McMillan, Darling put heads together and, voilà, Heads Up

BY MARK LESLIE

Golf course irrigation contractors, builders and superintendents can sleep soundly during construction projects — now that a new flag assembly is on the market.

The continual problem of destroyed sprinkler heads on a project is "a nightmare to the irrigation contractor and superintendent," said Pat McMillan of Chandler, N.C., an on-staff supervisor and finish shaper with Robert Trent Jones Sr. After struggling with this nightmare for years, McMillan and Gary Darling of Sapulpa, Okla., a Jones architect's representative, decided to do something about it.

The results: Heads Up Flagging, a simple 5-by-6-inch orange plastic flag on a 36-inch metal pole that sticks into a rubber mount. Using a powerful new tape from 3M Company, the mount is stuck on the top of the head, so that the flag is not touched by water from the sprinkler.

Tested in intense heat, extreme cold and high winds, the flag assembly has proven it will save money and major headaches on golf courses, parks and athletic fields.

"For years we have griped and moaned about people putting wooden stakes beside the sprinklers," said Dave Davis of Golf Course Irrigation and Design Consultants in California. "The sprinkler would rotate past the stake and it would block out an area of irrigation as well as erode around the stake. But nobody ever thought about putting a sticker on a head.

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