

TURFGRASS PROBLEMS?

Why?

- Soil Conditions?
- Soil Fertility?
- Unavailable Nutrients?
- Drainage?
- Grass Quality?
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No Rhyme Nor Reason

BY JOEL D. JACKSON, CGCS

Last winter when I wrote the free verse editorial titled, *The Superintendent*, it generated more calls and comments than any other editorial I had ever written. One fellow superintendent even sent me a framed copy of it.

So this year, I thought I'd share some other verses I wrote about golf courses. Don't panic. This isn't a trend. Consider it a belated Christmas/New Year's gift from an editor who thanks you for the opportunity to write about what we do. I hope the following lines conjure a memory or two or give you pause for thought about this great profession.

Fairways

Broad shouldered and muscular
Like pack animals
The rolling fairways carry the burden of
play
Without protest

Seldom pampered and often taken for
granted
Serving their masters in silence
While the greens, like spoiled children
Clamor for attention

The fairways become like the eldest sibling
Having to rapidly mature beyond actual
years
To help the golf course family
Withstand the daily assault on its
character

Sometimes they receive honorable
mention
For their yeoman service
But mostly, they leave the spotlight and
adulation
To their little brothers, the greens

Take a moment and praise the fairways
They carry us from tee to green in such
grand fashion
Never asking much in return
Just a little respect and dignity

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Winter Season

While friends and neighbors up north
Sit hunkered down in their snowdrifted
homes

Watching instructional videos and
tournaments on TV

Our snowbird golfers arrive in
migrating flocks

Every eight minutes from New Year's
Day to Easter

From sunrise to sunset
To tee it up and play golf

We can't keep enough carts charged to
meet the demand

We can hardly get the turf mowed and
get out of the way

Rainy days and frost delays cause
nothing but chaos

As precious tee times are ignored by
fickle Mother Nature

The Finance and Accounting
Department smiles at the bottom
line

As revenues skyrocket off the chart
While we watch the turf on the course
disappear
Under the endless grinding parade of
cleated feet

Days of cloudy cold fronts rob the turf
Of its vigor and nutrient reserves
And agronomic explanations of
conditions
Are met with indifference by those
seeking perfection

Overseeding decisions made in the
fall
Are either praised or cursed as the
winter unfolds
And the well made plans of
management
Become a roll of the dice at the mercy
of the elements

Somehow the course will survive
Battered and bruised, but alive
Eagerly awaiting
The renewal that always comes with
spring



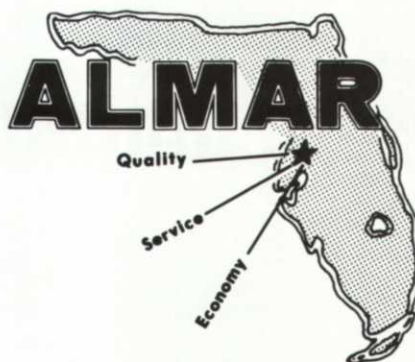
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Thunderstorm

First I heard it,
Rumbling off in the distance.
Then I saw it,
Purple, black and grey.
Rushing in from the west,
Devouring the horizon.

Blotting out the sun,
It turned day into night.
Illuminated only by
Blue-white lightning flashes.

Crack! Pow! Boom!
Cannon shots. Tympani drums.
The thunder claps shattered the clouds
And rolled across the heavens.

Then the rain began.
Big fat splattering drops at first.
Then like a solid grey wall,
Shutting out the world.

Puddles turned into lakes and rivers,
And then into tumbling waterfalls.
Carving deep canyons
In the faces of the sand bunkers.

In twenty minutes it was over.
The golfers and the crew
Emerged from their hiding places
To resume the serious business of golf.



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The Logo Man

I'll tell you true,
I don't feel dressed.
If I don't have a logo,
On my sleeve or my chest.

Got my Jacobsen hat,
And my Toro jacket.
My Rain Bird shirt,
With the three button placket.

Got a Swinging Mickey shirt,
and white Goofy shorts.
I even have three hats,
From NBC Sports.

Got shirts like Ashworths, Antiguas,
Polos and Gants.
Also have green, brown, and blue pairs,
Of new Docker pants.

Burlington Gold Toe,
Is the brand of my socks.
And I jog around town,
In pumped up Reeboks.

Shark on my sleeve,
Bear on my chest.
Umbrella on my collar,
I'm really well dressed.

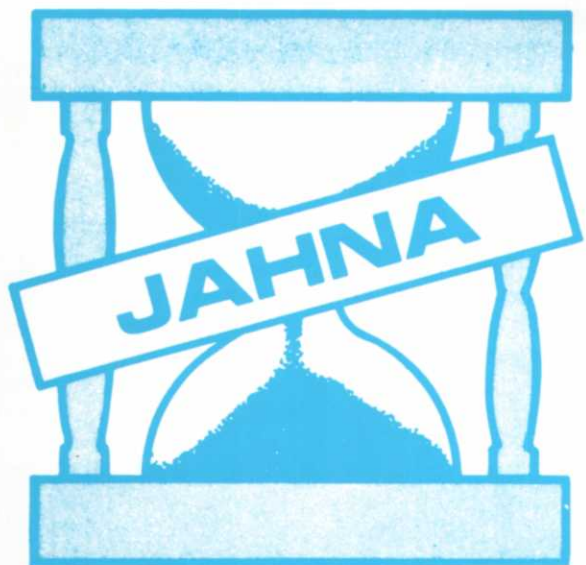
Sartorial splendor,
Was never my plan.
Fate had me picked
as the new Logo Man.

Sundown

Was there ever a better time
to see a golf course
than at sundown?

All the cares and worries
and harsh realities of the day
are softened.

And in the twilight,
the turf turns from tweed
into velvet.



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