



Isleworth's 12th green: rebuilt and regrassed. Photo by Buck Buckner.

ter we got into coring out the greens and rebuilding them, the members began talking about playability issues and the challenge of the course. The course had always been wide open and player friendly.

"Everyone was looking for a little more challenge.

"So we decided to hire golf course architect, Steve Smyers, to look into what could be done to complement the original layout and instill a little more challenge and excitement. So the relatively simple concept of converting the greens turned into a multi-year phased program of improvements and change."

"Isleworth's vision of challenge included good bunkering. Smyers reworked the existing 26 bunkers and added 64 more for a total of 90. I think he did a good job with them," said Buck.

I had to agree. As Buck and I rode the remodeled course, I had a hard time remembering whether some of bunkers were original or new because they seemed very natural in the rolling layout.

Buck added, "In addition to the bunkers, the greens were all reshaped and #17 and #18 were relocated. The 18th hole was shortened into a challenging par 4 and the 17th lengthened into a gambling, go-for-it-in-two, par 5.

"The high left side of the 7th hole was cut and lowered and we used the fill to

***Having bentgrass in
Central Florida is a
wonderful dream, but
just isn't realistic!***

raise the low areas on the 3rd hole. We also moved tees and built new tees to give more variety for playing length and different sight lines.

"Additionally, we have planted a lot of magnolias, maples, oaks and sweet gum to help define some areas and screen others. If you remember that Brazilian silk floss tree on #13, we harvested two seed pods and have planted many of the resulting seedlings around the course."

"The only real difficulty we had during the project was the record rainfall in the summers of 1993 and 1994. It forced us to do more sodding on areas we might otherwise have sprigged .

"All of the changes have been good, and the members seem pleased with the results. The course is still very playable for golfers of all caliber. I think the new changes may have toughened up the course by a stroke or two overall, but I think they're having more fun and excitement each round with the new looks and challenges."

Super Tips

Cleaning up fairway clippings presents challenge

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As a golf professional friend of mine often says, "There are many ways to make par." This philosophy certainly holds true in a golf course superintendent's line of work as well. Every superintendent has their own unique way of doing things and often the same task can be completed many different ways.

It is because of this that I believe one of the best methods for a golf course superintendent to advance his knowledge in the field of turfgrass management is through networking with his peers. It is this interaction among comrades that allow us to pick up on little tips or even completely different styles of management that will help us to a better job on our own "turf".

Beginning with this issue, a new feature in the *Florida Green* will be the "Super Tips" section. The "Super Tips" section will provide tips from your peers that might make your job easier or more efficient.

The first "Super Tip" relates to the clean up of "fairway clippings".

One of the challenges golf course superintendents face today is how to mow the large acreage of fairways with little or no distraction to the golfer. Some have chosen to mow the fairways in the afternoon. Mowing when the turf is dry usually solves the problem of the piles of clippings in the fairways.

However, not many golf course superintendent's have this luxury since it would probably be a hindrance or distraction to the golf play. Therefore, we are usually forced to mow fairways in the early morning hours.

Consequently for southern golf course superintendents, who mow fairways without baskets, mowing in the morning re-

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sults in numerous piles of clippings that must be dispersed.

Clippings in the fairways can obviously be a distraction. So what is the answer?

On a recent trip to Dancing Rabbit Golf Club in Philadelphia, Miss., I witnessed a unique solution.

Golf Course Superintendent John Mills had attached a fairway drag net, usually seen attached to the rear of a fairway mower, to a golf course utility vehicle. This allowed the fairway mower the freedom to do his job of mowing fairways without the concern of the location of a net attached to the rear of his fairway cutting machine.

By attaching the net to the bed of a utility vehicle, the employee dragging clippings can drive on only the close-cut fairway area.

Having the drag mat attached to a separate unit (utility vehicle) has several advantages:

- First, it takes only one vehicle and one operator. Therefore, there is not a need to send two vehicles and two operators on the golf course with a chain or hose dragged between them, knocking down the piles of clippings. This certainly saves labor dollars.
- Second, the net displaces all of the clippings with one pass over the area and it does so without dragging the net through the rough that often causes un-



This one-man drag mat mounted on a utility cart drags only in the fairways and doesn't require a second person, like a hose, rope or chain. Photos by Darren Davis.

sightly standing up of bermudagrass grain.

- Having the net attached to a utility vehicle also gives the golf course superintendent the freedom of dragging the fairways without necessarily having to cut the turfgrass. This may come in handy on a tournament day when mowing is not an option or if you desired to remove the dew on the fairways prior to fertilizing them.

- Having clipping dispersal as a separate job function also gives the fairway mower the freedom to mow fairways without the concern of the location of the net that normally would be dragging behind his unit.

- Finally, the utility vehicle method allows the net to be folded up and stored in the bed of a utility vehicle in-between dragging of golf holes.

The particular brand of fairway drag system seen at Dancing Rabbit Golf Club, is manufactured by Gold Medal Recreation Products, and is being distributed in Florida by Precision Small Engine in Pompano Beach.

If you have an innovative idea that you feel could help your fellow golf course superintendent please drop us a line at *The Florida Green*, 6780 Tamarind Circle, Orlando, FL 32819, or email us at FLGRN@aol.com.