AVON, Colo. — Shane Nelson, superintendent here at the Beaver Creek Golf Club, came very close to spending his life mining for gold. Instead, he's maintaining for golf.

Growing up in nearby Leadville, about 40 miles to the south of here, Nelson was to be a seventh-generation miner after studying industrial arts at a junior college in his hometown. His family had operated several gold and silver mines in the area for decades.

"After the metals crash of the early '80s, I realized that a career change was in order," Nelson said. "That's when I came to work for Vail Resorts in 1984 as a snowcat operator in the winter. I also worked on a golf course during the summer for a few years."

Nelson eventually took a full-time position at the course as a mechanic. Four years later, he was pulling double duty as the assistant superintendent and mechanic. In 1992, he was promoted to the assistant superintendent.

E-SERIES OSMAC IRRIGATION SYSTEM
The Robert Trent Jones, Jr.-designed layout at Beaver Creek, opened in 1980. "It's 6,784 yards of fun golf," said Nelson about the Rocky Mountain track. "The first three holes are as breathtaking as any in golf."

Nelson and his team have been going all out this summer, installing Toro's narrow fairways and elevated greens which were originally designed by Jock Inglis in 1903. The course underwent a redesign by John Lafoy in 1987, and greens were changed from bentgrass to TifEagle Bermudagrass in 2000.

"Right now, we're involved in improving the conditions of the course following our capital renovation project that was completed in the fall of 2000," said general manager Bruce Szafraan. A new irrigation system, pump house, and new cart paths were also installed.

UNDERNOURISHED TURF
IGM superintendent Paul Haines found turf conditions to be undernourished at the club and will be making agronomic adjustments. "We're working to get the turf color and health up to provide a better playing surface and help create visual height dis-

IGM signs contract with Montgomery CC
MONTGOMERY, Ala. — International Golf Maintenance has entered into a maintenance agreement with The Montgomery Country Club here.

The private, Southern-style Montgomery layout with tree-lined fairways and elevated greens was originally designed by Jock Inglis in 1903. The course underwent a redesign by John Lafoy in 1987, and greens were changed from bentgrass to TifEagle Bermudagrass in 2000.

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WinterStar.

“WinterStar was extensively worked on BrightStar SLT for salt tolerance over at Pure Seed Testing [Hubbard, Ore.],” said Tom Stanley, marketing manager. “They did what was place all the NTEP perennial ryegrasses into a salt water bath. They subjected them to the bath, at 17,000 parts/million, for nine weeks.”

Most of the varieties were destroyed. “Some, however, still had green and growing tissue,” Stanley said. “BrightStar SLT was one of the top survivors. It also has a good resistance to red thread. It will work well in areas with cool, moist, maritime winters.”

Citation Fore will require less mowing, according to Stanley. “It has reduced steminess and reduced vertical growth in the spring and summer,” he said. “It also has a 54 percent endophyte content, so it will be fairly resistant to aboveground feeding insects.”

WinterPlay and WinterStar, two Poa trivialis varieties released by Turf Seed in limited quantities last year, will be more available this fall. “They’ll be ideal for the South, where they’re just going to be temporary grasses,” said Stanley. “Also, the Northeastern and upper Midwest regions where there’s wet, shady areas difficult for growing turf or even in shade mixes for permanent turf.”

Pennington Seed, in Madison, Ga., is offering two new perennial ryegrasses that were both bred at Rutgers University. “Applaud provides great color and has a very nice leaf texture,” said Russ Nicholson, national sales manager. “We’ve found that it transitions very well. It’s not one of these varieties you plant and have concerns about next spring in the South. It doesn’t take the heat very well.”

The other variety, Integra, will be available in limited quantities this fall for commercial use. “Next year, we’ll step up production,” Nicholson said. “It will still be in limited supply, but we’ll have a few million pounds of it by then.”

“Like the Applaud seed, Integra was also bred at Rutgers for disease resistance, a dark green color, and good texture,” said Nicholson. “In trials, we’ve found it to be a strong performer for the overseeding market.”

Jacklin Seed

Plant breeder Susan Sumudio at the Jacklin Seed Co. in Post Falls, Idaho, was one of the driving forces behind two “spanking new” perennial ryegrasses, Extreme and Galaxy. “Extreme features excellent spring green-up, high density, and a dark green color,” said Sumudio. “It also exhibits good pink snow mold resistance. It’s been tested in company trials since 1997 and was entered in the 1999 perennial ryegrass NTEP trial. It’s done very well in northern trials.”

Galaxy was especially developed for the Midwest, according to Sumudio. The company has tested it since 1998 at sites in Ohio, Maryland and New Jersey. “It’s characterized as medium-fine texture, high density and a medium-dark green color,” said Sumudio. “It also has demonstrated moderate resistance to leaf rust and gray leaf spot (GLS)."