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There’s the Rules of Golf ...
and then there’s Ridge Rules!
FGCSA Board meets with GCSAA Board

Palms we hosted a GCSAA Regional Seminar: “IPM – Putting Together an Effective Plan for Your Course.” Attendance was good in part due to our discount registration fee for chapter members, with the chapter picking up the balance. Everyone was invited, but non-chapter members paid the normal seminar fee.

FGCSA
Our board of directors met with the GCSAA board at its winter meeting in Orlando in January. The GCSAA has been holding meetings around the country to get local chapters involved in the governance structure and to provide grassroots input on the issues and programs. This push is to help GCSAA to serve its members through the chapters and to help chapters be as effective as possible.

All the candidates that the FGCSA supported for the 2007 GCSAA Board of Directors were elected at the GCSAA Annual Meeting in Anaheim. Congratulations to our own Bob Randquist, CGCS for winning a second term as director.

Congratulations are also due to our Florida No. 1 Golf Team of Bob Harper, Seth Strickland, Stephen Fox and Jim Torba for winning the Team Gross event. Harper finished tied for second. At our GCSAA reception, we raised nearly $3,000 for the Benevolent Fund thanks to Steve Ehrbar donating back his raffle winnings to the pot. Steve asked that his portion be used to aid fellow superintendent Mike Ballard, who lost his home to a fire.

GCSAA
Past President Bruce Williams, CGCS will be the presenter at this year’s GCSAA Leadership Series half-day seminar at the Poa Annua Classic on Friday, May 11th in Naples. Williams will be speaking on “Mastering Your Communications Skills” – a real necessity in today’s world. Naturally PDI and Certification education points will be available.

Additionally, chapters were reminded to announce the first FGCSA dues increase in 14 years to their members. Also a committee was formed to handle restructuring and reorganizing the staffing needs of the FGCSA with the pending retirement of Association Manager Marie Roberts in February.
2007 FGCSA RECEPTION

GCSAA said “The Answer is Anaheim”
The question was where is the FGCSA Reception?

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Photo by Daniel Zelazek
Seventeen years ago golf course architect Bobby Weed and player consultant Chi Chi Rodriguez designed a golf course that was destined to host one of the players’ favorite annual events on the Champions Tour, the Outback Steakhouse Pro-Am. Additionally under the guidance of golf course superintendent Jason Kubel, the course has won consecutive Chapter Awards for Public Courses in the annual GCSAA and Golf Digest Environmental Leadership in Golf Awards (ELGA) in 2005 and 2006.

According to Kubel, the course does more than 42,000 rounds per year and the highlight of the season is February, when the Champions Tour comes to town for the Pro Am event. “We draw as many spectators as a regular PGA Tour event,” said Kubel. “This year senior ‘rookie’ Nick Price played the event.

“In the celebrity category, Bill...
Murray also played this year. Other entertainers who have played include Kevin Costner, Huey Lewis, Mark Wahlberg and Kevin Sorbo of Hercules fame. We also have a strong showing from the sports ranks with Emmit Smith, Phil Simms, Joe Theisman, Ronde Barber and Derrick Brooks.

"The field is usually 70-80 players and includes approximately 16 celebrities. There is quite a scramble by the celebs to shoot well enough to make the cut and play on the third day. This is the first year we will be telecast live in High Definition on NBC. Most of the Champions Tour events are carried on the Golf Channel so this was a nice boost for us to be on network TV."

"With a $2.6 million purse, we have one of the strongest fields of the year behind the majors, of course. Outback Steakhouse does such a great job of hosting the tournament that the event is perennially voted number one on the tournament in several categories. The winner also gets the unlimited use of an Outback Steakhouse card."

The event originally was called the Verizon Classic and Kubel recalls fond and bittersweet memories of those days when Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus teed it up. Most notable was Nicklaus remembering Kubel from the construction of the King and the Bear courses at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine. Kubel also remembers how the crowd gravitated to wherever Palmer was playing on the course during the practice rounds. Sadly on the first day of competition, the King threw his back out on his tee shot on the first hole and had to withdraw.

Besides working with the King and the Bear in St. Augustine in 2000-01, Kubel served as an assistant superintendent at the Isleworth G&CC.

This steep-faced bunker on No. 14 is among the fairway bunkers slated for reconstruction to improve drainage and prevent washouts. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

Most notable was Nicklaus remembering Kubel from the construction of the King and the Bear courses at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine.
John Kopack  
Director of Grounds  
Orlando World Center  
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Orlando, FL

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Location: Lutz

Ownership: PGA Tour

Stats: 18 holes; 6,898 yards; par 71

Genealogy: Designed by Bobby Weed and player consultant Chi Chi Rodriguez; construction by PGA Tour;

Opened: 1991

Management Team: Brady Boyd, general manager; Justin Wink, head golf professional; Jason Kubel, golf course superintendent

Acreage under maintenance: 152

Greens: Tifdwarf; avg. 7,000 sq.ft., total 4.0 acres; green speeds: 9-10, 10-11 for tournaments. All greens are overseeded with 3-way blend of Poa trivialis @ 20 lbs/M maximum.

Tees, Fairways and Roughs: Tifway 419 hybrid bermudagrass overseeded with Champion GC ryegrass. Tees 6 acres, HOC .425” overseeded @ 600 lbs/acre. Fairways 41 acres, HOC .475” overseeded @ 500 lbs/acre. Roughs 101 acres, HOC 2.0” May-Oct, 3.0” Nov-April, overseeded @ 400 lbs/acre.


Natural areas: 22 acres of wetlands, cypress bayheads and native areas consisting of cypress trees, mulch, ferns and native grasses.


Irrigation: Source – deep well; PSI Constant Speed Pump Station; Toro Site Pro/E-Osmac controller. 1,100 heads @ 75-ft. spacing. Fertigation system.

Staff: Total including superintendent, 22 including two part-time; Weekly budgeted hours - 935 ST and 83 OT. No seasonal variation of labor.

Key team members: First Assistant Brad Shaeffer, Second Assistant James Pichler, Equipment Manager Jeff Young, Pest Control Tech Mike McNamara, Irrigation Tech Mark Batchelor and Admin Assistant Kathy Amick.
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under Buck Buckner from 1995-98 and got to watch another modern legend, Tiger Woods, hone his game and play "fun" golf with buddy Mark O'Meara. Says Kubel, "It was fun to meet some of these golfing legends and nice that they remembered you, but you have to keep all that fame and glory in perspective and remember that they are really just normal folks like you and me."

Kubel says he loves the energy and action of tournament preparations. He also has a passion for taking seriously the role of environmental steward. Kubel says, "It's not hard! Like anything, if you work smart and have a plan, it just becomes your normal operating routine. Adopting IPM strategies and following BMPs isn’t rocket science, most of it is basic good housekeeping. Keeping good records and keeping the shop neat and clean sets an example for your staff, visitors and regulators. It's scary when you go somewhere and see 6-foot-high dog