Q&A: Jacobson
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RJ: We're seeing a thrust toward providing facilities for practice — in private facilities as well as public. Even at some of the old classic golf courses that have unused parcels of land, they're putting in a short-game practice area, or even a nine-hole, pitch-and-putt course. Facilities which were built on the fringe of a metropolitan area 10 to 15 years ago, but which are now in high-growth areas, are going from 18 to 27 holes, or from 27 to 36. There are a lot of expansions and many are incorporating expanded practice facilities.

GCN: What sort of staff do you have?
RJ: We have two part-timers as support staff and two full-time designers — me and Doug Myslinski, another Wadsworth alum who was a project supervisor and, more recently, senior estimator.

And I've combined those old-school architects along with a guy like Jack Nicklaus. Certainly he gave me the knowledge basis to tap into when you're formulating a design approach for different projects in different parts of the country.

That's what everybody attempts to do today. To what degree they succeed, the public golfers tell you through the success of the project.

From a business standpoint you have to respond to your developer's mission statement. Define their goals and you're doing what you're supposed to be doing.

GCN: Did Michael Jordan have any input into your design of the Michael Jordan Family Golf Centers?
RJ: Not from a design standpoint. He was very involved from the promotional standpoint and with developing programs for inner-city kids and people who don't have access to golf. That is a key in today's golf environment. We have to cultivate the youth in golf. They're our future — the next wave of golfers once you look past the Baby Boom generation.

GCN: How many Jordan Golf Centers are planned?
RJ: Beyond the first one that is open in Chicago, another is in planning in Charlotte. AMF bought them, but we're still working with them and have looked at other sites around the country. I don't know if they are going to pursue them.

GCN: You are designing quite a mix of daily-fee, resort and private courses. Have you seen a trend in any direction?

We started using the ROOTS 1-2-3™ product last spring, and have used it every Friday ever since at six ounces per thousand. The product gives us dark and consistent color (especially when using PGRs), great root development, and knocked our wetting agent use down by 95%.

We have very fast greens, usually 11 to 12 on the stimp meter (weather permitting), and the 1-2-3™ product keeps the plant nourished without getting top growth. I've been a superintendent for 25 years, and have never seen anything in my life that does for color, density, and root growth what the ROOTS 1-2-3™ product does.

Dave Roule
Dellwood Country Club
New City, New York

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