



BRIEFS

MANGUM ADDS GREENKEEPING RESOURCE TO WEB SITE

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Writer and golf instructor Geoff Mangum has added a Greenkeeping resource page to The Putting Zone Web site, <http://puttingzone.com/gk.html>. The electronic library of articles available on the database covers everything from golf course construction and irrigation to turfgrass maintenance and seasonal course conditions. A resource section of the page also provides links to organizations, universities, journals and weather information.



ENVIRONMENTAL GOLF GAINS SEVENTH NORTHEAST CONTRACT

CALABASAS, Calif. — Environmental Golf has signed a multi-year partnership with the private Glenwood Country Club in Old Bridge, N.J. The agreement provides the outsourcing company with seven golf courses in its Northeast portfolio and brings the company's total to 39 contracts nationwide. The 18-hole Glenwood facility was designed by Hal Purdy in 1969. Situated in central New Jersey, the course features bluegrass and ryegrass tees, fairways and roughs and bentgrass greens.

WIENECKE JOINS GREEN SECTION

SANTA ANA, Calif. — Agronomist David Wienecke has joined the USGA Green Section staff here at the Southwest Region office. Replacing Mike Huck, who left in June, Wienecke will be responsible for making turf advisory service visits throughout Arizona, California, Utah, Colorado and Nevada. Wienecke has a M.S. degree in Horticulture from Oregon State University, specializing in turfgrass science. He first started in the golf industry as an irrigation technician before taking on assistant superintendent and superintendent positions. His most recent work involved consulting golf courses in Integrated Pest Management and certification in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program while working as an assistant superintendent at Oswego Lake Country Club in Lake Oswego, Ore.

Superintendents innovate to save time and money on course

By JOEL JOYNER

DULUTH, Ga. — Faced with smaller budgets and staffs and managing increased workloads with fewer resources, golf course superintendents are turning to innovative ideas to survive economic fallout. Superintendents Mark Hoban and Sam Orozco know that saving time and money in a golf course maintenance program helps to create a more efficient operation and could potentially save jobs.

HOBAN MODIFIES GOLF CARS

At the Standard Club in Duluth, Ga., Hoban has modified used electric golf cars into utility vehicles.

"We have electric golf cars that we've converted to utility vehicles," he said. "We build a deck on the back of them so that all our greensmowers are easily loaded on and off. We can get a fleet of six used electric cars and convert them for the price of one new utility vehicle."

The club trades in golf cars every three years, then Hoban buys the used cars back for \$1,500 to \$1,700 and converts them versus buying a new gas powered utility vehicle for \$9,000 to \$12,000. Hoban keeps the converted golf cars for three years before he trades them in for another set of used cars.

"I've found that golf cars will last for six to seven years before any major maintenance repairs are required," explained Hoban. "After that time you begin running into problems like worn out bearings. So we trade them out before any real maintenance problems develop."

EFFICIENT OPERATION

The electric cars are able to handle the load and help to make a more efficient operation. "The cars are already loaded with the mowers each morning and the

crew is out on the course within minutes. It's easier than finding a utility vehicle, getting a trailer to hook up to it, and arguing about who has what," said Hoban.

The cars are only stopping at four or five greens at a time so there isn't any wear and tear before they are headed back to the shop and recharged for the next day, according to Hoban. "It's a big savings with small benefits included," he said. "There's a windshield so that the operator doesn't get a cold wind in the face during the winter and a place for coffee. We really load the cars up."

"There's a place for a whipping pole and backpack blower," he continued. "There's a map for which greens an operator is supposed to do. Each car is assigned so that the same mower goes to the same holes every day. So if there's a problem with the equipment, we know which operator was on-hand running it on a given day."

Hoban has reduced his fleet to 21 vehicles, including the six electric cars with mowers on them, as well as decreased maintenance required to keep the gas powered vehicles operating. "The constant stops and starts with the gas powered vehicles left us with several repair problems in the long run," he explained.

Hoban learned of the idea when one of his assistants saw it done at the Athens (Ga.) Country Club. "We discussed it for a few years, then I sent my mechanic, Herb Zeilm, to the club to check it out," said Hoban. "We ended up using a modified version to meet our own needs."

OROZCO FINISHES FACILITY

Superintendent Sam Orozco, at the Palo Duro Creek Golf Club in Nogales, Ariz., took on the role of general contractor after finances started drying up during

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New construction and management techniques needed for approach areas

By KEVIN ROSS

While greens, tees and bunkers receive the bulk of construction and maintenance dollars, green approach areas are beginning to become an equally important playing surface.

There is no debate that the most important area on a golf course is the green surface. During a round of golf, anywhere from 35 to 50 percent of the strokes played per golfer are on the green surface.

When it comes to construction, greens are the most complex of areas to build behind tees and bunkers. In maintenance costs, tees are

second only to greens in per unit area of expense. But should teeing areas be considered that important?

While 18 shots during a round are played from tees, none of those shots land or react off those surfaces. You never hear golfers complaining, "I can't get any roll on these tees." Tees are the only area of the golf course not receiving golf shots.

APPROACHES AND PLAYABILITY

Many architects, builders and superintendents are beginning to rank approach areas above tees. Why? Because the approach area is highly

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Approach renovation with sand rootzone, extensive drainage, and independent irrigation may become the standard.

Sod producers explore pest-free alternatives

By Douglas H. Fender

ROLLING MEADOWS, Ill. — In the ongoing war against insect pests, fungal diseases and other threats to turf health, many turfgrass sod producers are exploring nontraditional treatment options to promote vigorous, pest-free crops, according to members of Turfgrass Producers International (TPI).

In their continuous effort to pro-



Two images of St. Augustinegrass, grown under the same conditions with gray leaf spot, show improvements (left) where the turf was amended with silica.

vide those who buy and maintain turfgrass sod with the highest-quality product possible, turf growers and researchers are testing a variety of inexpensive alternative treatments, including mineral, herbal and live biological products.

While these alternatives don't replace effective traditional pesticides, turf industry professionals are starting to recognize the value of such materials, reporting important

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Maple Leaf Golf Club achieves certification

PORT CHARLOTTE, Fla. — The Maple Leaf Golf Club, maintained by International Golf Maintenance, has achieved certification in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP).

Located here along the west coast of Florida, between Sarasota and Fort Myers, the Maple Leaf facility joined the program in July of 1998 and now has become the 53rd golf course in Florida and the 340th course in the world to reach the challenging designation.

"We preformed a bird inventory, completed water quality testing and built bird houses throughout the property," said superintendent Aaron Warstler. "We also mapped natural habitat and chemical usage areas."

Water comes into play on almost every hole. "My team went all out to achieve this designation," Warstler said. "In the process, we discovered that our course is home to hawks, eagles, ospreys, great

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Super ideas

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the renovation of his maintenance facility.

The Palo Duro Creek Golf Company signed a 100-year contract with the city of Nogales, located south of Tucson and just minutes from the Mexican border, to operate the facility. Three million dollars was invested by the company back in 1996 to add nine holes to create a full 18-hole layout, install a new irrigation system with pump house, and renovate the clubhouse and maintenance building.

During the renovation of the maintenance facility, the money ran out. "They had the basic maintenance structure put up with the office semi-finished and the chemical room finished, but the plans called for a lunchroom/conference center and restroom," said Orozco. "We finished the project in-house."

The entire facility is relatively small, less than 4,000 square feet, according to Orozco. "I put in my own time in the afternoons and on weekends with some of my crew and we finished the building in about two months," he said. "The company estimated about \$7,000 to finish the building, we spent only about \$1,900 total in materials."

'A REAL MORALE BOOSTER'

Orozco admits that the added workload wasn't so much for the company, but for the employees. "There are no real benefits, not even insurance, for my employees," he said. "The company basically only provides uniforms. As a superintendent, I had to find a way to help motivate my employees."

"They now have a nice lunch room. In the summer, it was almost unbearable trying to eat lunch outside with flies hovering around," said Orozco. "The employees had to eat on top of the machines or under a tree."

With the new restroom, the employees don't have to go out to the desert or under a tree somewhere, said Orozco. "There's only one restroom at the pro shop, and that's usually closed early in the

morning when the employees arrive. Besides, they shouldn't have to go over to the pro shop or restaurant all the time. The whole project has been a real morale booster for the employees."

The lunchroom also is utilized as a conference room to help train employees. "We're currently in the process of trying to buy a television and VCR in order to show instructional vid-

eos," Orozco said. "We've been selling the pallets we have left from our ryegrass orders every year and placing the money into a bank account. We sell about 30 pallets each time, and we almost have enough to buy the television and VCR."

Orozco has a background in electrical and plumbing work, and the building has been inspected and passed all code re-

quirements. The superintendent doesn't have an assistant, so his mechanic Al Quintero helped out acting as foreman for the project. They even tackled the job of finishing the renovation work on the pro shop and clubhouse.

"We have to make do with what we have," said Orozco. "It's a slow process, and our company doesn't provide a large budget. We have our hands full on the golf course

already with just eight employees and my mechanic. But we're planning to build more."

"We've got more equipment than storage space at the moment," he explained. "I'm looking to build a storage area for our fertilizers next as well as an area to wash our equipment. We want to eventually put in a filtration system and collect runoff water in order to recycle it." ■

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Maple Leaf GC

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horned owls, blue herons, egrets and cranes."

A semi-private club, Maple Leaf was built in two phases. The first nine was constructed in 1976 and the second in 1980. Designed by Lane Marshall and Ward Northrup, the course is a par 62 that plays to 3,915 yards.

As many as seven IGM-maintain courses have already received certification, and the more than 90 courses contracted with the maintenance outsourcing company are all enrolled in the ACSP. ■