Technologies Inc. (PTI) has hired John Tidwell as assistant superintendent at The Plantation of Leesburg in Leesburg, Fla. Lindsey, who has been with Environmental Golf Industries Inc. since 1995, was promoted from assistant superintendent to superintendent at The Plantation.

PTI hires Tidwell for FarmLinks

FAYETTEVILLE, Ala. — Pursell Technologies Inc. (PTI) has hired John Tidwell as superintendent for FarmLinks, PTI’s 18-hole research course opening next spring. He will work with Tim Lacy, director of grounds and golf, to oversee the remainder of construction.

Cleaning intakes helps reduce pump station repairs

It is easier to see problems that occur on the surface, but because those that lurk underwater or underground are harder to predict, they deserve more attention. One such area that should be dealt with regularly is the pump house wet well and intake piping.

After years of use, intake screens can become clogged and the intake piping and wet well can become contaminated with silt. Most golf course managers will agree that the most important part of the golf course starts with the pump house. So, this is a great place to investigate what lurks below and address it on a preventive basis.

There are diving companies throughout the United States that will do this type of investigative work. One company, American Underwater Services (AUS), of Fort Worth, Texas, has made a niche for itself specializing in desilting of wet wells and intakes.

"Thousands of dollars are spent annually on pump station repairs and replacements that could often be eliminated by removing accumulated sediment, rocks, and other debris from wet wells or pump basins," said Anthony Dilulio, president of AUS. Dilulio, who has a team of former offshore divers that also services power plants and big dams, got into the golf business five years ago when he was contacted by a company in Houston.

"We had a blend of Trailblazer and Pythium and brown patch from the start," said superintendent Michael Dieckhoff. "Nine months out of the year it was great, but the three months that we had most of our member play it was 60 percent at best. We gave it one more year and then came to the harsh realization that there is no amount of money that will make it acceptable for play in the summertime."

Dieckhoff estimated the cost of water, fertilizer, fungicides and labor to keep the fescues going ran about $300,000 a year. Converting to Palisades zoysiagrass will cost the club $400,000, but Dieckhoff expects to recoup that in cost savings out of this program that we can hire in management positions," said CourseCo principal Ray Davies. "The real goal of the program is to open doors to the green industry for inner city kids in Oakland. They don’t even look at the green industry as a career opportunity.

"We are trying to take advantage of the kids’ interest in Tiger Woods and the fact that we are building a new golf course down the road and tie that all into the program," he continued.

Creating a community service program was part of Oakland’s contract conditions for the Metropolitan Golf Links (MGL) project. “They wanted to have us give one started in the inner city.” As a result, Davies spent two years developing the program even though CourseCo had yet to win the bid for the 40-year lease for the MGL from the city. CourseCo is paying $5 million up front for the construction of the Johnny Miller and Fred Bliss-designed course and will pay city $30 million to $40 million in rent over the course of the lease in exchange for all operating revenues. Work on the course started this spring and Davies projects an opening in spring 2003.

With the idea in hand, Davies approached Castlemont High School’s Eric Edgerly, students check out the putting green at Monarch Bay GC in San Leandro.

CourseCo develops turfgrass program for inner city kids

OAKLAND, Calif. — As part of its redevelopment of Oakland’s Metropolitan Golf Links, CourseCo has developed the Oakland Turfgrass Education Initiative. CourseCo created the program in partnership with Castlemont High School, Merritt College and various organizations including Future Farmers of America (FFA), the United States Golf Association and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSSA).

"We are hoping that five or six years down the road we will have some kids coming out of this program that we can hire in management positions," said CourseCo principal Ray Davies. "The real goal of the program is to open doors to the green industry for inner city kids in Oakland. They don’t even look at the green industry as a career opportunity."

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Rough notes: Spring Creek converts

COLLIERVILLE, Tenn. — Though the private Spring Creek Ranch Country Club here is just three years old, the facility is tearing up its disease-prone fescue roughs in favor of new Palisades zoysiagrass.

"We had a blend of Trailblazer and Lancer 2 fescue and we have fought Pythium and brown patch from the start," said superintendent Michael Dieckhoff. "Nine months out of the year it was great, but the three months that we had most of our member play it was 60 percent at best. We gave it one more year and then came to the harsh realization that there is no amount of money that will make it acceptable for play in the summertime."

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Spring Creek Ranch

Continued from page 6

The owners, Dr. David Meyer and his son Rob, decided on Palisades after much deliberation. Dr. Meyer wanted the contrast of green roughs while the Meyer zoysia varieties were dormant in the wintertime and Rob wanted a more playable warm season turf. The two compromised, keeping 20 acres of the fescue mix, which would be allowed to go native, and just replacing 65 acres of rough with Palisades.

AN 'AWESOME ROUGH'

According to Dieckhoff, Palisades, which was developed by Dr. Milt Engleke at Texas A&M, made the cut because of its aggressive growing habits and softer texture.

"It is very fast growing," said Dieckhoff. "We have had sod down on one greens complex for six days now and already the seams are disappearing. It also does really well in the shade."

Winstead Turf Farms, which owns the rights to Palisades in Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas, is supplying the turf for Spring Creek.

"This is the first big job that we have done since planting our first crop of Palisades in 1999," said Winstead Turf Farms owner Bobby Winstead. "It will be an awesome rough for those guys. It has better shade tolerance, is not as prone to thatch and is less susceptible to patch diseases."

Work on the front nine at Spring Creek started at the end of March and Dieckhoff was scheduled to wrap up work at the end of June when he will start on the back nine.

GREENS AND BUNKER SURROUNDS AND LAKE BANKS ARE BEING SODDED AND THE REST WILL BE PLUGGED WITH TWO-INCH-BY-TWO-INCH PLUGS.

THE CONVERSION PROCESS

Six days after hitting the ground, root growth exceeded one and a half inches.

Dieckhoff's attention turned to the plugging process. The club went with plugs because sprigs would have had a harder time establishing since the sandcap would have diminished water retention.

"Establishment is the big thing here, we will keep them wet, but we are already cutting back on the amount of fertilizer we thought we would have to give them," said Dieckhoff. "Instead of half a pound of nitrogen a week, we are plugging only three-quarters of an inch and a half with a grass that has more cold tolerance," said Lawrence.

TifSport has performed well for Lawrence and has greened up well for the tournament.

"We have had no problems over the past three years with winter kill and it seems to green up a little earlier than 419 bermudagrass does," he said. "The green up starts at the same time as 419 in about mid-May."