Tour of Duty

The rolling hills and huge pine trees are reminiscent of western North Carolina and make the course more challenging to maintain than a typical western Florida layout, Grant said. Grant's biggest maintenance headache is mowing access roads. The pesky insects eat up $50,000 of insecticide and hundreds of man-hours each year.

Innisbrook fortunately was north of Hurricane Andrew, which devastated southern Florida last August. But a no-name storm packing 80-mph winds toppled 70 large pine trees on March 13. Fortunately, most were well out of play and the damage won't be evident to television viewers, he said.

MADE-FOR-TV PREPARATIONS:
Grant said preparation for the Classic is fairly routine. Rough heights are raised to 2 inches.
Riding mowers are put aside and greens instead hand-mowed two or three times daily beginning six weeks before the tournament. Compactors are used to tap down traps.

HOMMOSASSA SPRINGS, Fl. — The inaugural Envirotoron Golf Classic held at World Woods Golf Resort raised $22,500 to benefit turf research. The Seven Rivers Chapter of Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association, led by President Glen Oberlander, developed the tournament concept. Oberlander challenged members to put together the largest single-day event in the state of Florida, with proceeds generated to support the purchase of equipment needed for the Envirotoron facility in Gainesville.

Envirotoron lab opening Nov. 19
GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Envirotoron, the turfgrass research laboratory at the University of Florida, will be dedicated Nov. 19, beginning "a new era of scientific research for the Florida turf industry."

The dedication climaxes more than two years of construction of the facility which is expected to yield invaluable information on the relationship of turfgrass with biological, environmental and cultural factors, according to Florida Turfgrass Foundation Director Bob Yount. Primary goals will be study of the aspects of turfgrass culture and the impact of turfgrass on temperature modifications, noise abatements, pollution filtration and water purification.

The 31,000-square-foot lab includes student housing to allow the university to recruit top turf scholars. The Dr. G.C. Horn Endowment will fund scholarships.

Envirotoron has been funded by $350,000 raised by the Florida Turfgrass Research Foundation, and by moneys from the state of Florida Capital Facilities Trust, Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association and other private organizations, clubs and individuals.

JAMES ARLIN GRANT
Innisbrook Hilton Resort
Tarpon Springs, Fla.
JC Penney Classic
Dec. 2-5, ABC/ESPN

James Grant is a 23-year veteran at Innisbrook, where the vice president of grounds maintenance oversees 63 holes, 1,000 acres and 140 employees.

He was involved with construction of The Island (1970), Sandpiper (1972) and Copperhead (1973) courses. A native of Chattanooga, Tenn., he spent eight years at nearby Valley Brook Golf Course and a year at Royal Poinciana Golf Club in Naples, Fla., before coming to Innisbrook. Grant holds a two-year certificate in turf management from Mississippi State University.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR: This is the fourth year the Copperhead course will host the male/female team event.

RUBEN RAMIREZ
Big Horn Golf Course
La Quinta, Calif.
Skins Game
Nov. 27-28, ABC

Ruben Ramirez broke into the golf course construction business as an irrigation installer, eventually working his way up to foreman. Noticing the work was steadier, he decided to become a course superintendent and enrolled in The College of the Desert's two-year turf management program. Ramirez helped build several Palm Springs area layouts, including The Vintage Club and the three courses at La Quinta Hotel Golf Course.

He arrived at Big Horn as construction superintendent in 1989 and later became head superintendent.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR: Big Horn includes 72 acres of turf and 46 acres of desert landscape. Ramirez installed drip irrigation in the desert portion. More expensive than conventional irrigation, a drip system saves water and minimizes weeding of grass