off, but our time is almost gone. Folks, how about a great big hand for our three superintendents. Gentlemen, thank you for sharing your insights and comments on golf maintenance with us today. Tomorrow on Let's Talk Golf we go into the Pro Shop to talk to teaching professionals to learn about the latest medical tragedy, "Paralysis by Analysis." Don't miss it. Bye now.

**Editor's Disclaimer:** This column should be read only by trained professionals. If you didn't laugh or smile, I failed. If you're still laughing, seek help immediately! Come to think of it. This column should be **written** only by trained professionals!

## Florida's Premier Producer

- Custom Blended Soil Mixes
- White Trap Sand **37-M** & **37-C**
- Premium Greens Mix Sands
- Dry, Sterilized Top Dressing Sands
- USGA Gravels



*Call today for prices • test information • free demonstration.*



**Standard Sand & Silica Co.**

1-800-475-SAND (7263) or 813-422-1171