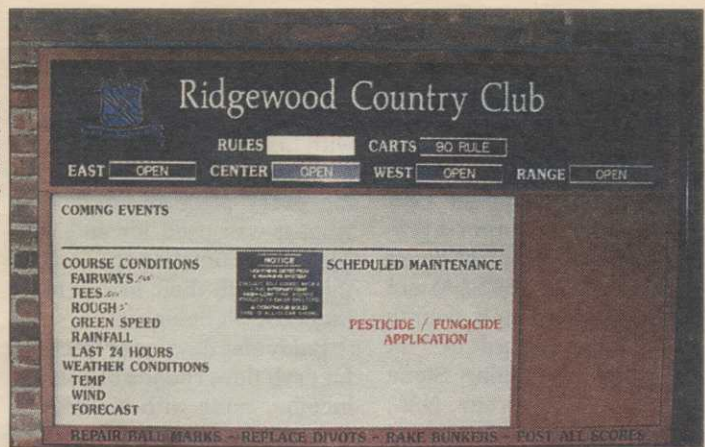


Terry Buchen photo



Ridgewood Country Club's communication sign lets golfers know what they need to know.

Sign communicates with golfers, guests

By TERRY BUCHEN

PARAMUS, N.J. — Communicating with course officials and golfers is extremely important for today's golf course superintendent. First impressions are also very important to provide the proper playing environment needed and wanted by today's demanding golfing elite. What better way to communicate than to greet golfers with a decorative and tastefully done redwood sign on the outside of the golf shop?

"Our sign contains vast amounts of information that I control at all times for our members and their

guests," said Todd W. Raisch, superintendent at The Ridgewood Country Club here. "We list which of our three nine-hole courses are open; whether to play regular or winter rules; rules for golf cars; course conditions, such as fairway, tee and rough mowing heights; rainfall during the past 24 hours; and current weather conditions, such as temperature, wind and the forecast for the day.

"We also provide important information about our sophisticated lightning-detection and warning system; our scheduled maintenance for the day or for the week; and any pesticide and fungicide applications."

The sign also reminds golfers to fix their ball marks, replace divots, rake bunkers and post all of their scores.

"We list our upcoming significant events as well," Raisch said, "to remind our members to make their commitments to play in as many member events as possible."

The most controversial issue about the sign, he said, is posting the green speed. While he initially did so, "we learned quite quickly that it is best not to post green speeds for very obvious reasons," Raisch said.

Savvy communications

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and subsequent maintenance budget for this year and next year.

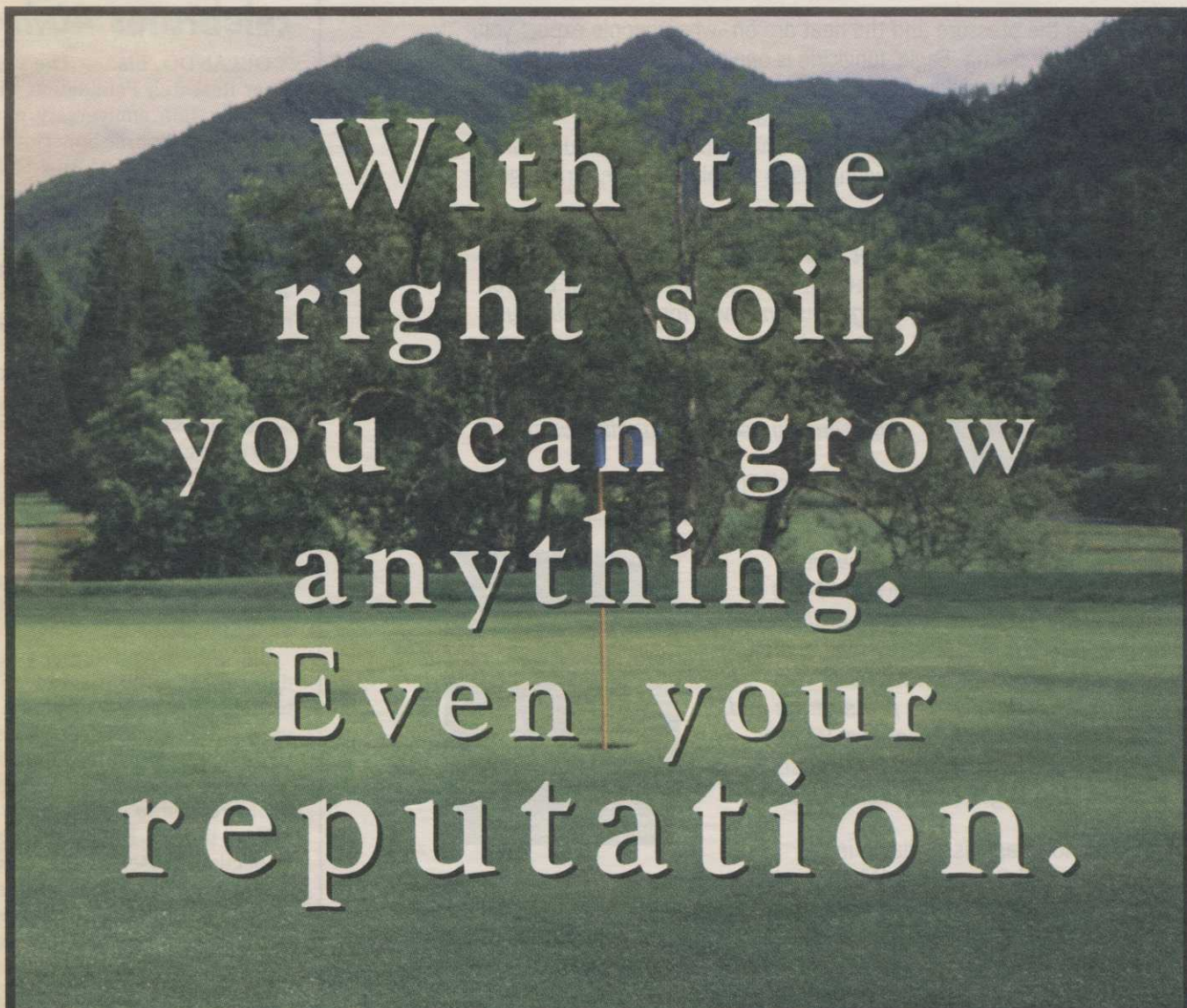
- Bruce Williams, also a former GCSAA president and certified golf course superintendent at Los Angeles Country Club, has weekly staff meetings and plays golf with his general manager every two weeks to interact about his areas of responsibility. He also uses much written correspondence that is wanted and needed.

- Jim Loke, certified golf course superintendent at Bent Creek Country Club in Lancaster, Pa., sets the green committee agenda with the green chairman and then distributes it to each committee member, along with a written progress report of all of the good things that have transpired since their last meeting.

- Andy Woolston, superintendent at Harbour View Golf Course in Suffolk, Va., uses a portable cellular telephone on his course that is under construction so he and his employers can stay in touch with each other easily. The cell phone is also a great portable office while his maintenance building is being built, and he uses it effectively while driving to and from the course to catch-up on telephone correspondence.

- Fred Biggers, certified golf course superintendent at the 36-hole Greenville (S.C.) Country Club, uses a large notebook to communicate with the green committee and his general manager. Items in the notebook, which is constantly updated, include operating and capital budgets; labor studies; conditioning improvements; maintenance and master scheduling; soil-test results; agronomy consultants reports; master plan; and what makes a great golf club bullet points listing.

- Tracy Shanahan, superintendent at the nine-hole private Saratoga (Calif.) Country Club, recently renovated two greens with great success that required many face-to-face meetings with club officials. This worked best at this particular club to keep the paperwork to a minimum.



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