Baltimore CC's roofed rinse station raises bar

By MARK LESLIE

TOMONIUM, Md. — It's the perfect — well, nearly perfect — equipment wash station. And its co-creator, superintendent Doug Petersan, is about to make it completely perfect.

"I probably will install some kind of elevated retractable hose, so when the guys are done washing the equipment, the hose will wind up above so it doesn't lie on the ground," said Petersan from his office at Baltimore Country Club here.

When the club built two new maintenance structures and refurbished an old barn and existing maintenance facility, the wash station was a key element of the plan.

"We looked at other maintenance facilities, chose things we liked and didn't like and developed this wash area," said Petersan, who worked with architect Jack Reinhardt of Charlottesville, Va. "We wanted it covered so we could work in it in less than ideal weather conditions. It's lighted, too, and has a couple of hoses and a high-pressure power washer. So, when people finish working, they have a good place to clean their equipment.

The wash area is adjacent to Baltimore CC's cold equipment storage facility in its office and shop area.

Other important aspects of the station are its dollars at each entrance ("which should be standard procedure," Petersan said) and a special drainage system for the rinsate.

Rinse water, Petersan said, goes through an oil grit separator which retains any sediment, oil or fuel. The then-clear water flows to a second, swirl-and-baffle chamber, then to maintenance as well as the professional

Washing equipment has never been made easier and more efficient than at Baltimore Country Club.

clear water flows to a second, swirl-and-baffle chamber, then to a water-quality lagoon adjacent to the separator.

"In that lagoon we have wetland plants," Petersan said. "At the base of that, which is completely lined, we have a 12-inch filter bed of organic matter and sand which the water percolates through. At the bottom of the filter bed is a tile which directs the water into a second lagoon. From there it goes into the irrigation lake and back onto the golf course."

The steel-pipe dollars, he said, are filled and cemented in place with concrete.

Petersan, who has been head superintendent at Baltimore CC for six years, was superintendent for 12 years at Prairie Dunes in Hutchinson, Kansas, before that.

Course design and maintenance a crucial marriage

By DR. MICHAEL HURDZAN

Last month I focused on the physical factors of design, and their relationship to maintenance as well as the professional relationship between designer and superintendent. Now I will address the single most important specification related to maintenance: the turfgrasses to be used. No other specification under the control of the golf course architect will dictate the overall maintenance practices, or playing conditions more than the selection of turfgrasses; and the choices are many.

A few years ago this was not the case and routine and standard specifications were acceptable. But in view of the enormous advances in turfgrass breeding and selection over the past few years, this is not the best practice. In fact, I believe that each individual golf course site should be studied for its inherent climatic and edaphic qualities, along with local environmental restrictions and attitudes, before turfgrasses are selected and specified.

Ideally, a probable maintenance regime should also be defined, with any budgetary limitations, before turfgrasses are selected. Then knowing specific site factors (drainage, soil fertility and texture, quantity and quality of irrigation water, proposed pesticide schedules, mowing equipment and height, etc.), climatic factors (wind, normal rainfall patterns, air drainage, and length of playing season), along with edaphic factors (soil chemistry, soil biology, and physical limitations), social factors, (EPA or conservation restriction, probable total play, country club, public golf course, existing competition, etc.), and budget factors, only then should turfgrasses be selected.

Let me give you some considerations in making this selection. Few golfers would deny that the finest playing surface in northern latitudes is bentgrass and there are many to choose from. It gives you the best tee, fairway and putting surface, but in the transition and Southern areas it is less practical because of summer heat stress.

Many new bentgrasses show good potential, but they are still susceptible to many insect and disease problems, require similar fertility, water management, cultural practices, and for a much longer and intense period.

Improved bluegrasses, on the other hand, Continued on page 14

"Our course design accommodates the natural contours of the land and preserves the wildlife habitats," Meaney said. "But it also plays like a dream. The holes challenge golfers of every skill level, play for reasonable par, provide scenic views, and

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System has enrolled the Country Club of the Poconos in Marshalls Creek, Pa., in its program. The Tom Fazio-designed course is operated by Resorts USA.

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How many times throughout a typical workday, during some agronomic practices, do we think to ourselves that we have solved one problem and created one, or maybe two others? An old example is when a riding bunker rake has come on the market throughout the years from different manufacturers, and it smoothly rakes the bunker sand but its teeth "fluff up" the sand and pull up stones into the sand while driving over a shallow sand layer.

One of my favorite examples is the "Two-Day Rule" when a course decides to skip mowing greens one day a week—usually on Mondays, or during inclement weather. The greens will receive a rest from the rigors of mowing, but they will not return to the speed and firmness that they were on Sunday until not one but two days later on Wednesday.

Another example of the Two-Day Rule is when a course receives a significant rainfall, resulting in a spur of growth two days after the rain.

I, like most superintendents, have a recurring dream of better things happening during real-world situations. Like:

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- The turf-care center is large

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- Top dressing will always be dry enough to apply whenever we decide to apply it.
- It will always rain one-quarter inch after a granular fertilizer application.
- Our equipment never breaks down and is always in great condition.
- Our employers always approve our maintenance and capital-outlay budgets.
- Our employees are easy to get along with and happy and very productive in the process.
- Our turf nursery is identically maintained to all grass varieties and mowing heights as practiced on the regulation 18 holes.
- Every day is a holiday at our golf course!

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CC at Pocono
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also deter players from entering environmentally sensitive wetlands and brush.

Faced with steep slopes and ravines, Meaney and his crew relied on sod and wildflower plantings to prevent erosion, installed a drainage system which directs surface runoff directly to the wetlands, and applied an organic soil enhancement program that promotes healthy turf while protecting those wetlands.

An upgraded and expanded irrigation system delivers water only where and when the drought-resistant ryegrass is dry. Using less water, coupled with less mowing, reduces spread of turf diseases, said Meaney, whose chemical-free program relies on slow-release organic fertilizers, biostimulants and wetting agents.

"The technology at our disposal is better every year," he said. "As we understand more about the impact of chemicals, we discover friendlier ways of preventing and combating disease and infestation."

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