**CMAA conference draws record crowd**

**Club managers focus on many golf course maintenance issues**

**Scholarship program recipient joins Dye Designs**

**Course owners recognize contributions of PGA Tour**

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**MARRIOTT PROMOTES HAMMOCK**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Kevin Hammock, most recently director of golf at Marriott's Sawgrass Golf Resort, has been advanced to the newly created position of associate director of Marriott Golf at the unit's headquarters here.

Hammock is involved with development acquisitions, golf marketing efforts and career growth programs for the more than 150 golf professionals on the Marriott golf staff nationwide. He is succeeded at Sawgrass by Rick Kline, a 10-year veteran of the Marriott Golf program. Hammock joined Marriott in 1982 at the Camelback Golf Club in Scottsdale as an associate golf professional and was named director of golf at Sawgrass in 1989. A year later, he assumed additional responsibilities for golf course maintenance issues.

A graduate of Arizona State University, Hammock was named the 1991 PGA Merchandiser of the Year honors in the College category. Hammock has been praised for his management and development skills, and for his ability to motivate large teams of professionals on the Marriott golf staff nationwide.

**DENVER, Co. — In 1986, Dye Designs Inc. established a scholarship program to encourage candidates to seek a college degree in a related field of study which would lead to full-time employment in the golf industry.**

On Dec. 14, Daryl Dinkel graduated from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, with a degree in landscape/horticulture specializing in turfgrass management. The achievement is significant because Dinkel never wanted to go to college, but now has a degree in a field of study which Dye Designs Chairman Perry Dye feels will make him a valuable employee.

Dye saw in Dinkel the potential to be the first role model in an educational plan with the board of directors of the National Golf Course Owners Association has presented its Award of Merit to the PGA Tour. The award was given to Deane Beman, commissioner of the PGA Tour, at a luncheon on Jan. 15 at Catamaran Resort Hotel in San Diego.

The award is presented annually for achievements that "reflect the proud traditions, elevate public awareness, and contribute to the advancement of golf as a life-long recreational and competitive activity." During Beman's tenure, the PGA Tour has experienced tremendous growth. PGA Tour Investments, a member of the NGCOA, has grown to include more than 14 golf facilities in the United States. The Tour has also opened "Family Golf Centers" that are designed to provide a venue for the whole family to learn and enjoy golf. The Tour has brought countless players to the game by conducting golf tournaments throughout the country, many of which are televised to millions of households each year.

**Player perceptions of the cost of golf over the past five years**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Percent of golfers</th>
<th>Core golfers</th>
<th>Occasional golfers</th>
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<td>22.5</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>15.8</td>
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**Increase in the cost of golf in the next five years perceived by golfers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of golfers</th>
<th>Core golfers</th>
<th>Occasional golfers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>5.9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.4</td>
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<td>7.4</td>
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**Source: NGF**

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Club managers explore variety of maintenance issues

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said.

More research is needed on ground water contamination. Yet, federal cutbacks have caused universities, like the University of Missouri and Pennsylvania State University, to curtailing research, he added. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, United States Golf Association and turf industries have picked up some of the funding slack.

"Water may become more precious than oil in the next five years," said the Blue Hills superintendent.

Saving water has become particularly important in areas like Arizona, where new courses are allowed to irrigate just 90 acres of turf; Florida, where most parts of the state are rationing water at 60 to 90 percent of traditional rates, and many new courses are required to use efficient, and even Wichita, Kan., where a proposal to restrict watering of greens to two hours a night and tees to one hour is under consideration.

Alternative low-water-use grasses, like buffalograss, are being introduced to rough areas, Fears said. Drought-tolerant tall fescues, zoysia grass and Bermudagrass are being used elsewhere. Automated irrigation systems with low-pressure heads and more efficient pumps are being installed.

"But the key to saving water is re-educating golfers who are used to a lush green carpet everywhere," Fears said. "They have to learn to tolerate some brown areas.

"Cutting greens below 1/8-inch is crazy. Cutting below that height requires far more water and pesticides. Acceptance of those changes has to come at the board level."

The federal government is requiring courses with underground storage tanks to have much higher levels of insurance or financial resources by Dec. 31, 1993, Fears said. "If you have a tank that is more than 15 or 20 years old, you should put a new one in," he told the assembled managers. "When you remove it, the soil around the tank may be contaminated with spilled gas. That soil may have to be shipped off to an approved landfill."

The U.S. Supreme Court ruling last June that federal law could not stop localities from imposing their own pesticide regulations has opened the door for local pesticide restrictions in the 83,000 municipalities nationwide, Fears said. (See related story page 1.)

Even if proposed Congressional bills restoring federal preemption on pesticide issues are passed, Fears predicted stricter environmental laws are on the way in terms of training; restricted use pesticide applications by licensed applicators; cleaning and disposing of wash water from chemical application equipment; regulations due to a chemical's aging, teaching ability; exhaust emissions from utility vehicles and golf cars; disposing of used oil; and installation of eyewash stations.

To help avoid problems of recommended managers begin training their chemical applicators; conduct environmental audits; make the public more aware of the positives of a golf course; train staff how to respond to the public's questions; institute integrated pest management practices; and have the superintendent join the GCSAA.

Managing the Maintenance Budget

The type of golf course greatly influences the maintenance budget, according to Randy Nichols, head superintendent at Cherokee Towson Country Club in Chicago and a member of the GCSAA board of directors.

Traditional links and modified links courses are generally easy to maintain because of their lack of trees and largely natural areas, Nichols said.

Modern courses are usually more expensive to keep up with their steep slopes, deep bunkers and undulating fairways. Growth regulators help slow grass growth and reduce mowing.

Hilly courses are particularly difficult on mowing equipment, Nichols said. Brakes on riding mowers must be in top condition to avoid rollovers.

Large greens require more fertilizers, chemicals and mowing, Nichols said. Small greens suffer from extreme wear and are expensive to repair. Somewhere in the middle works best.

Concrete paths are 30 to 50 percent more expensive to install than asphalt, Nichols said. But concrete costs much less to maintain. Partially sodded paths may be the cheapest. Yet, constant re-sodding is necessary where paths turn to grass.

The three major insect pests are grubs, fire ants and mole crickets, Nichols said. They can cost thousands of dollars to control.

Labor accounts for 50 to 60 percent of the average maintenance budget. As the labor pool shrinks, women, minorities and migrant workers become a more important source of workers, Nichols said.

A crowded course can reduce a maintenance crew's effectiveness by 50 percent, he said. Early.morning play keeps workers off the course when they would normally perform most maintenance functions. Shotgun starts leave no place for the grounds crew to work. And the extra work involved in tournament preparations can severely cut away the maintenance budget.

Putting together the golf course maintenance budget should be a joint effort between the general manager and superintendent, Nichols said. It is usually the most expensive part of any overall country club operation.

That's fitting since the golf course is the most important part of most facilities. A dropoff in course quality often results in fewer greens fees, reduced play and membership declines, he added.

Nichols said he is a firm believer in the general manager concept. The general manager should sit down with the superintendent to develop the budget. Hopefully, the GM has

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spent some time in the maintenance facility, is on the course at least once a week and attends the GCSAA annual convention so he understands the superintendent's needs.

RENOVATIONS

Renovations are becoming increasingly popular because of the natural aging of golf courses and the relative ease of obtaining environmental permits for renovations compared to new courses, according to New Jersey golf course builder Bill Kellers. Why do courses do renovations?

Deterioration is the usual reason, whether it is to overworked greens that need rebuilding, traps that need refining or whatever, Kellers said. Liability can be another reason if, for instance, stray shots are striking cars traveling along a roadway running near the course. Poor drainage is often a motivating factor to improve a course.

Whatever the reason, working with the superintendent is very important, especially on smaller jobs where an architect isn't necessary and the superintendent's crew can do the job itself.

Certain principles apply to renovation work, Kellers said. First, a course should have a good master plan, so that any changes don't hinder the surface. Second, any renovations should have an aesthetic appeal. Finally, any changes should result in a course that is playable for golfers of all abilities, is easily maintained and is sensitive to environmental considerations.

Logistically, everyone needs to know what is going to happen, from the superintendent to the general manager to the members. Work should begin at the farthest point from the clubhouse and work back to minimize impact on golfers. And clean-up after the job is very important, he added.

If several greens need rebuilding, doing them one at a time rather than all at once can also reduce inconvenience for golfers. Sodding and mowing techniques have improved, but if getting the green back into play quickly isn't important, seedling will yield a smoother putter, Kellers said.

Finally, once a job is done, Kellers recommended having it independently inspected to make certain it was done properly.

FINANCES AND TRENDS

The average private course maintenance budget jumped 13 percent in the last year, from approximately $27,000 per hole a year ago to almost $31,000 this year, according to Pannell Kerr Forster's 1992 Clubs in Town & Country, an annual financial survey of more than 250 private country clubs.

Payroll and related expenses provided the bulk of the increase, rising 36 percent, while other expenses grew by 8 percent. Overall, labor costs represent 48.9 percent of course maintenance expenses.

"That means that half of every dollar in the maintenance budget is spent on labor," said PKF's Kevin Crow. "If you're looking to improve your budget, that's the place to make big things happen. If you can control your labor costs, you can get a lot of mileage out of changes there."

The fact that regular membership dues were up 9.9 percent compared to a 2 percent drop in other memberships (social and tennis for example) demonstrates the importance of golf to the club operation, PKF personnel said.

The national accounting firm will add a new figure to its annual report next year, maintenance costs per round. Crow said.

"We recognize the figure may have more meaning for a club that does 20,000 rounds annually than one that does 70,000," he said.

The firm will also begin publishing reports similar to Clubs in Town & Country for the daily-fee and resort course industries, he added.

BUSINESS AND ELECTIONS

CMAA Secretary/Treasurer Richard Kolasa of Skyline Country Club in Tucson, Ariz., reported the association added $100,000 to its reserves while decreasing expenses $14,000 in the past year.

"Your association is in good financial condition," he said.

Kolasa was also elected vice president while Bill Schulz of Houston Country Club was named secretary/treasurer.

Bill Kendall of Woodmont Country Club in Rockville, Md., and Paul Skelton of Troon Golf & Country Club in Scottsdale, Ariz., were elected to the board. Re-elected were Randall Gudanowski of Italian Trail Club in Franklin Lakes, N.J., and Norman Spitzig Jr. of Fort Wayne (Ind.) Country Club.

Your association is in good financial condition.
— Richard Kolasa
new CMAA vice president