Tools of the Trade...at Kip Tyler's Salem Country Club

By Kip Tyler

The 47-year-old superintendent explained the level of detail involved in getting the layout ready for the Senior Open, an event already sold out. "New chipping areas were created," he said. "The left portion of the 15th green was also enlarged to provide an additional hole location just over the left bunker. We have heavily topdressed the tees and green approaches to firm them up."

Fairways will be cut to 3/8ths of an inch, and the greens will measure right around ten and a half on the USGA Stimpeter. "Fairway widths will average between 29 and 38 yards in the landing zones," Tyler said.

The staff will strive to hit peak condition as the event unfolds. "Our equipment needs will increase dramatically for championship week," said Tyler. "I typically have four people walking the greens with mowers. We hope to use 12 that week. We'll mow the greens at least twice each morning, and possibly roll them as well. Then we'll cut again, and possibly roll them in the evening."

The nine will be reversed for the tournament in order to provide better spectator viewing. "This week will require extraordinary caution, since the whole world will be watching. It's a pretty awesome responsibility, but we welcome it," he said.

A 1977 agronomy graduate of Ohio State, Tyler arrived at the club in 1982 after working as an assistant superintendent at the Medinah Country Club in Medinah, Ill.

Greens mowers: 6 Toro 1000, 2 Jacobsen Greens Kings V

Tee mowers: 5 Toro 1600, 1 Jacobsen Greens King IV

Fairway mowers: 4 Toro 5000 Series

Rough mowers: 1 Ransomes 250AR, 2 Steiner 230

Riding bunker rake: 1 Toro Sand Pro (for habit raking)

Turf utility vehicles: 6 Club Car Turf II, 6 Cushman Turf-Trucksters

Verti-cut reels: Jacobsen Aerifiers: 3 Ryan Greensaire 24, 1 Ryan GA-60

Topdressers: 1 Turfco SP-1530, 1 Turfco F124

Hocutt creates free job-hunting Web site

By Joel Joyner

Pawleys Island, S.C. - Tired of dish- ing out the cash and dealing with the hassles of finding the perfect job? Sam Hocutt, the superintendent here at the Pawleys Plantation Golf Course, has now made it a bit easier for those in the golf course superintendent world to find a job.

"Hocutt is currently employed as an assistant superintendent at the Thief River Golf Club in Thief River Falls [Minn.]," said Hocutt. "It was from Clayton Hoyt, a 1999 graduate of the University of Minnesota in Crookston. He earned a B.S. in plant industries management with a horticulture emphasis and had aspirations of becoming a golf course superintendent.

"Hoyt is currently employed as an assistant superintendent at the Thief River Golf Club in Thief River Falls [Minn.]," said Hocutt. "He offered to help, and that's when I decided to go for it. He was instrumental in helping me get it started, so I offered Clayton a small part of the Web site."

Sponsorships Pay the Bills

Buying additional programs and finding a sponsor, Hocutt developed the site in about seven days. "I put a sponsor form on the site for anyone interested in helping to keep the site up, and to keep it free." He said. After only a week, two companies showed interest in sponsoring the site - Smith Turf and Irrigation and Wilbro. Smith Turf and Irrigation is a Toro distributor and Wilbro is a distributor.
Croson, a USDA technician. The test was a first in an outdoor experiment. Caged herons at the USDA's National Wildlife Research Center in Sandusky, Ohio reacted in a similar fashion when the red dot of the laser struck them.

READY, AIM, SPRAY
Manufactured by Bird-X, GooseChase is listed as an environmentally and ecologically safe product designed to render the birds' food unpalatable. "The geese came in flocks ranging from 20 to 50 birds," said Jay Smith, assistant superintendent at the Yankee Hill Country Club in Lincoln, Neb. "We tried blasting a shotgun over their heads, but it didn't deter them.

"With insufficient snow cover, we have problems with the geese during winter and early spring," he said. "They come in, peck at our short grass, and make ruts and holes in our greens." GooseChase is a concentrate made from extracts of grapes, the same active ingredient that gives Concord grapes their characteristic flavor. "It worked quickly, and there was a very distinct line of effectiveness between where we sprayed and where we didn't," said Smith.

A 'BIOLOGICAL FENCE'
FlightControl uses the same active ingredient as GooseChase, but with a different formulation and concentration rate. The strength of the formulation determines the length of time the substance remains effective on the grass. The repellant is described as a "biological fence" to herd geese away from areas where they interfere with human activity. "It works, no doubt about it, but it's just another tool as far as I'm concerned," said Bob Ribbans, superintendent at the Forsgate Country Club in Jamesburg, N.J. "We also use noise makers. It's just like with people - if you annoy them long enough, they'll leave. But if you have water, you'll have geese."

FlightControl has an additional feature: a visual deterrence. Once applied to the turf, the solution absorbs ultraviolet light to make it appear spotted or unsightly, at least to a goose. The chemical apparently alters the visual attractiveness of the turf to discourage geese from stopping by for a snack or perhaps a long stay. If the treated site is not enough to dissuade the geese, the "harmless intestinal reaction" from feeding should dishearten them.

Some superintendents, however, are hesitant to recommend the products. "I don't know about the practicality of it," said Brad Helms, superintendent at the Palatine Hills Golf Club in Palatine, Ill. "Come spring and fall you can't mow for two weeks, and that would be difficult.

"We gave it a try," he said, "and the geese would eat right up to the sprayed area, walk across the treated grass, and go in to the lake. The only cure would be to spray the entire area and that would be cost prohibitive."