SPOTLIGHT: NATIONAL WINNERS, CHAPTER ROUNDUP

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COVER STORY: TALLAHASSEE MUNICIPAL GCS.

Tallahassee is an island of golf opportunity located at the point where the state’s peninsula takes a left turn into the Panhandle.

HANDS ON: MANAGING PUTTING GREENS

Putting-green management is undergoing a world of change, and today’s superintendent needs to proceed with caution when implementing management programs.

INDUSTRY ROUNDUP: INDUSTRY LOSES A GIANT

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OFFICIAL BUSINESS: CAPITOL UPDATE

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STEWARDSHIP: ECOLOGICAL CONSCIENCE

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RESEARCH: SOUTH FLORIDA UPDATE

Research reports presented at the annual South Florida Turfgrass Expo at the Fort Lauderdale REC indicate the vast breadth of research done at the facility which soon will be moved.

AFTERWORDS: WALKER, JARELL & JACKSON

Jim Walker fantasizes about Super Superintendent, Mark Jarell wanders off the golf course to see how today’s superintendents are coping with the age-old maintenance problems caused by golfers.

About the use of trade names: The use of trade names in this magazine is solely for the purpose of identifying the product use is consistent with the directions on the label.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

Deadline: October 20.

Contact editor Joel Jackson, CGCS at 330-982-1000; fjackson@usga.org.

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CALL FOR ARTICLES
Hands on Topics: Make your best practices and tips for those upcoming topics. Photographic or digital images that are 3 inches wide or 4 1/2 inches are accepted.

Summer 2003 — Overcoming Trouble & Producing Cover

Fall 2003 — Finding the Nut
How today’s superintendent is coping with the sped-up maintenance procedures caused by golf.

Co-hosted by Joel Jackson, CGCS. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs cannot be returned.

FOOTNOTES:
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The 74th GCSAA Conference and Show is history but I would like to reflect on some of the highlights of the convention for those who may not have attended.

First, Florida superintendents walked away with several awards and they need to be recognized again and congratulated for their achievements.

Joe Panteleo, superintendent at Indian Creek Country Club in Miami Beach, won the GCSAA Golf Tournament with a 7-over-par, two-day total of 150. Conditions were quite cold and windy for this golf event at Hilton Head, S.C., but Joe prevailed and we’re all very proud of him.

Joel Jackson, director of communications, was presented with GCSAA’s Distinguished Service Award.

Darren Davis, superintendent at Olde Florida Golf Club, Naples, was awarded his second Leo Feser Award for his articles in Golf Course Management Magazine.

Scott Whorrall, superintendent at the Club at Mediterra in Bonita Springs, received the Environmental Leaders in Golf Award for national private clubs.

Again, congratulations to all of you. It’s great to know that your efforts are appreciated.

Our annual FGCSA reception on Thursday evening was well attended by an estimated 600 people. A “Big Thank You” to our sponsors who continue to make this an outstanding event every year. Thanks also to Association Manager Marie Roberts and Business Manager Mike Perham. They organize the party and make sure we don’t run low on food and refreshments. The 50/50 drawing for our inaugural benevolent fund got off to a great start raising just over $3,000 for members who are in need. Keith Longshore of Lesco had the lucky ticket in the fund-raising raffle.

Keynote speakers at this year’s convention had inspiring messages to lead off the convention. John Kasich, former Ohio congressman’s message was “With Leadership and Teamwork We Can Make a Change.” He said, “We are the kind of people who are based on the way we were raised, with values that have traveled through time.” Those values being honesty, integrity, persistence and accepting personal responsibility. These are ideals exemplified by the successful people in our industry today.

At the Golf General Session, Captain Al Haynes delivered his awe-inspiring keynote address. Capt. Haynes was the pilot of the United Airlines flight that lost all hydraulic systems in the air July 19, 1989. His message focused on luck, coupled with teamwork, communications, preparation, execution and cooperation, all which enable him to land his DC-10 aircraft and save 185 of the 296 passengers on the ill-fated flight. He went on to say, “If something goes wrong, you must be able to stop, think and react to the situation.” It is also important to listen to your team members, including those you supervise. Even if you think you have the answer, they might just have one better. You can see how this applies to us as golf course superintendents and our everyday situations. Capt. Haynes’s presentation included audio tapes of conversations from the cockpit to the tower and all of the emergency departments involved in this crisis. I noted that level heads reigned throughout this horrendous ordeal. Panic was never detected with these highly trained professionals.

At the convention, one always runs into old friends whom we haven’t seen for a while. Maybe it’s someone who worked with you as an OJT student or former assistant and now is a superintendent. I ran into both and renewed old friendships, and there are always good seminars and a trade show that has everything you could need at your course. One of the operators who was missing this year was Dr. Bree Hayes. She was diagnosed with cancer and the treatments left her physically unable to attend. If you have attended her seminars you might drop her card and send get well wishes. I’m sure this would brighten her spirits.

I know this is a busy time of year with spring renovations and upcoming summer projects, but I urge everyone to attend some of your chapter meetings. The directors for your chapters work hard to provide good meeting sites, good educational programs and the host superintendents usually knock themselves out to make their golf courses the best ever for the meeting.

I often hear that some superintendents are turned off because they think their local associations are big “cliques.” They say the same guys hang together, play golf together and don’t allow anyone else into their group. That may be true in a few cases, but for the most part our members who attend meetings regularly are just more familiar with each other. So if you aren’t attending meetings for this reason, try again and give people a chance to get to know you.

I am looking forward to the EGCSA Poa Classic weekend and the CFGCSA Crowfoot weekend. These are two weekends of some rest and relaxation and good fun for the family. Everyone needs a break once in awhile. Other events of interest will also be the Suncoast Scramble, SFGCSA Turf Expo, NFGCSA Mike Richards Memorial, Jeff Hayden Envirotron Classic, SFGCSA Missing and Exploited Children’s Tournament, PBGCSA Future of Golf and TCGCSA Blue Pearl. Proceeds from these tournamens go toward turf grass research, scholarship funds and to other worthwhile causes.

I hope to get to as many of these functions as possible and look forward to meeting as many members as I can. Please feel free to introduce yourself anytime, anywhere.
Walks the course every morning.

Mole cricket mercenary.

Happy hour with the crew on Fridays.

True to the game.
Joel Jackson, CGCS was in a bind. Actually it was a triple bind.

He had just learned of his selection for a 2003 GCSAA Distinguished Service Award, but after a few moments of basking in the glow of the highest award his profession can bestow, the pit of his stomach began to get heavy.

The weight hung there and the award was presented Feb. 12 at the opening session of the International Golf Course Conference and Show in Atlanta. The DSA presentation followed the 2002 Wreath of Grass Award from the Florida Turfgrass Association by a few months.

“While I treasure the recent awards I have been given,” said the FGCSA’s director of communications, it’s not about technical skill and knowledge. It’s about taking those things to the phrase we have all come to hate: the next level, which is the heart and attitude with which you apply those skills and knowledge. It’s about taking the Florida Green deadline - loomed ever larger as it grew nearer. As editor, he had led his publication to the GCSAA’s top award 10 times in 11 years on the basis of high journalistic principles, which include thoroughness in reporting the news of his franchise. What was he going to do?

“I’ve decided to run the GCSAA news release along with the official photo of the presentation,” Jackson said when his publisher asked how he was going to handle the situation. That would never do, said the publisher, who made other arrangements.

This is a brief profile of the man as seen by an outsider. The facts of his resume are known to most Florida Green readers and the highlights are listed here. But what kind of a man earns these kinds of honors? In the end, I come back to the phrase used earlier: he is the consummate professional.

It’s not about technical skill and knowledge. It’s about taking those things to the phrase we have all come to hate: the next level, which is the heart and attitude with which you apply those skills and knowledge. “My standing goal always was to be the best superintendent I could be,” he said.

The same could be said about any task he has undertaken. Whether it’s as a golf course superintendent, a teacher, a director of communication, a reporter, a naval officer or a communication, a reporter, a naval officer or a day laborer - Joel Jackson has been all of the above - he would strive to be the best he could be - the consummate professional.

I first met Joel in the fall of 1988 when part-time Golfweek columnist Mark Jarrell persuaded me to come talk to the FGCSA board about leaving my job as executive editor of Golfweek to become publisher of the Florida Green.

Jackson was vice president at the time, publications chairman and the object of Dan Jones’s affection to be editor-in-waiting while Dan and his wife, Irene, wound down to retirement. But I don’t remember Joel in those first meetings. He did nothing to call attention to himself - a trait, I have learned, that certainly helps define his character.

Of course he probably was absorbed in his job at the time. He had just taken on the responsibility of growing bengtgrass greens year-around in Central Florida for none other than Arnold Palmer.
But that was only the beginning. In the next 18 months, while trying to keep a delicate cool-season grass alive in Florida’s brutal summer sunshine, Jackson also
- became editor of the Florida Green;
- became president of the Florida GCSCA;
- underwent double bypass surgery (his first of three or four cardiac procedures);
- was host to the GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show’s first-ever visit to Florida.

Oh yes. I think that was about the year that daughter Jennifer entered high school. If not, she was an eighth-grader, which is even worse!

Near the back of this issue is a column by Jim Walker about a mythical “S-Man,” a superintendent who is expected to accomplish impossible tasks before breakfast. Those mythical tasks in Walker’s cheek pale in comparison to the real-life challenges Jackson faced in 1989-90... and overcame.

But the man not only survived, he thrived even though the bent-grass path was far from smooth and Jackson ended up returning to Disney in 1991. Still that job with Palmer was the scene of one of the highlights of his career.

“Arnold Palmer was playing golf with the CEO of the Nestle Corp. and told me, ‘This is the way I always wanted the course to be;’” was the first thing Jackson said in listing his personal memorable moments.

Other highlights included making three treks to Augusta National to learn the secrets of preparing for the Masters. “We watched the evolution of golf course maintenance on the most coveted course in the game,” he said.

In 1992, Jackson was awarded the FGCSA’s Distinguished Service Award. It was well earned and an honor that most would consider the pinnacle of a career. Joel Jackson was just getting started.

He began writing articles for other publications in addition to the Florida Green, and he began attending meetings with regulators, legislative hearings and other organizations in the golf and turfgrass industries. He began writing letters to newspapers, lawmakers, bureaucrats and golf officials.

Soon Joel Jackson the information-seeker became Joel Jackson the sought-after spokesman for the golf-course-maintenance industry in Florida.

As the physical demands of the job and the stress of maintaining high-profile golf courses increased, another heart procedure convinced Jackson to “retire” so he could begin the career he had been preparing for his entire professional life: communicating the needs of the golf industry to its participants and the people who would regulate it.

He began work as the FGCSA’s director of communications in 1998.

“I have always believed in communicating up and down the chain of command to keep everyone informed of what is expected and what is going on,” he said. “Now my goals are aimed at taking the message of the golf industry to the legislators, regulators and general public.”

Jackson now writes regularly not only for the Florida Green, but also for the national publication Golfdom, and for his hometown golf publication, Central Florida Golfer - defending the industry, challenging its regulators and patiently explaining the complexity of managing vast environmental systems.

When he writes and speaks for internal audiences, however, he preaches professionalism. Listen to the advice he would give the future generation of golf course superintendents:

“If you are bound and determined to become a superintendent, then supplement your agronomic and technical education with business and communication courses, including writing. I guarantee you that dealing with people - owners, committees, general managers, golfers, and your own staff - will be your most difficult task.

“You will have numerous sources for turf-problem solving, including your peers, suppliers, and consultants, but your face-to-face interactions with the people who count at your club will require you to be a good communicator and leader.

Once on board, learn the

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Launched in 1996 as a slit-applied product, Chipco Choice quickly became the product of choice for mole crickets — providing control for six months or more with just one slit application.

Now, the new label adds new sites, pests and the flexibility of broadcast application. When broadcast-applied for fire ants, a single application of Chipco Choice provides up to 52 weeks of control and bonus control of mole crickets (4 months), fleas & ticks (1 month), and nuisance ants (3 months). The broadcast application requires a spreader capable of applying 12.5 lbs. product/acre.

New Chipco TopChoice provides one-step fire ant control for up to a full year. Formulated specifically for broadcast application with a standard spreader (87 lbs. product/acre), TopChoice is designed to be very different from other fire ant treatments: No multi-step processes. No time-consuming mound treatments. Just one easy, broadcast application is all it takes to get up to 95 percent control in 4-6 weeks, and eliminate the threat of fire ants for up to a year. Plus, an application of Chipco TopChoice for fire ants will also control mole crickets, fleas, ticks and nuisance ants.

New Chipco FireStar delivers fipronil in a unique, easy-to-use granular bait that’s highly attractive to fire ants. The result is effective control with just 0.00015% active ingredient, the lowest concentration in any fire ant treatment. FireStar makes an excellent partner for Chipco Choice or TopChoice — use it to treat landscape beds, embankments and sand trap perimeters, the bases of trees, and other hard-to-reach places fire ants favor.

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business at your club. It is not sufficient to just run your department. If you understand how everything is connected and the revenues and expenses are in focus, you can make yourself more valuable and even a candidate for general manager if that is in your career path.

Ask questions. Admit mistakes. Always seek ways to improve and don’t be shy about writing reports and memos that highlight your learning experiences from peer visits, at monthly chapter meetings and GCSAA conference and show experiences.

“It shows you are on the ball working to improve yourself and the conditions at your club.”

From the man who walked the walk before he talked about it.

Larry Kieffer

Darren J. Davis Wins Second Leo Feser Award

Darren J. Davis, director of golf course operations at Olde Florida Golf Club, Naples, was presented with the 2002 Leo Feser Award Feb. 12 at the opening session of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America’s 74th International Golf Course Conference and Show in Atlanta. It was marked the second time Davis has won this award.

The Feser Award honors the best superintendent-authored article published in the association’s monthly magazine, Golf Course Management. The winner receives an all-expenses-paid trip to the conference and show and will have his name engraved on a plaque for display at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kan.

Davis was recognized for his two-part article, “An Olde Florida Course Made New,” published in the January and February 2002 issues of GCM. The article discussed the increasing problem of off-type bermudagrass. Because playability was being compromised by the progression of the “off-types,” Davis and his staff engineered an aggressive re-grassing project that has been well-received.

Davis is the only two-time winner of the Leo Feser Award. He previously received the award in 1997 for his article “Sowing the Seeds of Knowledge,” published in the December 1996 issue of GCM.

“Darren Davis’s article, ‘An Olde Florida Course Made New,’ is an excellent story that celebrates the revitalization of the Olde Florida Golf Club,” said Ricky D. Heine, CGCS, chairman of the GCSAA publications committee. “Darren is certainly a worthy recipient of GCSAA’s Leo Feser Award.”

Darren Davis, right, from the Olde Florida G.C. in Naples makes history as GCSAA President Mike Wallace presents him with his second GCSAA Leo Feser Award. Photo by Bruce Mathews.
The award honors the late Leo Feser, a pioneer golf course superintendent and a charter member of GCSAA. Feser is credited with the keeping the association’s official publication alive during the Great Depression. For three years, he wrote, edited, assembled and published each issue of the magazine from his home in Wayzata, Minn. Davis is also a regular contributor to The Florida Green. His regular Hands-On feature called “Super Tips” conveys cost-effective and innovative ideas he has discovered on his visits to golf courses across the country and around the world.

Davis’s articles may be accessed at http://www.gcsaa.org/gcm/2002/jan02/01olde.html http://www.gcsaa.org/gcm/2002/feb02/02olde.html

CFGCSA Gives Presidents Award To Leventhal

The Central Florida GCSA rewarded Stuart Leventhal, CGCS at the Interlachen Country Club for his 20-plus years of participation and support in the central Florida golf industry by selecting him to receive a 2002 FGCSA President’s Award for Lifetime Service. Leventhal, originally from Natick, Mass. moved to Florida at age 5. His father was the general manager at the Wedgefield C.C. when Leventhal was in college and he worked part time on the course while pursuing a degree in criminal justice at the University of Central Florida in the late 1970s. Little did he realize that...
he would return to golf and make a successful career in the fields of green.

As the harsh realities of a criminal justice career set in, Leventhal decided to capitalize on his experience in golf and he began taking ornamental horticulture classes at Valencia Community College to provide him with the basics in agronomy. Armed with this knowledge he landed the superintendent’s position at Orlando’s city-owned Dubsread golf course, once a stop on the PGA Tour back in the 40s and 50s.

Leventhal says he came of age as a superintendent while at Dubsread. “Golf course architect Lloyd Clifton was a consultant for the city of Orlando when I was at Dubsread. He connected all the dots for me and tied all my practical experiences in the field and all my theoretical education in the classroom together.”

After two years at Dubsread, Leventhal took over the reins at the Rolling Hills C.C. in Longwood and got a taste of private-club operations during his three-year stay. In 1985, he was tapped to take over the 10-year-old Interlachen C.C. in Winter Park. Eighteen years later, his lightning-fast greens are a legend in the area.

Leventhal has given back to his profession by serving lengthy terms on the advisory committee for the Mid-Florida Turf Conference and on the board of directors for the Central Florida GCSA. He was president of the chapter for 1991-93. Leventhal also has been a long-time member of the Larry Kamphaus Crowfoot Open Committee, helping to make this one of the premier social/business events of each year. Leventhal, with the generous participation of the Interlachen C.C., has hosted the annual CFGCSA - FTGA Turf Research Fund Raiser, which brings superintendents and club officials together for education and golf each January.

Leventhal is a member of the Central Florida GCSA, the Florida GCSA, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and the Florida Turfgrass Association. Congratulations and thanks to Stuart Leventhal, CGCS for his steadfast support of the profession and the golf course industry.

Joel Jackson

Chapter Round Up

Cantwell Event Nets $50,000

Calusa

In conjunction with the Everglades GCSA we want to thank everyone who sponsored and participated in the Mike Cantwell Memorial Tournament on January 17th. (See sidebar) We were able to raise $50,000 for the Cantwell children’s educational trust fund.

Central Florida

Walt Disney World’s Bob Karnes, superintendent of the Bonnet Creek Club was recognized in the February 2003 issue of Florida Golf Central magazine for his environmental steward work in getting the Disney courses certified in the ACSP program. Bob was presented with a unique birdhouse by Fort Loudon Designs of Louisville, Tenn. We are also proud of our hometown boy Joel Jackson, who was awarded one of the three 2003 GCSAA Distinguished Service Awards at the 74th International Golf Conference & Show in Atlanta. The recognition of Joel’s long service to the industry was richly deserved.

Everglades

We’d like to add our congratulations to our External Vice President Darren Davis for receiving his second Leo Feser Award at the GCSAA Conference in Atlanta. Davis is a proven communicator with his work with EPIC Productions’ training videos and his Super Tips articles in the Florida Green. We would also like to recognize Scott Whorrall and the Bonita Bay Group.