

# Meeting the challenging expectations...

crew will come in at 4:30 a.m. and work until about 9:00 a.m. They will come back at 4:00 p.m. and will work until they are finished. Jeff Haley, tour agronomist, and Vaughn Moise, tour advance man, have provided invaluable assistance for the preparation of the course.

Dan may get the credit, but he chooses not to accept it. He would rather give it to his assistant, Tim Sticco, and his crew. "I could not have done it without him," DuPree said of Tim.

Tim was at Weston for a year before Dan arrived, so he was able to have many of the things the PGA Tour expects done before they ever arrived. Dan thinks this tournament brings the members of his crew closer together. They like the tournament and seem to be geared up for it. "The crew is always the most important thing. Without them, I am nothing," DuPree said.

Dan has had help from other places as well. Hector turf has donated a Toro 5100 fairway mower. The Honda people have been a big help also. They put up all the ropes, bleachers and concession area, freeing Dan and his crew to do other things. With only 32,000 rounds a year, the course recovers well from the tournament. Weston is a beautiful facility, and everyone should take a trip there some time, whether it is to play or just to watch the tournament.

*Kenneth Lee Dixon*  
Hollybrook CC

## The Nestle Invitational

Bay Hill superintendent, Dwight Kummer, celebrated his fifth Nestle Invitational this year and he says, "It seems to be getting easier!" He also felt he had his best putting surfaces ever for this year's event. And the reason for those near perfect greens was also the source of his biggest headache during tournament preparations.

Four weeks out from the tournament Central Florida was hit with "a week of winter" which included 3-4 frosts back to back and a freeze thrown in for insult. For plant material enjoying an otherwise mild winter, it was devastating. Dwight de-

scribes the results, "We lost all of our blooming ornamentals and annuals which add so much color that time of year. We don't overseed the fairways and they went completely dormant. I have to give the crew a lot of credit. We logged the most overtime we ever had in order to clean up all the dead plant material and replace all the beds. And with a little luck and some ammonium sulfate we got the color back on the fairways. Even though that cold snap brought a lot of problems, I think it helped stop all bermuda competition on the greens and allowed us to manage straight poa greens for the tournament."

Dwight attributes one other practice to the continued improvement of the putting surfaces over the years since the course was rebuilt. Dwight said, "We have begun to deep drill our greens in August for our fall renovation. I firmly believe we are driving those roots down making for healthier turf, which has reduced spike marks during the tournament." The condition of this year's greens drew high praise from Dwight's boss, Arnold Palmer, who was calling them better than Augusta. And TV's guru of grain, Johnny Miller, was quoted as calling them "flawless" this year.

Dwight outlined his overseeding program as follows: Greens - Laser Poa trivialis is overseeded at the rate of 10 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. in early November. In mid-December additional Laser is added at the rate of 2-3 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft.. This practice continues every 10-14 days until the desired density is achieved. This year a total of 20 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. was applied.

Roughs, tee slopes and greens slopes are overseeded with 100% Palmer II perennial ryegrass at the rate of 300 lbs per acre in mid-November. Since the fairways are not overseeded, Dwight needed a way to overcome the very slow healing divot scars incurred during the heavy winter play in the dormant bermudagrass. The solution that works for him is to topdress the divots with a sand-seed mix including Jamestown II chewings fescue. The fescue is non-aggressive, grows just fast enough to fill-in and blends well with the bermudagrass.

Bunker faces are another area that can be tough to manage. Dwight has found that Rebel Jr. tall fescue is more drought tolerant than ryegrass. By overseeding his bunkers at the rate of 10-15 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. with Rebel Jr., he has eliminated the need for hand watering these areas.

As for tournament week itself, it was pretty routine. There was a rain suspension on Saturday which required the staff to stay late to prepare the course for a 6 hole shotgun start on each nine at 7:00 am Sunday morning. And now Dwight and the Bay Hill staff can turn their attention to rebuilding the Charger Nine and remodeling the 16th hole on the Champion's course. Arnold wants to add a little more excitement to that gambling par five finishing hole. Congratulations to everyone at Bay Hill for another successful tournament. See you next year!

*Contributions to this article by Dr. Richard H. Hurley, Loft Seed, Inc. and Joel D. Jackson, CGCS, Disney's Magnolia G.C.*

## The Tournament Players Championship: TPC at Sawgrass

As the PGA tour makes its final stop in its four-week sprint through Florida golf's "March Madness," the critical eyes of the golfing public and the players themselves are focused on the Tour's home course.

Since 1986, Fred Klauk has been meeting the challenge of preparing the Tournament Players Club at Sawgrass to satisfy the highest expectations on the tour.

From the record cold of 1990 to the record rains of 1994, the staff of the TPC is tested time and again. This year March did not go out like a lamb.

Following are Fred's capsule comments on the event:

"The 1995 Tournament Players Championship was both challenging and exciting. Very windy conditions (48 mph) prevailed the entire week causing the course to dry out rapidly and present some extremely difficult playing conditions.

## ...of the professional golf tour

Last year the course conditions were criticized as being too soft from the record rainfall in 1994. We were determined to keep the playing conditions firm in 1995.

The result was close to U. S. Open playing conditions, very firm and very fast. The winning score went from -24 in 1994 to -5 in 1995, which got very favorable responses from the media and spectators alike."

### The LPGA Sprint Championship

Going into the LPGA members' first championship to be held at their brand new LPGA International Golf Club, Superintendent Mark Heater had two fears, rain and/or hot weather. The late spring dates in April could be disastrous on either count. On April 16th, one week before tournament week, the temperatures began climbing to summer-like numbers 90, 92, 93... Mark could imagine TV shots of dead ryegrass all over the

place. At 1 pm that Sunday, the watering began.

Mark said they pumped record gallons of effluent water each night for six nights plus the daytime syringing to cool the grass in the heat of the day. The downside to so much watering to save the overseeding was that the course is built on heavy soils. Heavy storms run off quickly, but the top quarter-inch can stay soft and hamper mowing. It was a no-win situation.

Finally, the heat wave subsided just in time for tournament week with high temperatures returning to low to mid 80s. Mark had also hedged his bets by spraying the fairways with Primo growth regulator in case he couldn't mow due to wet conditions.

By the end of the tournament, some ryegrass areas were getting "toasty," but the course only lost a few per cent of overseeding. After the tournament another heat wave hit and this time the rye said sayonara! Through it all the bent/

poa greens showed no signs of stress. Mark attributes that to the application of K-Power's 12-0-42 fertilizer at 1 lb. of Potassium per 1,000 square feet, three weeks before the event.

The tournament routine itself was a juggling act of men and equipment squeezed into a near impossible time frame. It took eight men walk mowing with spotlights on the putting and chipping greens and first holes front and back to stay ahead of the early morning 1 & 10 tee times. The 5:45 a.m. morning routine consisted of setting cups, walk mowing 24 greens (double cut), walk mowing the tournament tees because of signs immediately behind each tee, raking the bunkers and dragging the fairways.

At 4:00 p.m. the crew returned, working until dark to triplex mow the rest of the tees, mow the fairways, collars and approaches, mow the first cut of rough, double cut the greens again, and "brush drag" the bunkers. By the way, the greens average 7,000 square feet so it wasn't a

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