

January 2006

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GOOLF

COURSE NEWS

Serving the Business of Golf Course Management

Turning It Around!

Management companies tweak operations to improve golf facilities.

Inside:

- ▶ Bunker sand selection
- ▶ Breaking the language barrier
- ▶ Contracted-out maintenance practices
- ▶ Liberty National's development

Congratulations, Joe

Dr. Joseph Duich
Professor Emeritus, Turfgrass Science,
Penn State University

Recipient of the 2006 *Old Tom Morris Award*

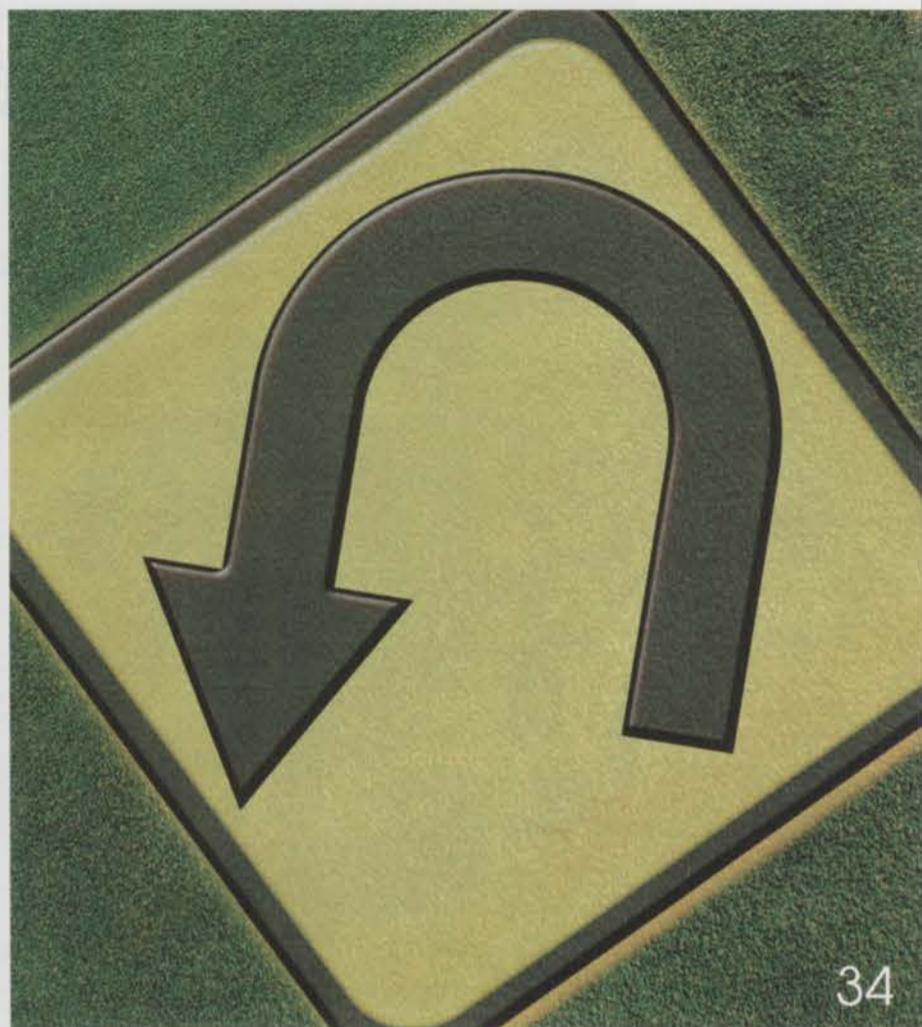


Old Tom Morris (1821-1908) was a greenkeeper and golf professional at the St. Andrews Links Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland; a four-time winner of the British Open (1861, '62, '64 and '67); and ranked as one of the top links designers of the 19th Century.

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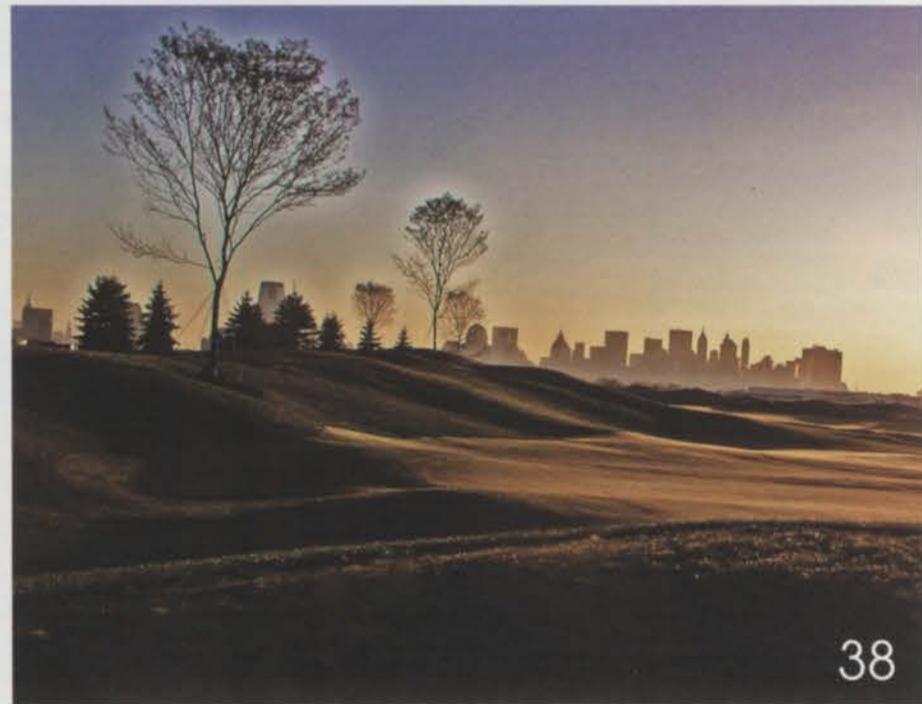
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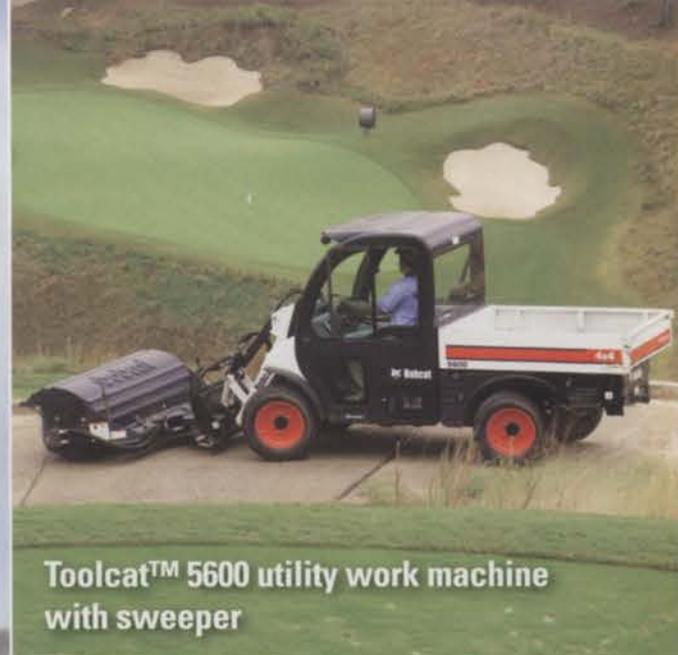
EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT:

Golf Course News reports on and analyzes the business of maintaining golf courses, as well as the broader business of golf course management. This includes three main areas: agronomy, business management and career development as it relates to golf course superintendents and those managers responsible for maintaining a golf course as an important asset. *Golf Course News* shows superintendents what's possible, helps them understand why it's important and tells them how to take the next step.

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ONLINE-ONLY FEATURES:

TIME TO HEAL

Dennis Warner, superintendent at Kenwood Country Club in Cincinnati, says superintendents can help minimize the downsides of hosting golf outings.

A CHANGE AT THE TOP

Paul J. Foley, the new executive director of the Golf Course Builders Association of America, discusses his new role.



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John Walsh
Editor

Take control

It's evident greens receive the most attention on a golf course. Superintendents consistently get peppered with questions from golfers about green speed.

At the recent Carolinas GCSA Conference & Show, Thomas Nikolai, Ph.D., turfgrass academic specialist at Michigan State University, and Michael Morris, CGCS, of Crystal Downs Country Club in Frankfort, Mich., gave a presentation about green speed. One of the slides showed three popular responses superintendents give when asked about green speed: Explain speed kills turfgrass, tell members to lower their expectations and lie. There are many superintendents who respond better, and data helps back them up.

There are three factors that contribute to the confusion or inaccuracy about green speed: the desire for faster greens by golfers, existing misinformation and the lack of communication between superintendents and golfers. Hence the question: How many superintendents spend time measuring and recording green speed daily, or even weekly? Even though some might think it's a waste of time or it will set a higher standard to meet, superintendents should consider recording Stimpmeter readings more often if they want to ease the pressure and clear the confusion surrounding the green-speed issue. A correlation comes to mind: If you're not measuring success, how do you know how well you're doing?

Collecting and using data will help put golfers' expectations more into perspective and help prevent the distortion and the unrealistic expectations many golfers have about course conditions.

Many factors affect green speed: weather, budgets, contours, mower maintenance, irrigation, what golfers deem acceptable, etc. Superintendents need to communicate and explain the aspects of course maintenance to golfers to help them understand that green speed at the course down the road shouldn't be the same as green speed on their course. However, this is easier said than done.

Just as slope, contour and maintenance dictate driving speeds on roads, so too should slope, contour and maintenance dictate green speed, Nikolai says. Superintendents should think about creating contours on their greens to increase speed without lowering the height of cut.

Green speeds aren't supposed to be standardized. They should remain up to course

officials with input from superintendents. Many golfers don't understand that, hence the challenge.

Superintendents should meet with their green chairmen and answer two questions: What are the green speeds day to day, and what is the best speed for the golf course? Nikolai and Morris recommend four steps for managing green speed and golfer expectations:

1. Determine daily green speeds by collecting and recording data;
2. Survey golfers to determine the target green-speed range for each golf course;
3. Evaluate maintenance practices to best manage green speeds in the target range; and
4. Communicate the results.

Consistency is key. If a superintendent determines ideal green-speed range is between 9.5 and 11, that should be the goal year round, knowing it might fluctuate out of that range. Once the ideal range is established, golfers will let the superintendent know if the green speed on a particular day feels above or below that range. Then the superintendent can look to change maintenance practices to make sure the consistency improves.

Green speeds can slow down, speed up or stay the same throughout the day because of weather and the condition or state of turfgrass. For example, green speed might decrease during the afternoon because the turf is growing the most at that time. Some golfers say green speed increases during the afternoon because the turf is drier.

The green-speed issue can be blamed on TV, competition, golfers' dishonesty about their abilities and golfers who don't know much about maintenance practices. However, superintendents can take charge by establishing an ideal green-speed range at each of their courses. And when golfers feel green speed doesn't fall into that range on a certain day, superintendents can communicate why.

Superintendents must objectively take the green-speed issue head-on because it's an opportunity to showcase their talents as professionals and to provide answers to golfers' questions. Who knows, maybe they'll silence a few of those pesky golfers that drive them nuts. GCN

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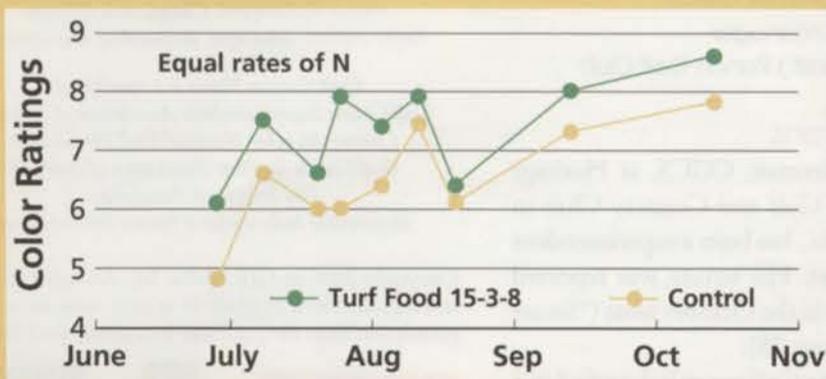
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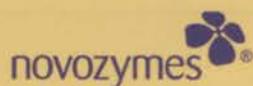
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Letters might be edited
for space or clarity.

Stay put

Although I usually enjoy Jim McLoughlin's points and articles, I'm not buying the relocation thing ("GCSAA taken hostage," November 2005, page 22). Here are my top 10 reasons why the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America should stay in Lawrence, Kan.:

10. The last time I spoke to anyone at the GCSAA, they all seemed to be highly qualified and career-minded employees. We shouldn't forget there are many good people at the GCSAA.

9. I don't want my professional organization to be a tourist attraction. I want my association working on behalf of its members, which they do, not waiting for a party to happen.

8. Lawrence, Kan., offers a reasonable cost of living for its association and staff. Have you tried to buy a house in Far Hills, N.J., the U.S. Golf Association's home?

7. I thought there were great golf courses in Lawrence, Kan. There are.

6. I thought moving was cheap. So why do we ask for moving expenses when relocating to a different golf course? (Just wait for an increase in dues or GIS registration.)

5. Lawrence, Kan., is accessible by plane, it's only a 40-minute ride from Kansas City.

4. Contrary to popular belief, computers, voice-mail, cell phones, e-mail, and yes, the Internet, do work in Lawrence, Kan.

3. Can someone give me a solid reason why it needs to move?

2. The relocation committee, consisting of superintendents, tabled the subject for a few more years down the road. I wonder if they talked to other GCSAA members?

1. If we've been talking about moving since the 1970s, why hasn't it happened yet? Here's an idea: Maybe the membership doesn't want to move.

Keep up the good work GCSAA (and Lawrence, Kan.). You're doing a fine job.

Jeffrey L. Berg
Golf course superintendent
Goose Creek Golf Club
Leesburg, Va.

Off base

If John Walsh, while riding in his golf

cart, is offended because a golf course maintenance worker didn't run up to him and ask if he liked the way the course was being maintained, he has serious problems ("Hospitality check," October 2005, page 6).

I've been playing golf all over the world on many great courses since before he was born, and I've never felt slighted because a greenkeeper or maintenance man didn't ask me if I was having a great day or liked the course. These guys go to work when most are still in bed, and by the time many have their second cup of coffee, these guys are having a well-deserved lunch. So he needs to back off.

It's he who should go up to the golf course superintendent or workers on the course and thank them for the outstanding job they're doing so that he might enjoy the game. When I play, no matter where, I always make it a point to approach the superintendent or golf course maintenance crew and thank them. They really appreciate it, and it makes their day. Next time, he should try to make their day instead of suggesting they try and make his.

Ken Zitz
Golf course designer
Ken W. Zitz & Associates
Wai'alea, Hawaii

Appreciation

I read Pat Jones' brief article "A billion thanks ... sort of" (www.golfcoursenews.com, click on Digital Coffee Shop under the news drop-down menu), and appreciate that he always stands up for golf course superintendents.

I'm not too involved anymore on the superintendent end, and though I believe the PGA Tour tries to give superintendents credit, it could put the spotlight more often on what these individuals and their profession accomplish.

Steve Plummer, CGCS
General manager
Tustin (Calif.) Ranch Golf Club

Corrections

- David Herman, CGCS, at Heritage Highlands Golf and Country Club in Tucson, Ariz., has been a superintendent for 10 years. His tenure was reported incorrectly in the October issue ("Smart savings," page 28).
- On-Course Golf was misidentified in a news item in the October issue. GCN

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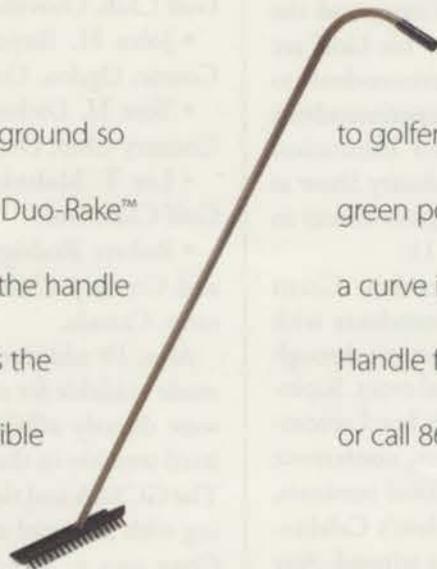




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Industry news

Golf playable hours affects rounds played

Buffalo Grove, Ill. – Pellucid Corp. reports a 5-percent gain in golf playable hours in November should provide a fourth-quarter tailwind for increases of rounds played versus 2004. Seventeen of the 24 weather regions posted November gains in GPH versus the prior year.



Weather in November 2005 was better than November 2004 for golf.

The positive weather results in November versus 2004 also pulled several regions into positive territory for the year as the Breadth Ratio (number of regions reporting increases of 2 percent or greater versus number of regions reporting decreases of 2 percent or greater) increased to 2.5:1. November year-to-date results show 10 regions in positive territory as opposed to four regions in the red. Pellucid's weather rules incorporate determining which geographies are capable of playing golf still, so the fourth-quarter numbers are driven by the warmer climate regions, which will control the direction of the national aggre-

gate during the next several months.

"The net appears to be that we finally got a break on weather in 2005 after a couple of challenging years, but unfortunately, the industry hasn't been able to take full advantage of it to generate commensurate increases in rounds played," says Pellucid president Jim Koppenhaver. "However, it appears we're headed for a flat 2005 vs. 2004 in rounds, but after three years of 2-percent to 4-percent annual declines, it's a start toward stabilization and potentially recovery."

The regional weather impact tracking report, which provides current month and year-to-date results for the 24 Pellucid-defined weather-based geographies, is the entry-level application in Pellucid's suite of weather impact reports for golf facilities. They produce individual facility-level reports covering 10-year weather impact history, the annual weather impact analysis and the monthly weather impact tracking available as individual reports or as a group at a discount.

Koppenhaver says the most useful tool for budgeting is the 10-year historical summary report.

"We've been advocates of using the 10-year average of golf playable hours for budgeting versus the previous year," he says. "Since you never really know whether the previous year was normal, abnormally high or abnormally low, the safest bet is to budget on the long-term average, which minimizes upside and downside risk. This is a separate report and is facility-specific rather than general regions."

Pellucid produces projections for the balance of the current year and the next year out.

"Right now the crystal ball of our weather information provider is calling for a slightly more favorable 2006 vs. 2005 at national level," Koppenhaver says.

Superintendents win trip to GIS

Lawrence, Kan. – For the third year, Bayer Environmental Science and the Environmental Institute for Golf are sending golf course superintendents to the 2006 Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Education Conference and Golf Industry Show at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Feb. 6 through 11.

The Bayer Superintendent Grant Program assists superintendents with their professional development through participation in the annual event. Superintendents receive airfare, hotel accommodations for six nights, conference registration, two educational seminars, two tickets to the President's Celebration and a \$200 expense stipend. Any superintendent who didn't attend the



golf industry show

2005 GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show in Orlando or the 2004 GC-

SAA Conference and Show in San Diego was eligible to apply. The five winners are:

- Stacy D. Baker, Table Mountain Golf Club, Oroville, Calif.;
- John H. Boyce, El Monte Golf Course, Ogden, Utah;
- Tom H. Dickman Jr., Burningtree Country Club, Decatur, Ala.;
- Lee T. Mahnke, Mayville (Wis.) Golf Club; and
- Robert Rodriguez, Camelot Golf and Country Club, Cumberland, Ontario, Canada.

Also, 10 additional grants have been made available for superintendents who were directly affected by hurricane-related weather in the Gulf Coast region. The GCSAA and the institute are working with affiliated chapters in the Gulf Coast area to identify superintendents affected by the storms. Those identified will be placed in a random drawing to select the 10 recipients at a later date.

Bayer Environmental Science is one of five supporters at the Champion's Club level in the Cumulative Giving Program

of donors who have contributed between \$250,000 and \$499,999 to The Environmental Institute for Golf since 1987.

PGA Tour lauds superintendents

Lawrence, Kan. – The PGA Tour's all-time charitable contributions eclipsed \$1 billion thanks to the efforts of the men and women who manage PGA Tour tournament golf courses.

"Many individuals, organizations and companies played a key role in this achievement, but none more than the golf course superintendents, their staffs and the countless volunteers who provided excellent playing conditions throughout the season," says Jon Scott, PGA Tour vice president of agronomy.

Scott, who directs a staff of agronomists that works with golf course superintendents in preparation for PGA Tour events, says this year was the ultimate challenge for golf courses.

"Never in my 31 years in this profession have I seen one as challenging as this one in terms of what Mother Nature presented," he says. "From heavy rain, to winterkill, to high humidity to hurricanes, we saw it all. But we lost very few rounds thanks to the expertise and dedication of the golf course superintendents. They are a big reason we have been successful in raising dollars for charity."

Tim O'Neill, CGCS, at the Country Club of Darien (Conn.) and president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, shared Scott's appreciation for superintendents' work.

"From the GCSAA perspective, the PGA Tour provides a platform that spotlights the role golf course superintendents play from the perspectives of golfer enjoyment and facility financial success," O'Neill says. "Golf course superintendents may be considered to be behind the scenes, but they are front and center in what they mean to the game. The role GCSAA members play in advancing charitable causes is significant."

Scientists talk turf

Crystal City, Va. – Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment and the American Chemical Society held a scientific symposium, "The Fate of Nutrients and Pesticides in the Urban Environment," this past October. The symposium featured more than 60 academic researchers, university extension, green industry and regulatory experts to discuss the latest developments in turfgrass science and public perceptions of turf. Turfgrass research confirms healthy turfgrass provides a wide range of environmental benefits, including preventing soil erosion, minimizing runoff, filtering surface water and conserving rainfall.

"The 14 experts that presented papers covered a wide range of turfgrass location scenarios, providing insight into how we can use real-world data and models to help us better understand and refine best management practices for maintaining productive and healthy turf," says Brian Horgan, Ph.D., assistant professor of horticulture science at the University of Minnesota.

"It's clear we may have something to contribute to the public policy debate about the appropriate use of fertilizers and pesticides on lawns and in public



spaces," says A. Martin Petrovic, Ph.D., professor of horticulture/turfgrass science at Cornell University.

"This body of research – conducted across many U.S. geographies – clearly demonstrates the role healthy turfgrass plays everywhere in measurably improving our environment," says Allen James, RISE president.

Cook, Zontek receive award for service

Lawrence, Kan. – Thomas W. Cook and Stanley J. Zontek were selected as recipients of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's Distinguished Service Award. Cook is an associate professor of horticulture at Oregon State University, and Zontek is director of the U. S. Golf Association Green Section's Mid-Atlantic Region. They will be acknowledged at the opening session of the 2006 GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show in Atlanta Feb. 9.



Cook

During his 20 years at Oregon State, Cook has developed, refined and continually updated the turfgrass management curriculum. Cook was hired by the university in 1977 to develop an undergraduate program for students interested in the turf and landscape industry. He has established modern golf course management standards in the region.

Zontek, the USGA's longest tenured employee, has served golf course superintendents for more than 30 years, educating them about evolving agronomic practices. Zontek joined the USGA staff in 1971 and has been a director for the North Central and Northeastern regions. He has received the Don Rossi Humanitarian Award from the Golf Course Builders Association of America and the Eb Steinger Award from the Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents. He has made more than 4,000 turf advisory service visits and travels throughout the world to speak to the industry about



Zontek

basic and practical elements of turfgrass maintenance and management.

The GCSAA board of directors selects Distinguished Service Award winners from nominations submitted by affiliated chapters and/or association members. First presented in 1932, the award is given to individuals who have made an outstanding, substantive and enduring contribution to the advancement of the golf course superintendent profession.

GE Real Estate, architecture firm to collaborate

Toldeo, Ohio – GE Real Estate will collaborate with Arthur Hill/Steve Forrest Associates to build market share in the high-end golf real estate and multicourse ownership segments.

"Initially, we will work together to leverage the well-established brand of the Arthur Hills organization to further strengthen GE's position in the golf market place," says Jim Mendelson, managing director, golf lending and new product development at GE Commercial Finance Real Estate. "We will work with seasoned owners/operators who seek to acquire and refinance golf courses. We also see many future possibilities, such as financing member-owned clubs."

"It's always been a significant goal of ours to identify industry leaders in the various sectors and formalize relationships with them," says Quentin Lutz, vice president of global business development with Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest. "This union enables both firms to offer our clients a much broader base of recommended services to support their strategies for growth."

"Traditionally, the golf course architect is party to course development or renovation plans at a very early stage," says Arthur Hills, founder and principal of the golf course architecture firm. "We've always done our best to direct our clients to viable financing options. But this new relationship with GE Real Estate takes this process to an entirely new level."

USGA grants support programs

Colorado Springs, Colo. – The U.S. Golf Association awarded 31 additional

grants to nonprofit organizations to support affordable and accessible golf programs and facilities. The new grants, totaling \$739,330, cover programs that will reach more than 18,000 kids and individuals with disabilities in 15 states and the District of Columbia.

The USGA awarded 180 grants and more than \$4.4 million to organizations whose joint mission is to use golf as a vehicle for personal development.

New recipients include The First Tee chapter in Carville, La., a program that received two grants totaling \$18,500 for the construction of an on-site driving range and associated equipment for its youth golf program, and the East Lake Community Foundation of Atlanta, where the USGA awarded a three-year,

\$120,000 grant for the continued development of its junior golf programs.

The USGA has awarded more than \$45 million throughout the past eight years to support golf instruction, equipment, course and range access, and course construction costs.

Curfew available in North Carolina

Indianapolis – Curfew soil fumigant, a nematicide manufactured by Dow AgroSciences, was granted a 24(c) label from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, making it available for use on golf course fairways, tees and greens throughout North Carolina. Curfew also is labeled for use in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mis-

issippi and South Carolina.

Curfew can improve rooting and provides control of parasitic nematodes – microscopic organisms that feed on and damage turfgrass roots. Curfew also controls mole crickets and Japanese beetle grubs present at time of application. With improved rooting, turf is more drought and stress tolerant. Most warm-season turfgrass and creeping bentgrass are tolerant to Curfew.

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Course news

Toxaway to get makeover

Lake Toxaway, N.C. – Toxaway Country Club is getting a complete \$6-million makeover, and golf course architect Kris Spence is heading up the project.

Because of environmental concerns, the project will be handled in two stages throughout a two-year period. Nine holes have been closed for construction, and once those nine are finished, the other nine will close next fall. The project is expected to be completed in July of 2007.

“The property at Lake Toxaway is located among some of the most breathtaking scenery you will find in America,” Spence says. “We will utilize the natural topography as much as possible to create more strategy and a wider variety of shot options.”

Environmental concerns are about trout streams near the course. The project will be completed in stages to prevent as much disturbance to the habitat as possible. Natural fescue buffers will be planted between the course and streams.

“We’ll work on three holes at a time, grass them and then move on to the next three holes,” Spence says. “It will take us the same amount of time to do nine holes as it usually takes to do 18.”

Spence devised a master plan that significantly alters the course’s routing. Nine holes will switch directions, while another four holes will have reconfigured greens and tees. The remaining five holes will retain their current routing but will be augmented with new bunkering and fairway contouring. The redesign also calls for new irrigation and cart path systems.

New turf will be installed throughout the course along with extensive drainage to handle the area’s heavy rainfall. All tees, fairways and greens will be bentgrass, while primary roughs will be a bluegrass mixture. Outlying rough areas will be sown with native fine fescue grasses to minimize maintenance requirements and lessen the environmental impact

of the course. Spence also will reduce the amount of highly maintained rough areas.

Spence Golf is constructing and managing the project.

Nine holes of the course were built in the early 1950s, and a second nine was added in the early 1960s. Because of its age, the course isn’t playing that well and hasn’t lived up to its reputation for some time, according to Spence.

“There have been numerous modifications made to the course, but it was piecemeal, and there is no continuity to it,” Spence says. “For example, there are long stretches in between holes. There was no long-range plan.”

Spence became involved in the project after the club’s owner and golf pro visited the course at the Grove Park Inn in Asheville to see the redesign Spence did on that course. They liked what they saw and called Spence to have him look at their course.

“The course at Lake Toxaway didn’t utilize the land forms very well,” Spence says. “The course is in a mountainous region, but it played flat. Now we’re getting vistas, angles and strategy because we are properly placing tees in relation to the landing areas. I’m just taking advantage of the natural land. We will move about 50,000 cubic yards of dirt.”

Spence says the owner and golf pro gave him the freedom to think outside the box.

“I played the golf course backward and ended up reversing nine holes and redesigning five,” he says. “They didn’t think it would be that dramatic, but they loved the plan, and the membership is excited.”

The redesign is limited somewhat because the areas that surround the golf course are fully developed. So the club bought slivers of land, which cost less than \$100,000, that were part of the lots surrounding the course.

“The results will surprise a lot of people familiar with the old Toxaway course,” Spence says. The course, which played about 6,200 yards, will play about 6,700 yards when the redesign is complete.

– by John Walsh



Photo: Distl Public Relations

Kris Spence is redesigning the Toxaway Country Club.

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Cutalong Club to open in 2007

Lake Anna, Va. – Golf course architects Ron Whitten and Tom Clark are teaming up to design the Cutalong Club, which is being developed by Paul Lerner and Matt Benes of Lerner Invest-

ments. The project is a golf course/home site development with 500 acres of open space for an 18-hole course.

Although a part of the property fronts Lake Anna, water will not be an integral part of the design. The course will feature 18 unique holes emulating famous design features of holes throughout the

British Isles.

"We don't plan to copy any holes, rather, we will be using their design characteristics and matching the existing topography to fit," Whitten says.

"We found a Redan par 4, a Punchbowl, a Biarritz & Gibraltar green site and my personal favorite, which is sure to be an instant classic, is the 14th – "The Railroad Hole,"" Clark says. "We discovered an abandoned Railroad bed from the mining operation that used the site from the late 1800s through the 1930s."

Groundbreaking started last year, con-

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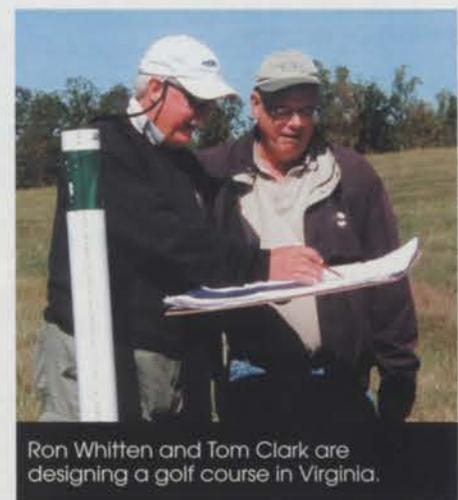
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Ron Whitten and Tom Clark are designing a golf course in Virginia.

struction is scheduled to be completed this year, and the course is scheduled to open in spring 2007. The course will stretch 7,400 from the tips and 5,200 from the forward tees. It will play to a par 72 with returning nines. The tees, fairways and greens will be bentgrass, and the roughs will be blue fescue.

When the project is finished, Clark – a partner in the firm of Ault, Clark and Associates – will have surpassed his mentor, Edmund B. Ault, and Fred Findlay by completing the highest number of courses (32) in Virginia.

Innovative design provides options

Fargo, N.D. – The 12-hole Osgood Golf Course, which was designed by Phelps Golf Design, opened this past fall. Phelps' lead architect, Kevin Atkinson, was among the featured speakers at the unveiling. The city hired Phelps to design the course and practice facility, which includes:

- A nine-hole, links-style layout routed into distinct, three-hole loops that bring golfers back to the clubhouse every third



Photo: Osgood Golf Course

The 12-hole Osgood Golf Course in Fargo, N.D., recently opened.

hole, allowing them to play three-, six- or nine-hole rounds.

- A three-hole practice loop with two par 3s and a par 4 that replicates 150-yard approaches, tee shots over water, sand shots out of fairways and green-side bunkers, uneven lies and pitch shots. Eight teeing grounds around the practice holes allow golfers to simulate anything from a 60-yard par 3 to a 515-yard par 5.

- A separate practice range with bentgrass target greens and sand bunkers that can be converted into a six-hole chip-and-putt course.

"The idea was to build something that is fun for kids and adults," Atkinson says. "We wanted to give the park district and head pro Lisa Schwinden the opportunity to be as creative as they wanted to be. If they want to create four three-hole loops, they can do that. If they want two six-hole loops, they can do that. They will come up with their own ideas of what works and does not work. The beauty is that the facility is incredibly flexible and a lot of fun to play. I especially wanted to give juniors the opportunity to goof around and simply make up their own games. That is the type of thing that gets them hooked and keeps them involved in this wonderful game for life."

Green fees for nine holes are \$12 weekdays and \$14 on weekends.

"People can also pay \$5 to just do a three-hole loop," says Jim Larson, Fargo park district director of finance and human resources. "That lets us attract the business person who wants a quick noon-time golf fix and then have something to eat at the course restaurant before heading back to the office. We think this helps fill a need for a more efficient game that allows people to play some challenging golf in a quicker fashion so that it fits into their busy schedules."

Daly goes long with Big Stick

Bolingbrook, Ill. — PGA Tour player John Daly and golf course architect John Robinson teamed to design a new golf course. The 18-hole Daly/Robinson design will be located adjacent to the

existing Bolingbrook Golf Club, creating a total of 36 holes of championship-caliber golf.

A 76,000-square-foot clubhouse accompanies the course. KemperSports, which manages Bolingbrook Golf Club, will assume management of facility operations of the course when it opens.

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The new layout has been tentatively named Big Stick in recognition of Daly's first tour victory at Crooked Stick Golf Club in Carmel, Ind., and his first designed course, Wicked Stick in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Big Stick will stretch more than 8,200 yards from the tips. The par-5 holes will exceed 600 yards, the par 4s will measure more than 450 yards, and each par 3 will feature a tee that makes the holes difficult and memorable.

Jack Frost club enters final phase

Blakeslee, Pa. – The final construction phase has begun on the Jack Frost National Golf Club, which is expected to open this fall. When opened, Jack Frost will join more than 35 resort and golf properties that are home to hundreds of holes of golf in the mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania.

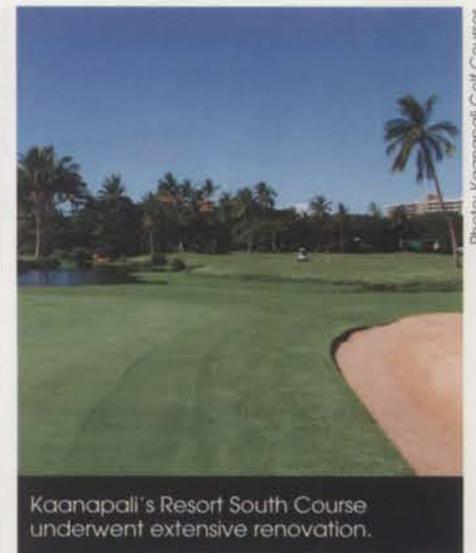


The grow-in phase of the construction process has begun. The 18-hole championship course will measure more than 7,200 yards and feature Lo-Mo bluegrass fairways and Penn-4 bentgrass greens. A double-row irrigation system, five sets of tee boxes and a practice facility are other features. Barbaron Constuction is building the course.

Kaanapali South Course renovated

Maui, Hawaii – Kaanapali Golf Courses, a Billy Casper Golf-managed property, reopened the facility's Resort South Course Nov. 19, 2005 after it underwent an extensive renovation designed by golf course architect Robin Nelson.

Nelson retained many elements of the course's original, player-friendly routing, while presenting a much stiffer challenge to more accomplished players with an array of strategically placed bunkers, con-



Kaanapali's Resort South Course underwent extensive renovation.

toured fairways and reshaped greens.

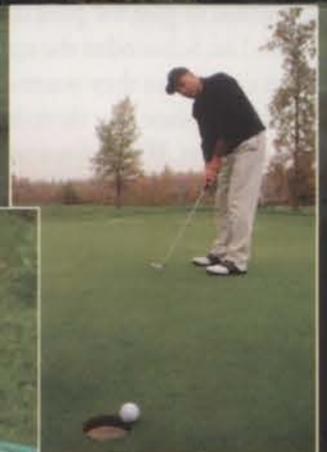
Nelson also added new tees, and the course, which measures 6,400 yards from the tips, now offers four sets with yardages to suit players of all abilities.

The tees, fairways and greens have new turfgrass and an irrigation system. The tees feature 419 hybrid Bermudagrass,



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and the greens have been regrassed with TifEagle hybrid Bermudagrass.

Begun in April 2005, the redesign of the Resort South Course is the first phase of a multiyear renovation project that will include the retooling of the Tournament North Course's layout and the remodeling of the pro shop and clubhouse.

Greens rebuilt at Hidden Valley

Salem, Va. – Frontier Construction Co. completed a green renovation/restoration project at Hidden Valley Country Club. Working with architect Bill Love, 20 putting surfaces were rebuilt to USGA specifications, and all the green-side bunkers were reconstructed.

The club was intent on rebuilding its 50-year-old push-up greens and wanted to maintain the existing contours on 16 of those putting surfaces. Frontier

mapped the 16 greens before breaking ground in June 2005 when the back nine was closed to play. The front nine was closed July 4. All 20 putting surfaces were rebuilt during the summer and prepared for seeding Sept. 1, 2005. The new greens, planted this fall with A4 bentgrass, will debut this spring.

"This is a club, built in the 1950s – a Dick Wilson design – which had gotten to the point where the greens had to be rebuilt," Love says. "They liked the greens. They had a good reputation. But these were 50-year-old modified push-up greens, and things got to the point agronomically where something had to be done. So we went in and replaced them all with USGA profiles and tried to hang on to the design intent of each one."

Camp Creek to go private

Panama city Beach, Fla. – Beginning

in 2006, play at The St. Joe Co.'s Camp Creek Golf Club will be restricted to members and guests of the company's resorts. Also, membership will be restricted to property owners within specific St. Joe communities.

The 18-hole, par-72, championship course has been accessible by the public since it opened in 2001.

Memberships in the club are expected to be available for purchase in June and will be available only to those owning property in certain St. Joe towns and communities in the area. The cost of membership has yet to be established.

The transition from public to private play will occur during the summer, with restricted play for members and St. Joe resort guests to begin Labor Day. Under the privatization plan, play at Camp Creek would be limited to club members and their guests, guests of the WaterColor Inn and guests staying at rental management properties.

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Photo: Camp Creek Golf Club

Camp Creek Golf Club will no longer be open to the public.

As part of the repositioning of the golf course, St. Joe will change the name to Camp Creek Golf Club at WaterSound.

Additionally, the U.S. Golf Association selected the course, which is a Tom Fazio design, to host a sectional qualifier Aug. 2 and 3 for the 2006 U.S. Amateur Championship. Qualified entrants will play from Camp Creek's championship tees, which measure 7,159 and feature one of the state's highest slope ratings of 145.

Escena Golf Club open for play

Palm Springs, Calif. – Escena Golf Club is open for play. It claims to be the first new public golf course to debut in Palm Springs in 20 years. Nicklaus Design designed the 18-hole championship track.

Developed in partnership between Lennar Communities and The Empire Cos., the par-72 course was designed to reflect wide fairways that accent its 7,173 yard layout and are framed by clusters of towering Mexican fan palms, pepper trees and small native trees. The course rests on 172 acres and offers multiple lakes and streams on nine of its 18 holes. The course stretches more than 7,000 yards from the championship tees and more than 6,000 yards from the forward tees.

Green fees range from \$45 to \$105, depending on the season. PGA pro Jeff Sauvage, through Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Troon Golf, will provide on-site course management.

Kearney Hill to host amateur

Lexington, Ky. – The U.S. Golf Association selected Kearney Hill Golf Links

as the site of the 2007 U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship June 18 through 24. The city of Lexington's Division of Parks and Recreation operates the course, which was designed by Pete Dye and his son, P.B. It opened in 1989.

The Scottish links-style course hosted the 1997 U.S. Amateur Public Links.

The 2006 U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship will be played at Walking Stick Golf Course in Pueblo, Colo., June 20 through 25.

Carlton Woods to host tourney

The Woodlands, Texas – The U.S. Golf Association selected The Club at Carlton Woods to host the 2007 USGA State Team Championships, which will be played Sept. 18 through 20.

Carlton Woods has two courses: one designed by Jack Nicklaus that opened in 2001 and the other designed by Tom Fazio that opened in November.

The 2007 USGA State Team Championships will be the first USGA championships at the club.

Sunriver to host women's event

Sunriver, Ore. – The U.S. Golf Association selected Sunriver Resort as the site of the 2007 USGA Senior Women's Amateur Sept. 1 through 6.

The Meadows Course at Sunriver Resort opened in 1969 and was revised in 1999 by John Fought, an Oregonian who won the 1977 U.S. Amateur. The course previously served as the site of the 2002 U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship.

The USGA Senior Women's Amateur will be played at Sea Island Golf Club in St. Simons Island, Ga. Oct. 7 through 12.

People

Glenn W. Burton, Ph.D., an agronomist credited with improving the food staple pearl millet and developing popular grasses for athletic fields and golf courses, died at age 95. Burton introduced Tiffine, an ultrashort hybrid turfgrass, to the golf market. His turf

work earned him a place in the Georgia Golf Hall of Fame.

Chip Kern, CGCS, a 25-year member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, rejoined Shearon Golf. Kern, a degreed agronomist, has overseen the grow-in of several 18-hole golf courses and managed numerous reconstruction projects.

Jesse C. Owre, charter member of the Penncross Bentgrass Grower's Association, died Nov. 18. Owre was 83 years old.



Schmidt

Robert G. Schmidt, CCM, was named general manager for the new Blackstone Country Club in Peoria, Ariz.

Executive director **Gene Maples** an-

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Maples

nounced his retirement from the Turfgrass Council of North Carolina, effective Feb. 28.

Monte Koch is the PGA golf manager for the city of Stockton, Calif. Koch, a PGA Class A pro, left Napa Golf Course in Kennedy Park after working as its head professional, general manager and director of golf since 1999.

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment governing board elected **Stephen P. Briggs** chairman. Briggs, director of the BASF specialty products department, was elected for a two-year term.

Sam Sakocius was named chief operating officer for Colorado Springs, Colo.-based Niebur Golf.

Kelly Morrow, formerly general superintendent for Landscapes Unlimited, joined Scottsdale, Ariz.-based SEMA Golf as project manager.

Brady J. Surrena joined Advan as Midwest area manager for the company's turf and ornamentals division.

John (J.T.) Turner returned to field sales as a lawn and landscape sales representative for Bayer Environmental Science, covering Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Kentucky. Previously, Turner was formulator account manager for Bayer.



Surrena



Turner

Greg Fletcher joined the turf and ornamental team with Dow AgroSciences as a senior sales representative.

Darin W. Lickfeldt, Ph.D., a product technology specialist for the turf and ornamental group, was promoted to a global turf and ornamental research and development position at Dow AgroSciences.



Fletcher

Jason Kuhlemeier joined the marketing team at Bayer Environmental Science in Research Triangle Park, N.C., as a marketing specialist.



Kuhlemeier

Dan Carrothers joined Datacore Marketing as chief operating officer.

Otterbine Barebo, a manufacturer of aerators and fountains in the pond and lake management industry, named John Ouellette Northeast regional sales manager.

Steve Ablor joined Syngenta Professional Products' turf and ornamental team as a sales representative serving customers in Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Dennis E. DeSanctis joined Syngenta Professional Products' turf and ornamental team as a sales representative serving customers in Fairfield County, Conn., the Westchester County area of New York and Long Island.

Fred Montgomery, CGCS, joined Syngenta Professional Products' turf and ornamental team as a sales representative serving customers in New York.

Supplier News

Ditch Witch launched Groundbreaking Safety, a training program designed to promote the safe operation of all types of trenchers, plows, horizontal directional drills, miniskid steers and miniexcavators.

LESCO opened its 300th service center, which is in Concord, Calif. It was the 26th service center to open in 2005.

Phoenix Environmental Care introduced a 7.5-gallon packaging concept called BATPak (buy, apply, turn in). The new delivery system is designed to address container handling and disposal issues faced by golf course superintendents.

ProLink Solutions, a provider of Global Positioning Satellite systems for golf courses, partnered with Iteration2, a Microsoft consultant, to enhance ProLink's operational efficiencies. ProLink also partnered with Elumina International Ltd. to install its GPS system at select, high-end courses throughout the Middle East, Levant and Egypt.

ProTrac Franchise Systems, a golf GPS systems company, opened franchise territories in Jacksonville, Fla., and Hilton Head, S.C. The company, in its first year of granting franchises, has 12 territories open. The others are located in Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio and Texas.

SubAir Systems, a subsurface aeration technology company, acquired TurfBreeze Fans. TurfBreeze Fans founder Tom Michaels will continue to work with the company, generating sales and overseeing the TurfBreeze product line.

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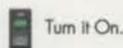


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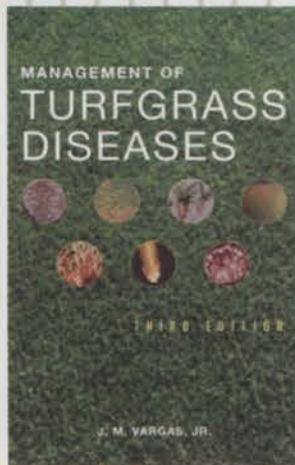
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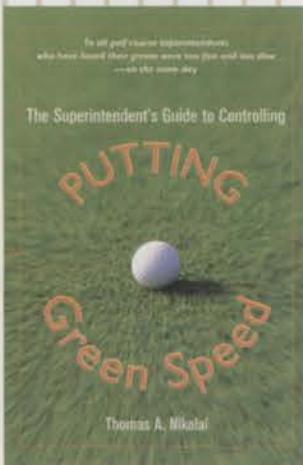
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J. M. Vargas, Jr.
ISBN: 0-471-47411-8, Hardcover, 336 pages, November 2004

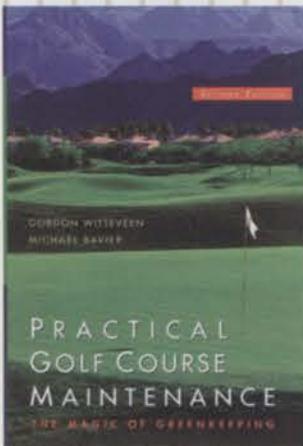
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The Superintendent's Guide to Controlling Putting Green Speed

\$60
Thomas Nikolai
ISBN: 0-471-47272-7, Hardcover, 160 pages, October 2004

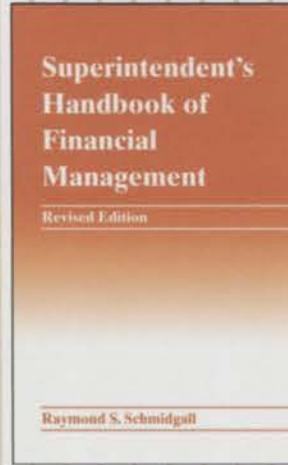
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Practical Golf Course Maintenance: The Magic of Greenkeeping

\$65
Gordon Witteveen, Michael Bavier
ISBN: 1-57504-047-6, Hardcover, 280 pages, July 2002

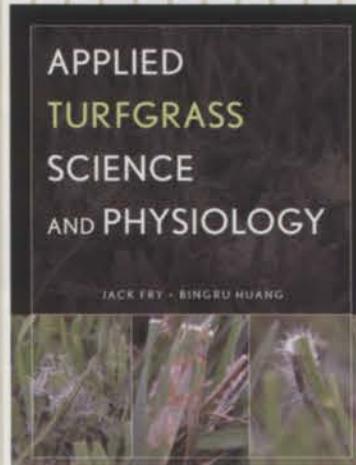
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Superintendent's Handbook of Financial Management, Revised Edition

\$45
Raymond S. Schmidgall
ISBN: 0-471-46319-1, Hardcover, 176 pages, October 2003

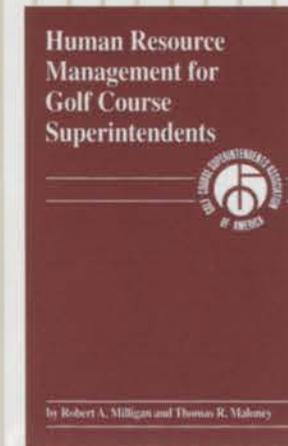
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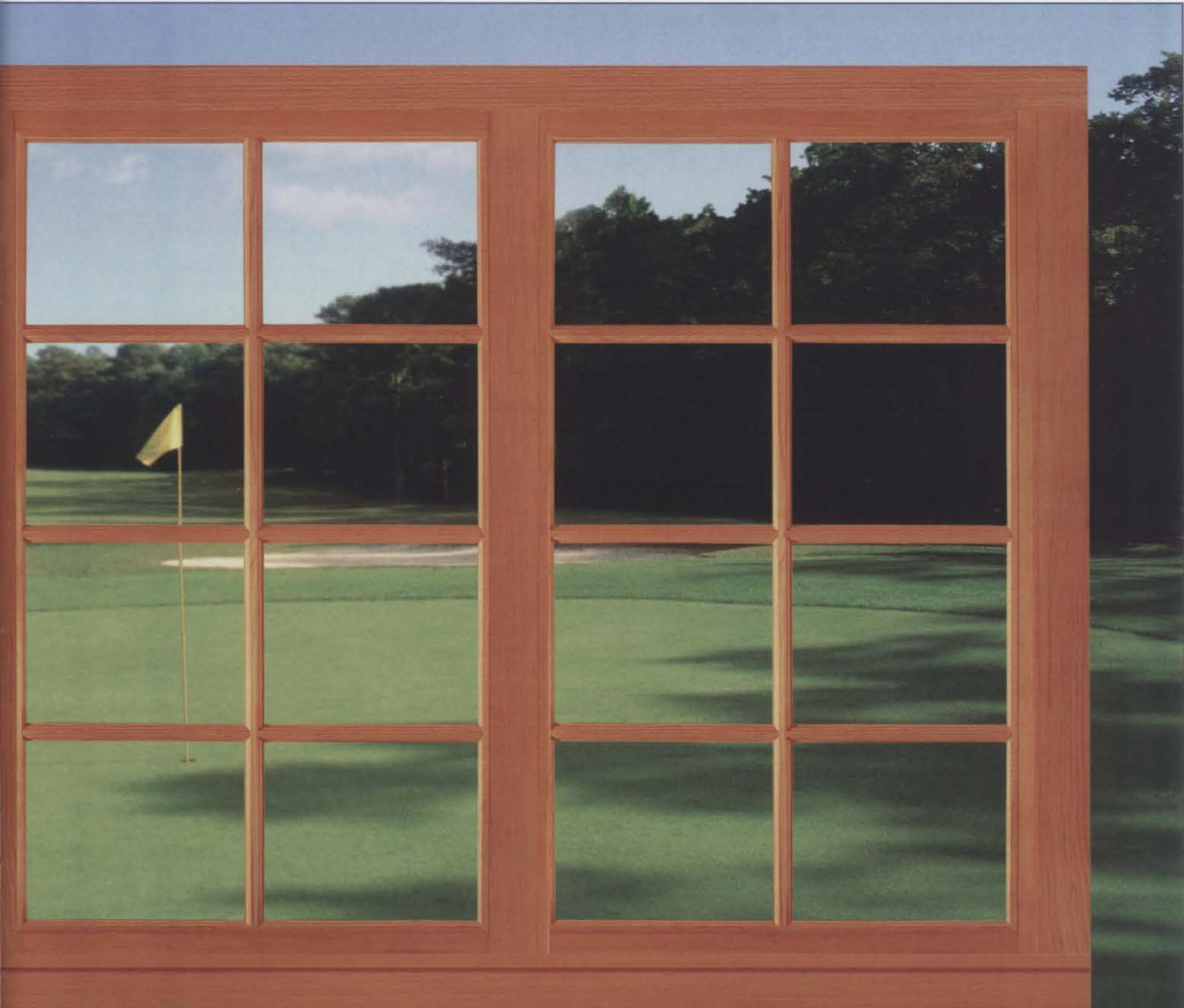
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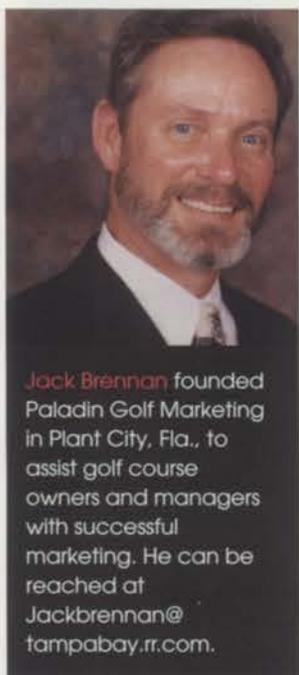
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Jack Brennan founded Paladin Golf Marketing in Plant City, Fla., to assist golf course owners and managers with successful marketing. He can be reached at Jackbrennan@tampabay.rr.com.

Think outside the box

Think outside the box' is a popular expression. But how many can define it readily and apply it for personal or professional benefit?

For some people, coloring outside the lines or thinking outside the box is innate. They're born with the creativity to accept, and prefer, the thought process. For others, it's a learned appreciation. But, the application of this learned behavior can be beneficial to golf course owners and managers personally and professionally.

By this time of the year, golf course owners and managers have formulated their 2006 plan for success to take advantage of their existing or planned unique market positioning. Appropriately, you can begin this process by applying the basics of theoretical marketing recognized as the four Ps of marketing – often referred to as the marketing mix.

The marketing mix became a popular idiom after Neil Borden published "The Concept of the Marketing Mix" in 1964. The ingredients in Borden's marketing mix consisted of product planning, pricing, branding, distribution channels, personal selling, advertising, promotions, packaging, display, servicing, physical handling, and fact finding and analysis. E. Jerome McCarthy later grouped these ingredients into four categories that are designated as the four Ps of marketing.

Follow the four Ps of golf course marketing – price, product, promotion and packaging – and you'll be better prepared for the new season than 70 percent of all golf course operations. Place is actually one of the original four Ps McCarthy introduced and refers to distribution channels primarily. (For example: a product, such as potato chips, needs to be baked at a site, bulk packaged, shipped to distribution outlets, then shipped to regional warehouses, and ultimately delivered to stores for consumer consumption.) I've substituted packaging in my reference for golf course marketing because it relates well to most golf courses' successful implementation of effective and efficient marketing. Face it, the place or location of your golf course is a critical marketing element.

Let's review practical applications of the four Ps for golf course marketing:

Price. By using a matrix based on your course's golf experience compared to the pricing in the market, were you able to adjust your pricing to fully maximize total

revenues? Or, did you simply increase or decrease the cart or green fee a dollar or two hoping for more play?

Product. In concert with your superintendent and his staff, were you able to adjust maintenance levels to position the course experience strategically to match the adjusted rack rate based on value to the customer?

Promotion. By segmenting total rounds into individual business categories (member play, outside play, outings, leagues, discount/twilight, etc.), have you formulated an advertising and promotions plan to maximize play from each segment with corresponding budget expenditures? Or, if nothing else, have you tested your ability to attract these different segments of play to your course?

Packaging. With a critical eye, have you reviewed all of your marketing collateral materials to make sure the image of your course is conveyed according to the price you're asking customers to pay? Is the rack card four-color quality? Does the outing brochure quality match the customers' expected experience? Are the graphics on the direct-mail pieces meaningful to their intended targets? Does the signage leading to your clubhouse communicate a sense of welcome to your facility?

Marketing is a systematic approach (inside the box) and a welcoming solicitation of your likely business targets: introduction, qualifying, requalifying (if necessary), meeting certain needs or desires (expectations) and asking for the order "play and enjoy our golf course." When golfers' experiences match their expectations in relation to recreational experience and value, you'll have developed a loyal customer likely to refer other golfers to your course.

So, what do you do when all of the basics of golf course marketing have been set in place, checked and rechecked for efficiency and effectiveness and you're still not realizing the needed revenue to cover debt service and produce a profit? The first answer is to recheck your basics. If your marketing programs are in order and systematically being carried out by a designated sales/marketing person, a portion of your profit solution is likely to

be realized by thinking outside the box. But can you?

I'm not going to pretend to teach anyone to think outside the box in one column. If I'm lucky, I might be able to get a few to begin to think in ways they hadn't before. Think of perspective. How do golfers view their experience at your facility? What would add value to their experience, to their membership, to their perception of their allegiance to your facility?

Business partnerships might change that perspective and add to a desired sense of belonging, and therefore, value to your course whether it's private or public. After all, that's the key to successful private clubs, isn't it?

The first step to create business-to-golf course partnerships isn't creating ideas you think will be attractive to your players or members. Ask them what's desired, or missing, from their experience at your club through player and member surveys. Conduct the research first, and then develop appropriate partnerships based on a consensus of responses.

An example might be a prestigious private club partnering with an exclusive city club or performing arts theatre – based on survey results that said your members desired such a relationship. If so, the effort is well worthwhile.

On the public course side, an often-repeated partnership might be with an off-course golf shop. Public-access courses are hard-pressed to stock all the latest and greatest new equipment. If your research indicates a perceived desire, and you established a beneficial partnership with the local off-course retailer, you could provide your loyal following with a sense of the same partnership. And, if those players were affiliates of your annual or frequent player program, you might be able to establish preferred discounts for them through the retailer. The retailer benefits by having a presence with golfers frequenting the course. You benefit by being able to provide something that you normally wouldn't stock.

The key is perception. How keen is yours? GCN

FOLLOW THE FOUR Ps OF GOLF COURSE MARKETING – PRICE, PRODUCT, PROMOTION AND PACKAGING ...

Modern green contours

If you're remodeling greens, get the contours right. Given the big expense, most courses don't have the financial resources for green-reconstruction multiligans. New greens must be satisfactory for at least a decade.

Most golfers will be disappointed to learn the three biggest design concerns in green contouring are drainage, drainage and drainage. Those devilish putts are a result of the designer using slopes to make water flow downhill and usually nothing more. Older courses seem more devilish, mostly because slower green speeds and less subsurface drainage allowed and demanded steeper slopes.

Greens usually need two drainage swales to minimize drainage concentration, which



A drainage swale usually exists on the front of a green.

causes saturation and turf damage, especially in high-use areas such as the green approach and walk-on points where increased traffic magnifies poor drainage.

The swale green in the photo above is an example of the problem inherent when greens drain in one direction. A second swale would reduce the concentration of surface water.

But the drainage zones don't have to be equal. It's usually more artistic if the drainage splits are slightly unbalanced. Usually, one drainage swale exits on the front of the green partly to make it visible and assist holding shots. The second swale should drain somewhere to the downhill side. It's preferable both swales drain away from the cart-path side. It's possible to drain greens against the natural slope, but they usually look awkward and make it difficult to read putts, which some consider a design benefit in limited doses.

A bigger problem is relying on catch

basins near the green for drainage. Catch basins aren't as reliable as surface flow because they can become clogged.

Large greens (8,000 square feet or more) or greens with slopes draining on their surface might need three drainage swales. While good agronomically, that often creates a crowned green that rejects shots, unless the third swale is small and cosmetic and drains about 10 percent of the green.

Another maintenance criterion is providing enough cupping space. There are many systems for rotating the cup around to distribute wear, but old cup locations – including the 3-foot radius around it – heal in about three weeks. That system type requires at least 21 locations.

After allowances for cupping areas, minimum distance from cup to green edge, collars and the general oval shape of the green, etc., minimum green size (based on the width of eight 6-foot-wide pin diameters and the length of 13 six-foot diameters) is about 48 feet by 78 feet or about 3,000 square feet. That's if all the area is flat enough to set a pin, which usually isn't the case. Most greens are about 6,000 square feet and allow interesting interior transition contours where a cup would never be set.

Steeper contours – ridges as high as two feet and 10- to 15-percent slopes – are fine on green perimeters, where pins are never set, and give the appearance of greater contour without reducing cupping space. If those rolling edges get too steep, they dry out, especially when facing strong prevailing winds. Turning mowers and major exit points add stress, which inevitably leads to turf damage and limits the placement and height of dramatic rolls.

Forty-eight feet is the narrowest practical dimension anywhere on a green. Where greens are narrower, there isn't enough room to move the pin around, which concentrates foot traffic in the middle of the green. Green edges with outside curve diameters broader than 48 feet reduce mowing damage from tight turns.

Another maintenance criterion is providing acceptable cupping areas. Modern green speeds have reduced green slopes acceptable for setting pins. Lately, people have been lobbying for reduced green speeds, even though many clubs demand faster green speeds. Some combinations of turf and microclimate require a life support system to adequately maintain greens

at desired speeds.

Many ask architects to lobby for lower green speeds, but my job is to provide golf courses that meet the needs of today's golfer, not dictate what they should want. Even though I favor steeper green slopes for their aesthetics, I'm designing flatter greens because form follows function.

Until the 1950s, 6-percent green contours were common. They flattened out to 4 percent in the '60s, 3 percent in the '70s, 2.5 percent in '80s, 2.25 percent in the '90s and 2 percent or less currently. Some research suggests that with green speeds of 10 on the Stimpmeter, 3-percent slopes are the maximum allowable for pin areas to avoid putts that, as H.S. Colt once wrote, "run from the putter like a swine possessed by the devil."

Major tournaments will set cups on slopes as much 4 percent, which might work even on extremely fast greens for pros, but I'm sure most country club golfers would struggle. I'll never build pin area greater than 3 percent, assuming there always will be reasonable green speeds. Greens become faster in certain seasons, or for important events, and must function well under all conditions.

While green speed governs maximum slope, drainage governs minimum slope, and even sand-based greens with subsurface drainage require 1.5 percent slope to drain functionally. I design with a 10-percent latitude for construction error, so my minimum design slope is 1.65 percent. And given swales have downhill and side-hill grade components that increase slope 10 percent to 40 percent, my swales rarely exceed 2.25-percent pitch to maintain 3-percent slopes throughout most green areas to maximize cup space.

Some architects design flatter greens, so advice will be slightly different. My greens slope more than other architects because of aesthetics and improved agronomics. Golfers demand perfect turf with their fast greens, so adapting to modern maintenance practices outweighs other design characteristics.

Modern green speeds limit green contours, and the margin between goofy, good and great greens is finer than ever. But we can still design for variety, challenge and playability with just a bit more thought and build practical greens that increase everyone's enjoyment of the game. GCN



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Golf's noble pioneer

As noted above, the continuing theme for this column is advancing the game. Accordingly, may I introduce Guido P. Cribari. He has advanced the game of golf in a manner and style that few others have.

Guido Cribari was born in Mt. Vernon, N.Y. (a suburb of New York City) and is a proud graduate of A.B. Davis High School in Mt. Vernon. Guido celebrated his 90th birthday and 60th anniversary in service to golf this past July. Although Guido's base of operation has always been the greater New York City area, the benefits of his service to golf have been felt throughout the country.

It all started during the 1940s when Guido ascended through the ranks to become the executive sports editor for what is known today in Westchester County as the Gannett Suburban News collective newspapers. The original seed was planted when William F. Fanning, publisher of the Westchester newspapers, and Guido mutually agreed to promote golf as much as they could during a time when no other news outlet throughout the country was giving golf the time of day. Guido picked up the baton on golf's behalf and carried it forward in a true Olympian manner, as the following events attest:

- As few know, today's long-standing Westchester County PGA Tour stop began in 1947 in the form of a one-day Pro-Am charity fund-raiser at the Apawamis Club in Rye, N.Y. Guido delivered all the professional Tour talent, including golf's then idol "Champaign" Tony Lima. Twelve years later, this popular and financially successful Pro-Am graduated to become the PGA Tour's 72-hole Thunderbird Tournament (later to be successively entitled the Westchester Classic, the Buick Classic and today Barclay's Classic) at a new site – the world-renowned Westchester Country Club where it resides to this day.

During the early days of the Thunderbird Tournament, when the newspapers covering golf throughout the country basically ignored PGA Tour events, Guido was

dedicating two to three pages daily to the Thunderbird, right in the back yard of the New York Times. Quickly embarrassed, the New York Times followed suit and expanded its golf coverage to match that of Guido's Westchester papers. Soon thereafter, all the major newspapers covering PGA Tour events across the country followed similar suit.

As a direct result of this expanded media coverage, the tournament's popularity grew exponentially – to the point where the subsequently retitled "classics" have not only set the pace for PGA Tour purse sizes through the years, but also generated more than \$32 million for local charities, more than any PGA Tour event other than the five-day Bob Hope Classic. Without question, the "classic" was born, grew, flourished and served as a constantly evolving PGA Tour model because it was cultivated within a fertile, unprecedented local media environment – thanks to Guido Cribari.

- During a time when nobody was giving women's golf the attention it deserved, women's golf was always given peer attention with men's golf in Westchester's newspapers. To help accomplish this parity, Guido founded the Westchester County Tournament of Champions for men and women club/course champions and gave it maximum newspaper coverage. This resulted in many clubs/courses adding women's championship events to their annual schedules just to be eligible for the champions tournament. With the

same commitment he had for everything he did, Guido's newspapers reported women's local tournaments with equal fervor and attention as the men's events – a practice that also was noted and emulated beyond the New York area. As far as Guido was concerned, the game of golf always belonged to and included men and women on equal terms.

- Patty Berg gener-

ously and publicly credits Guido for his counsel and support for helping create the initial and sustaining atmosphere that would allow the LPGA to be born in 1951 in Westchester County's backyard at the Knollwood Country Club.

- When it comes to fund raising and testimonials, Guido Cribari has set a standard that no one will approach, in terms of their frequency, special impact on people and the game of golf. It got so that no charity would approach a fund-raising activity without first asking for Guido's invaluable assistance, i.e., seeking newspaper support and

because Guido is a raconteur without peer – his services as the master of ceremonies for each event. Throughout all these years, it has been estimated that Guido has sup-

ported and participated in over 1,000 fund-raising and testimonial dinners and affairs that serviced golf and mankind.

- Because of limited space, I can only briefly reference Guido's never-ending support for several of his favored golf programs: the Association of Disabled Golfers and its efforts that resulted (with USGA support) in the publication of "A Modification of the Rules of Golf for Golfers with Disabilities," the U.S. Blind Golfers Association, and the Westchester County Caddie Scholarship Fund (where Guido still serves as a founding director) that has awarded more than 1,600 scholarships worth more than \$6 million. The latter two organizations have named prominent annual awards in Guido's honor.

- Not surprisingly, Guido has received many distinguished local and national awards that are too numerous to mention here. The interesting aspect of this is that Guido, more times than not, has been the initial recipient for many of these awards, which were created for the sole purpose of reflecting Guido's unprecedented contributions to the game that others have only learned to follow.

Guido is more than an institution. He is the essence of what unselfish human behavior is all about. No one has brought more meaning and dignity to the game of golf in a lifetime than Guido Cribari. Thank you Guido for so much. GCN

GUIDO PICKED UP THE BATON ON GOLF'S BEHALF AND CARRIED IT FORWARD IN A TRUE OLYMPIAN MANNER.



Cribari



Jim McLoughlin is the founder of TMG Golf (www.TMGgolfcounsel.com), a golf course development and consulting firm, and is a former executive director of the GCSAA. He can be reached at golfguide@adelphia.net or 760-804-7339. His previous columns can be found on www.golfcoursenews.com.

We would like to hear from you. Please post any comments you have about this column on our message board, which is at www.golfcoursenews.com/messageboard.



Impactful attitudes



Robert A. Milligan, Ph.D., is professor emeritus from Cornell University and senior consultant with Madison, Wis.-based Dairy Strategies. He can be reached at 651-647-0495 or rmilligan@trsmith.com.

Golf course superintendents often think, talk and fret about the attitudes of their employees. They seek employees who are motivated, productive, dedicated and loyal. Superintendents' attitudes and the cultures they develop dramatically impacts their success attracting and retaining motivated, productive, dedicated and loyal employees. Consider the following:

- I recently visited a superintendent who was seeking my advice because he was having little success attracting and keeping high-quality assistant superintendents. He told me there were few good candidates. Those who had the skills were too young, didn't want to work hard and spent too much time partying. When he was able to hire good candidates, they didn't stay more than a year or two.

- During a seminar I was teaching, a golf course superintendent proclaimed to everyone in the seminar that there were 36 superintendents in the United States who were assistant superintendents with him. During later conversations with him, he said he didn't have problems hiring assistant superintendents but had difficulty choosing one from the several superbly qualified candidates.

To better understand how your attitude impacts employees' attitudes, contrast two approaches to employees, sometimes called

We want to be a part of a winning team, so consider the following:

- Identify the greatest team you were a member of – sports, work, volunteer, etc. Why did you identify the team as your greatest? The answers usually revolve around a common goal, direction, mission or vision.

- The greatest team I led was during my time on the faculty at Cornell University. Through a New York State-funded project to improve the competitive position of the state's dairy farmers, we assembled a team of eight professionals with a common vision to improve the management skills of the dairy-farm managers. The energy, passion and synergy from the common vision led to focus, creativity, productivity and a winning team.

- Think about athletic teams at all levels. Do the teams with the most talented players always win? Talent is important, but without commitment to team goals and engagement in team success, most athletic teams fall short of their expectations.

Quality leaders develop a winning culture. Everyone in the work force is engaged in course success. In this culture, employees don't simply complete tasks. Instead, they exceed expectations when completing tasks to contribute to course success and seek additional opportunities to contribute to course success. Here are some suggestions

Quality supervisors understand and develop the unique talents, skills, interests and attitudes of each employee. Consider the following:

- I use to play the Robert Trent Jones Golf Course in New York regularly and knew the superintendent. The 11th hole was a beautiful par 4 with a narrow, tree-lined fairway leading to a large green protected by bunkers and closely surrounded by trees. The golfers loved the challenge, but the superintendent hated the hole because the shade made keeping the green in great condition almost impossible.

- After a presentation at a state landscape and greenhouse conference, a man named George asked me if he could tell his story. George worked for a landscaper for 23 years. Looking back, he realized he was a terrible employee. He did the minimum and used all of his vacation and sick leave. He also said he received no feedback or encouragement from his employer. Because that landscaper went out of business, George joined his current employer. This landscaper gives him training, encouragement and feedback. George is now passionate about his work and seeks to succeed in every way.

What does the 11th hole have to do with supervision? People, like golf holes, are different. As the uniqueness of the 11th hole was integral to the golf course, each individual's uniqueness is integral to the success of a winning team. Quality supervisors are masters at understanding what makes their employees tick. They build on that knowledge to create task assignments that enable employees and the course to succeed. The change in George wasn't anything other than leaving a losing team and joining a winning one.

You can be a leader of a winning team and a great supervisor. Remember employees' attitudes are impacted dramatically by your attitudes and by the culture you create among the work force at your course. So:

- Hire great people;
- Develop the uniqueness of each employee;
- Respect the capabilities of your employees;
- Provide positive and negative feedback and redirection; and
- Engage everyone in course success.

GCN

	CONTROL FOCUSED	QUALITY FOCUSED
LEADERSHIP	Hire and train employees for course maintenance tasks	Develop a winning team with all employees engaged in course success
SUPERVISION	Assign employees to complete tasks based on skills and availability	Develop and coach to capitalize on the uniqueness of each employee

paradigms. I'll call them control and quality. The control approach is a traditional approach to management built around the superiority of the manager and the need for the manager to control how everything is done. The quality approach emanates from the quality movement (Total Quality Management, Six Sigma, Baldrige, etc.) and modern human resource management practices and focuses on every member of the work force working together to produce quality products and services. Consider your roles with your employees – leader, manager, supervisor, trainer, coach, mentor, teacher – by focusing on two – leader and supervisor (see table above).

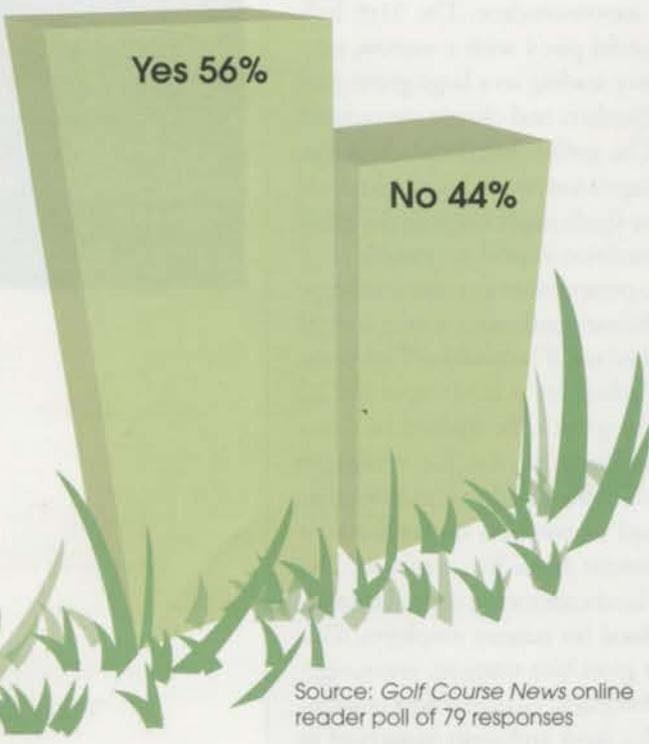
for developing a quality culture:

- Clearly articulate the vision, directions, values and goals you have for the course. Share these with your employees. Utilize the vision, direction, values and goals in all training, directions, feedback and day-to-day discussion.

- Seek input and ideas from your employees. Involvement in a winning team goes both ways. You need to seek their ideas and passion.

- Provide copious amounts of high-quality feedback about how the team and each individual are doing. Your employees will appreciate knowing they and the team are or aren't winning.

Has the turfgrass variety on your fairways or greens been changed during the past five years?



"Just as there are golf tournaments and major championships, there are golf courses and major golf courses. This is at the top of the list. This is the U.S. Open of golf course design." - **Tom Kite**, professional golfer and golf course designer describing Liberty National Golf Club, in Jersey City, N.J.

"Golf course superintendent is a great job around here. Salaries start around \$60,000, and some of them at the private clubs probably earn more than the pros." - **Jane Schlosser**, executive director for the Southern Nevada Junior Golf Association, about plans to add golf course maintenance classes to high school curriculums

"Most superintendents are passionate and competent guys who are either real good grass growers, good course presenters, have good business sense or are good project managers. The ideal guy has all four of these traits, but most have two or three." - **Peter Hill**, chief executive officer and chairman of Billy Casper Golf Management

"I've told many of my friends that growing grass out here is much easier than in Kansas City or Virginia. It's the politics of growing grass that are much different. The regulations make you operate in a framework that has you on your toes a bit more than you normally would be." - **Pat Finlen**, director of golf maintenance operations at The Olympic Club in San Francisco

BY THE NUMBERS

72 The number of countries in which the GCSAA has members

54 The percentage of PGA professionals who have a bachelor's degree, according to a recent PGA survey

98 The age of the Beverly Country Club in Chicago

2.4
The percentage increase of golf participation by women during the past 10 years, according to NGF

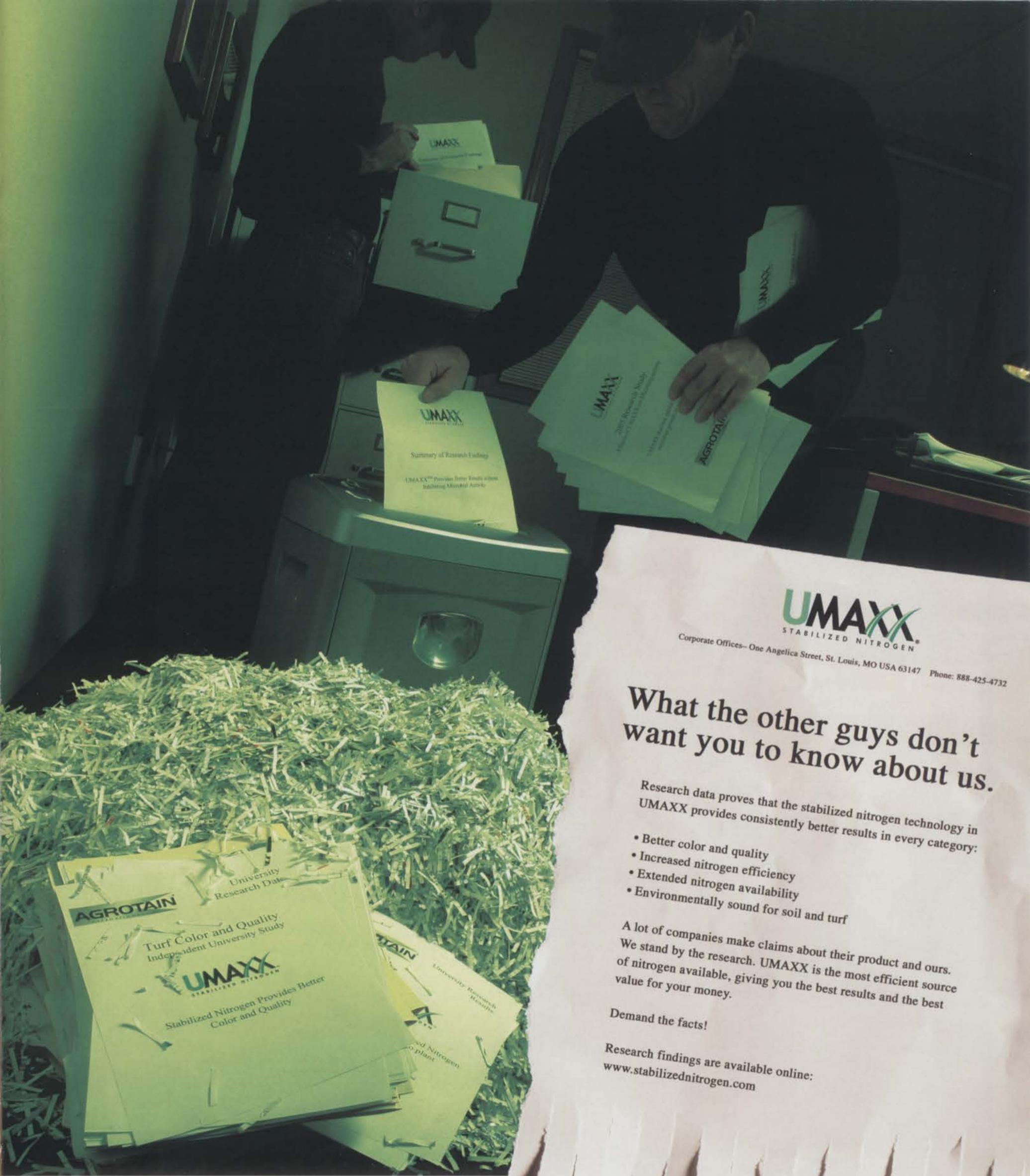
7,300
The number of new golf courses that have opened worldwide during the past 10 years, according to Golf Research Group

The percentage of the world's golf courses that are in North America, according to Golf Research Group **59**

8 The number of USGA championships hosted by Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa, Okla., according to the USGA

90 The percentage of respondents from a recent PGA of America survey that think local PGA professionals spend as much as half their day giving golf lessons

/// QUOTABLE ///



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A path less taken

A MIDWESTERNER WORKS HIS WAY UP TO A HIGH-PROFILE FACILITY ON THE WEST COAST AND OPERATES UNDER A DIFFERENT FRAMEWORK

by
JOHN
WALSH

Q Explain how you got into the business.

I started playing golf when I was 11. I cad-died at a course in Chicago for a year before my family moved to Kansas City where I started picking up balls on the driving range at Quivira Lake & Country Club. From ages 12 to 15, I worked in the golf shop doing whatever odd job was available. In the fall of my sophomore year while working in the golf shop, I was asked to help out on the golf course maintenance staff because most of their help had returned to school. I was asked to come and help on weekends, and that was how I started working on a golf course – hand mowing greens when I was 15.

I continued working through high school and took every available hour to work on the golf course because I loved being outside, operating equipment and seeing the results of my work.

I went to college at Kansas University and worked the first two years on a local course and then transferred to Rockhurst University, a Jesuit college in Kansas City for my final two years. I didn't work on a golf course from my sophomore year in college until I was 23. I graduated college with a degree in business administration.

I wasn't looking to go back on a golf course. I went into the landscape/nursery business the final year Jimmy Carter was in office and borrowed a fair amount of money at about 20-percent interest. I lasted two years and then had to get out. I had to find a job, so I went back to the two courses where I worked previously – Quivira Lake and Alvarado Golf and Country Club in Lawrence, Kan. I ended up at Quivira Lake and was fortunate

to do so. Within a year, the assistant superintendent left, and I became the assistant superintendent. A year after that, in 1984, the superintendent left, and I became the superintendent.

Q How did you manage to become a superintendent without a turfgrass degree?

I was in the right place at the right time. Quivira Lake is the place where I started picking up balls on the driving range when I was 12 and the same place I first started on a maintenance crew, so most of the members there knew me.

I was told by many that my career wouldn't go far without a turf degree. I took many seminars and read every turfgrass book I could get my hands on. I talked to as many superintendents as I could and continued to read.

It was pure timing to be there when the assistant left. If it were today, that wouldn't have happened. Demands have changed dramatically as well as the superintendent's role.

Q Where did you go from there?

I stayed at Quivira for two years, then took a job in Virginia Beach, Va., building a new golf course. I was there about two years and returned to Quivira Lake when it combined the superintendent position with the residential maintenance manager position. In the new position, I was responsible for the golf course, as well as the roads, common areas, lake and sewers. That experience was a great foundation for my career because I learned about more than just golf. I gained a lot of experience dealing with contracts and projects.

I hired three assistants to work for me

– two on the golf course and one on the nongolf side. That's when the job became much more of a management position. I still wanted to get out there and do the work but couldn't.

I stayed in that role for 11 years. I had a great general manager, John Miller, and a great green chairman, Terry Williams. Those two, along with many members, taught me a lot about ethics and how to operate in a business climate.

Q What was next?

I went to Bayonet and Black Horse Golf Courses in Seaside, Calif. It's a 36-hole facility that used to be a part of Fort Ord. My wife and I always wanted to live in the Northwest, but there were few jobs advertised. After interviewing unsuccessfully a couple times, the job in Seaside opened in 1998.

I sent in my resume and got an interview. It just so happened the interview was the week of the U.S. Open, which was being played at The Olympic Club. I was the last person to interview and was asked to stay around. Eventually, I was offered the job while still there. I told them I would look at housing. I was shocked. I was coming out of Kansas City, which is one of the most affordable housing areas in the country, and looking in the Monterey area, the prices were astronomical. I said I couldn't take the job. They told me to think about it for a couple days and come back with what I wanted. In the meantime, I watched the U.S. Open for a couple days. I went back to Seaside, told them what I needed, and we eventually settled.

I credit getting that job to my involvement with the GCSAA and serving on committees when I was in Kansas City. From the networking aspect of it, I had met and knew enough people that when the time came for

GOLF COURSE NEWS
INTERVIEWS PAT
FINLEN, DIRECTOR OF
GOLF MAINTENANCE
OPERATIONS AT THE
OLYMPIC CLUB
IN SAN FRANCISCO

Photo: Steve Skoll





Photo: Steve Skoll

The strict environmental regulations Pat Finlen works under keeps him and his staff on their toes a bit more than they normally would be.

that job to open, it happened to be a person on a GCSAA committee who interviewed me. We didn't know each other at that time, but he has since told me that my service on a GCSAA committee contributed to me getting an interview.

Q Why the move from Bayonet and Black Horse to The Olympic Club?

Just before 9/11, I saw changes in the golf market. Bayonet and Black Horse is a daily-fee, 36-hole facility. We had done a tremendous amount of construction and improved it. It was slated to be taken over by TPC, but the deal was delayed after 9/11, and it looked like it wasn't going to happen, so I started to look elsewhere. I interviewed for a few other positions but didn't get them.

I went to Kansas City for a GCSAA committee meeting, checked my messages one day, and there was a message from a search firm looking for a superintendent. They wouldn't tell me where the location was other than it was in the San Francisco area and it was a multicourse facility. I knew what facility it was because that was the only opening at the time.

I went through the process of sending my resume and the phone interview and was selected for a personal interview. That was November 2001. The hiring process was slow

and methodical. The job had been offered to another candidate before me, but he turned it down because he was out of state and didn't think he could afford the move.

Q What were your thoughts while interviewing?

I was scared to death interviewing for The Olympic Club. I'm a humble person, and my career path has never been to seek employment at a high-profile golf course. I was extremely nervous. I'm a quiet person and don't interview well. I even admitted that in the interview. But I left the interview feeling pretty good about it, until it dragged on for a couple months.

Q What factored into you getting the job?

Living in California was somewhat of a factor, but more importantly was the fact that I was at a 36-hole facility. My business background played a part, too. The Olympic Club is a 45-hole facility. We have a lot going on and have a large staff. It's much more of a management job than when I first started at an 18-hole facility. We have a superintendent for each 18-hole course, and they both have assistants. We also have an assistant on the nine-hole course.

Q Are you under more pressure maintaining courses at such a high-profile club?

You always have an image of what a place is like, and that typically changes after you get hired. I knew it was a course that had a lot of history and prestige to it. I was just thrilled to be considered for the job. Then to get offered the job and show up three weeks later for work is a humbling experience.

I couldn't have had a better situation because our general manager, Dennis Bouey, started a month before I did. He has been fantastic and is another person who has a lot of great management experience and is a good teacher. He has been great to work with. I also had a new green chairman who is a tremendous asset and who has been good to work with, as well as the board and committees. It would have been much tougher without those people in place helping me along.

Q Explain the environmental regulations in California.

Each year you meet with your county agricultural advisor and give him a list of the products you want to use during the year. There's a number of pesticides that, when they become available in other parts of the country, might take three to five years to become available in California because, in

addition to the EPA label registration, they have to have a California registration, which many other states don't require.

Beyond that, there are strict reporting requirements. Every month, you have to turn in exactly what you've used to your county agricultural advisor. For any 2,4-D or similar products, you have to give notice of intent to use those. That notice has to be given within 24 hours. The county agriculture department has the authority to tell you whether or not you can make that application depending on the weather. He also has the right to come out and inspect the course at any time. We get inspected fairly often. The state is stringent about the products you use, how you use them, the signage you have and the personal protective equipment used.

The city-run golf courses in San Francisco have their own reporting requirements. They operate under their own department rather than through the San Francisco agricultural department. They have a whole other realm of stringent requirements that they have self-adopted through the city that we don't have to comply with. It's a much more restrictive list.

Q Are the regulations necessary?

When I first moved here, I thought the regulations went too far, but after you operate under something like this, you realize they're good regulations. We're all afraid of doing something different, but it isn't that hard. It's just a few more hoops you have to jump through. I've told many of my friends growing grass here is much easier than in Kansas City or Virginia, it's the politics of growing grass that are much different. The regulations make you operate in a framework that has you on your toes a bit more than you normally would be. We're very cognizant of what we're applying, when we apply it and how we store it, whereas if we hadn't had these rules and regulations, things might be different.

Q Do you solve problems differently because of the tighter regulations?

That's a tough one because the weather is different here. It's cool almost the entire year. We usually get to about 65 degrees during the day. We're in the fog half the year, so we have a more constant disease pressure, but not the extreme disease pressures many other parts of the country experience during the summer months.

The weather makes you think differently about how you use pesticides. We have snow mold pressure 12 months a year. We've

learned there are certain months in the spring and fall that, because of the type of weather, we can get away with not applying a preventive product or stretching out an application much longer than we normally would. I can't attribute that to pesticide regulations. That's just using good agronomic knowledge any superintendent would practice in any part of the country.

Q Explain the importance of being involved with associations.

It makes you a better superintendent because of the people and role models you meet. In Kansas City, I was a member of Heart of America Golf Course Superintendents Association and went on to become its president. It was through that involvement I initially became involved with the GCSAA and committees. My interest in the GCSAA and the role the golf course superintendent has in golf has propelled my career through the people I've met.

When I moved to California, I immediately became involved in the GCSA of Northern California. Within two years, I ran for its board of directors and was president last year. Part of that involvement led to becoming involved on the state board because it pulls members from each of the six respective chapters to serve on the state board. I'm their president this year. I'm also a candidate for the GSCAA board of directors.

When serving associations, my goal isn't to become president. You have more fun the years you're not president because you have a chance to become involved in many different things.

Q What's the biggest challenge you deal with on a regular basis?

This is the first time I've worked at a union facility. Like with pesticides regulations, it makes you operate under a different framework. Right or wrong, we are what we are, and it's the biggest challenge, but it's one that makes you think and act differently. It also requires you to solve problems differently than what you're used to. Some solve problems by getting rid of a person. In a union environment, that typically doesn't happen. You become creative when solving employee issues.

We negotiated a contract with the union three years ago that expires this March, so this January we'll begin negotiations, which is an intensive process – one of you is on the far left and the other is on the far right, and you have to bring everyone to the center. It becomes a good learning experience about

people and how to negotiate.

Q What are the best and worst parts of your job?

One of the best parts is the enjoyment of seeing the results of your work. You can take an area that needs attention and transform it into whatever vision you or the architect has and have an outstanding outcome. Once you complete a project, you see the satisfaction golfers have from your work. The constant interaction with golfers and the conditions I provide that make them happy is rewarding.

I also like to see those who work for me go on and achieve something for themselves. Not that we want to run people through our program, but we want to bring in people who have a career path and have them go on to be superintendents.

What bothers me the most is seeing middle-age superintendents lose their positions. Whether they lose them because it's their own fault or because of something unjust, they have an extremely hard time re-entering the job market. There's this inclination to hire the young because they're stronger, quicker and smarter, but many people find out that isn't so. There are many talented superintendents who are in their 50s that often get overlooked.

Q Where's the superintendent profession headed?

The business model for golf will continue to change. I've heard Steve Mona say no longer will three people be able to make the top salaries at a facility – there will be only two. Down the road, the business model at public and resort golf courses, and eventually many private courses, will have only one making a great salary being in charge of the entire facility. It could be the superintendent, golf professional, director of golf or club manager. I tend to look at the superintendent to be that person. We are the most creative of the group of professionals at a facility. We need to step up to the plate. Our association is stepping up to the plate by offering seminars for those who want to continue on. If you decide to be that person, you need to be prepared and use the tools your association has to offer.

Superintendents are going to continue to see more responsibility thrown their way, and they need to be prepared to take it on, or let someone else be in charge.

Q What agronomic changes do you foresee?

We've hit a plateau with low cutting heights. The PGA Tour and USGA have talked about rolling back some of the changes – to where we go to these extremely low cutting heights

on greens, tees and fairways for events – that have been made during the past five years. The trend to continue with these low cutting heights is going to change slowly during the next five years. That doesn't mean they're going back to where they were. But we won't see the rapid progression where every year we have to have something shorter, tighter and faster.

But the demand for playing conditions will continue. We see it in bunkers, which are hazards. But most golfers want all bunkers to be consistent and play alike, which isn't typical of hazards, but it's typical of what the American golfer wants, which is a continuation of something bigger and better.

To a degree, we are our own worst enemy. Our desire to please the people we work for propels us to do things that might not be sound agronomics or sound from a sustainable standpoint. As superintendents, we need to be more creative when achieving better playing conditions than just lowering the height of cut. We have hit a certain level, and that's about as far as we can go. Most courses can't continue to achieve better playing conditions on a year round basis without incurring increased costs.

Much of the business model of golf is being driven by how much money is spent maintaining the course. It used to be that we were extremely happy to take our budget and be left alone to do our job. But that's not going to happen at most facilities. The superintendent is going to be relied on to be a part of the management team, to cut costs, to operate more efficiently, and to continually provide better playing conditions.

Q Careerwise, where would you like to go from here?

I'm 47 years old, and when you are in your late 40s, you think about retirement, not because you want to retire, but you want to know how you'll get to retirement. I was never one to say I want to be at this or that type of course. I'm more of a person who does the best job I can do and hope that opens up other doors. It's not that I'm trying to open up other doors right now because I'm extremely happy where I'm working. I couldn't have a better situation. We have the U.S. Amateur coming in 2007 and the U.S. Open in 2012. I'm here through the U.S. Open, and I'm not looking for anything right after that. I want to get to 2012 and do the best I can and portray the club in the best light possible. GCN

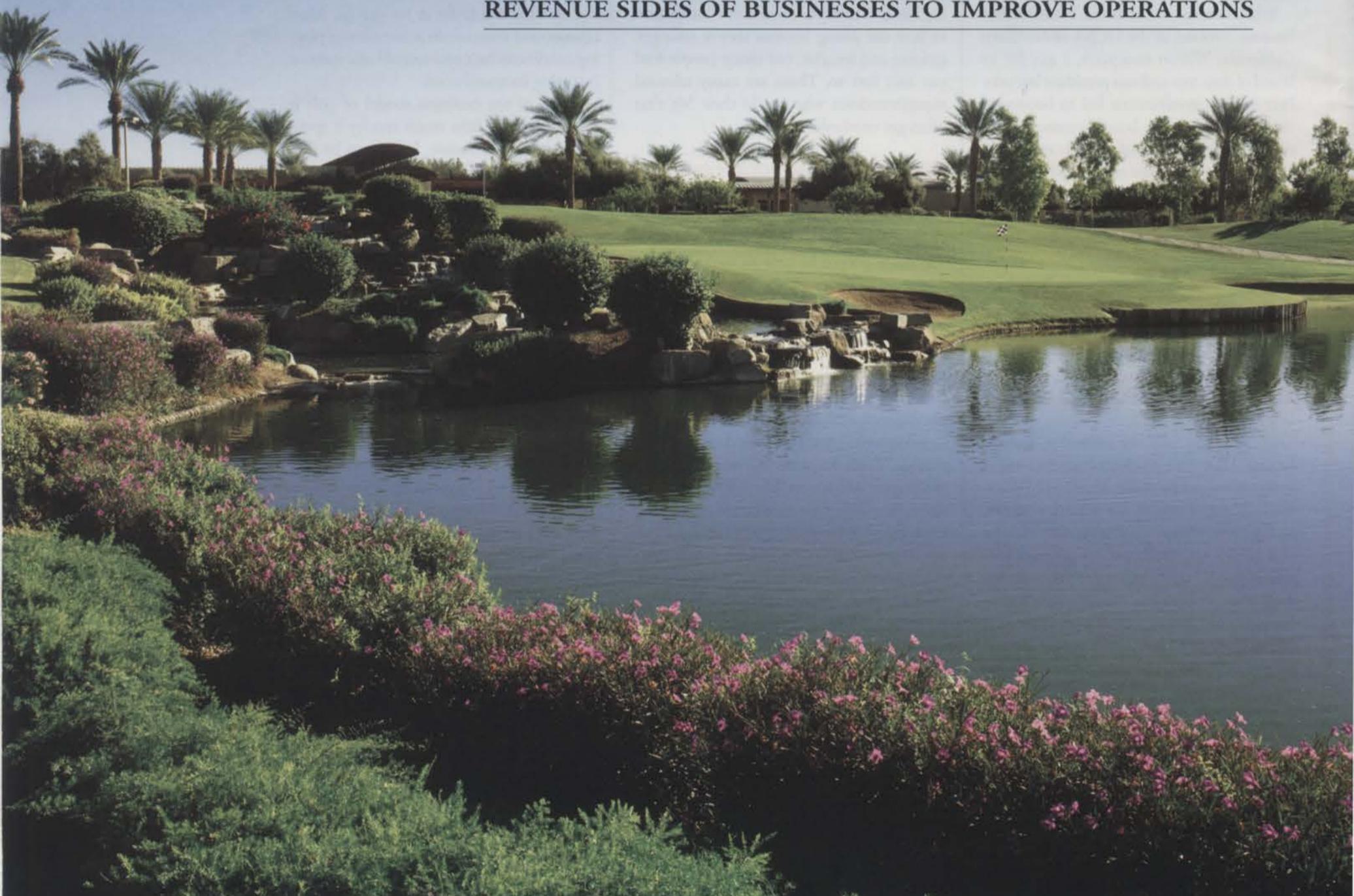
To read the full-length interview with Pat Finlen, visit our Web site. Finlen can be reached at pfinlen@olyclub.com.

Tron Golf – which has the Ocotillo Golf Resort in Chandler, Ariz., in its portfolio – implements its support programs when it takes over management of a golf facility.

Photo: Tron Golf

Turning it around

MANAGEMENT COMPANIES SCRUTINIZE EXPENSE AND REVENUE SIDES OF BUSINESSES TO IMPROVE OPERATIONS



by
JOHN
WALSH

Golf course owners sometimes hire management companies to help them improve their facilities. When a management company takes over an operation, it analyzes the expense and revenue sides of the business. Reallocating where money is spent typically improves operations, according to management company executives.

"There's no silver bullet for turning around a golf course operation," says Steve Skinner, president of Northbrook, Ill.-based KemperSports Management. "It's doing a lot of little things."

Many components need to be looked at when taking over the operations of golf facilities, says Peter Hill, chief executive officer and chairman of Vienna, Va.-based Billy Casper Golf Management.

"We evaluate the staff, the condition of the golf course, pricing, amenities, and these elements translate to the value the facility has," he says. "Is the course properly positioned? What are its strengths and weaknesses, its competition, location, quality of conditioning? All this helps determine the price."

"The key to success in golf is realizing that all golf is local," Hill adds. "Most people golf at daily-fee courses and come from a half hour away or less."

The formula for turning around facilities is the same, according to John Easterbrook, executive vice president of operations for Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Troon Golf.

"We go in and analyze the operation and staff, support programs that are doing well, and where there's a challenge in the operation, we overlay our system, which includes benefits, staff sharing, national procurement, insurance, sales and marketing programs, membership programs and agronomy standards," he says. "In most markets, golf is overbuilt, rounds are down, the cost of operation is up and workers' compensation insurance is up. If revenues are down or flat, courses need to rejuvenate those, and that's why people hire us."

"With a daily-fee course, it's easy to move the needle and measure how far the needle moves," Easterbrook adds. "With private clubs, it's not as easy. At times, it feels like you're adding up pennies."

"With private clubs, you have a smaller audience," Skinner says. "We survey the members and get to know them and find out what their expectations are. We also get involved in the community to increase membership. Sometimes we look to rebrand the club."

The challenge with private clubs is that there's tremendous emotion involved, according to Easterbrook.

"Members expect things to be the same as they were 10 or 15 years ago," he says. "Many clubs don't have the same membership they once had, and they have to change to be successful. It's harder to make change at private clubs than it is at daily-fee courses because you don't have that emotion at daily-fee courses."

Problems are unique to each course, and usually the team in place isn't supported or doesn't have the tools to do a better job, Easterbrook says of courses that need help.

"When we take over management of a facility, it's a full-court press," he says. "We look at all aspects of a club or course, on the expense and revenue sides. We have a competitive matrix to measure club performance."

Skinner says KemperSports tries to align itself with owners' interests.

"It's not easy anywhere we go," he says. "We try to be honest with the owner as to how things need to improve. Customer service and course conditions are the two biggest determining factors."

"You have to look at the revenue and mix of play and where it's coming from," he adds. "We don't believe in discount golf. We look at value."

Even with all of the different facilities that exist, Skinner says if there's one common denominator among struggling courses – it's that they don't know their niche and aren't targeting their market.

"They don't have a brand and are trying to be everything to everybody," he says.

Staffing

A main component of a golf operation is staffing. How staff members are set up to interact with people, how they're trained, how they greet people and how they're treated are aspects BCG analyzes, Hill says.

"It's not a hard concept to understand, but it's difficult carrying these out," he says.

Hill says there's not much superintendent turnover when the company takes over an operation.

"Most superintendents are passionate and competent guys who are either real good grass growers, good course presenters, have good business sense or are good project managers," he says. "The ideal guy has all four of these traits, but most have two or three. Part of being a good manager is recognizing the weak link and supporting that."

At many courses, superintendents don't have a budget or a sense of what they're spending and don't get much direction from the owner, and there's no long-term plan, according to Hill.

"Many superintendents want direction," he says. "It's really unusual to find a superintendent who's so headstrong he has to be replaced. Our approach is to hire them, train them and let them do their job. But you have to lay out the expectations, which are different at a \$40-a-round course than a \$140-a-round course. And you can't cookie cutter every course because each one is unique."

When KemperSports first takes over a property, it interviews all the staff.

"We're looking at the right staff in the



Billy Casper Golf assumed the operation of Bent Creek Golf Course in Jacksonville, Fla. BCG enhanced course conditions and customer service.

Photo: Billy Casper Golf

"We set standards and expectations and give the staff the tools to do a good job and make a difference."

- STEVE SKINNER

golf shop and food-and-beverage outlet and ask if they're service oriented," Skinner says. "Those with the right attitude and skills stay. We set standards and expectations and give the staff the tools to do a good job and make a difference.

"On the expense side, we look at staffing to see if there are any savings, but most of the turnaround is done on the revenue side, which will drive play," he adds.

Easterbrook says a golf operation needs a support mechanism, and many times the company finds out that a system isn't supported.

"We don't move staff out unless the

people who hire us tell us to," he says. "We look at the staff levels and where the superintendent is spending money. Most of the time, we don't ask for more money, and we're not blowing out a superintendent. We're just looking over the shoulder of the superintendent.

"There are times when a course or club isn't managed well," he adds. "We bring a culture and enthusiasm for what we're doing. The quickest way to get let go is to not have enthusiasm for what you're doing. Whether you're operating a \$30-a-round golf course or a \$300-a-round golf course, people in charge need to be enthusiastic."

Reallocation

More often than not, turning around a facility isn't about the superintendent not having enough money, according to Skinner. More often, it's spending money more wisely, i.e., staffing, the right chemical applications, detail work, priorities on the course – doing the right things golfers notice.

Easterbrook says turning around a golf course doesn't always mean cost cutting. It's more of a reallocation of expenditures.

"We have the ability to share staff among clubs, so they aren't keeping people in non-busy times," he says. "We can keep people in our system of 8,000 employees. And with our procurement method, a club can save 20 to 30 percent on purchases."

A common problem among the courses BCG takes over is the misallocation of funds in which not enough money is set aside for capital improvements, Hill says.

"There should be two separate budgets:



Photo: KemperSports

KemperSports took over the operation of The Golf Club at Cypress Head in Port Orange, Fla., in late 2003 and helped increase rounds at the facility 11 percent.

an operations budget and a capital budget," he says. "Maybe there's too much labor and not enough material and supplies or vice versa. What's the three- to five-year plan to address the course, and what can the staff bite off and chew in 2006, 2007 and beyond?"

Portfolio growth

Even though management companies try to improve operations, they haven't always been viewed positively. However, the acceptance of management companies is much better now than 10 years ago, Easterbrook says.

Even so, management companies try to add to their portfolios. Troon, which doesn't have any municipal or lower-end golf facilities in its portfolio, is in the process of completing a deal under a different umbrella in about four months, Easterbrook says.

"If a course isn't a leader in the market, we would decline to manage it," he says.

BCG has a 90/10 mix of daily-fee and private facilities. Hill says the company wouldn't add a course to its portfolio if the owner had unrealistic expectations.

"It's all about expectations," he says. "At the end of a \$40 round, golfers will have three reactions: 'That was a great deal,' 'It was \$40 well spent,' or 'I'm never going back.' You need to avoid the last reaction." GCN

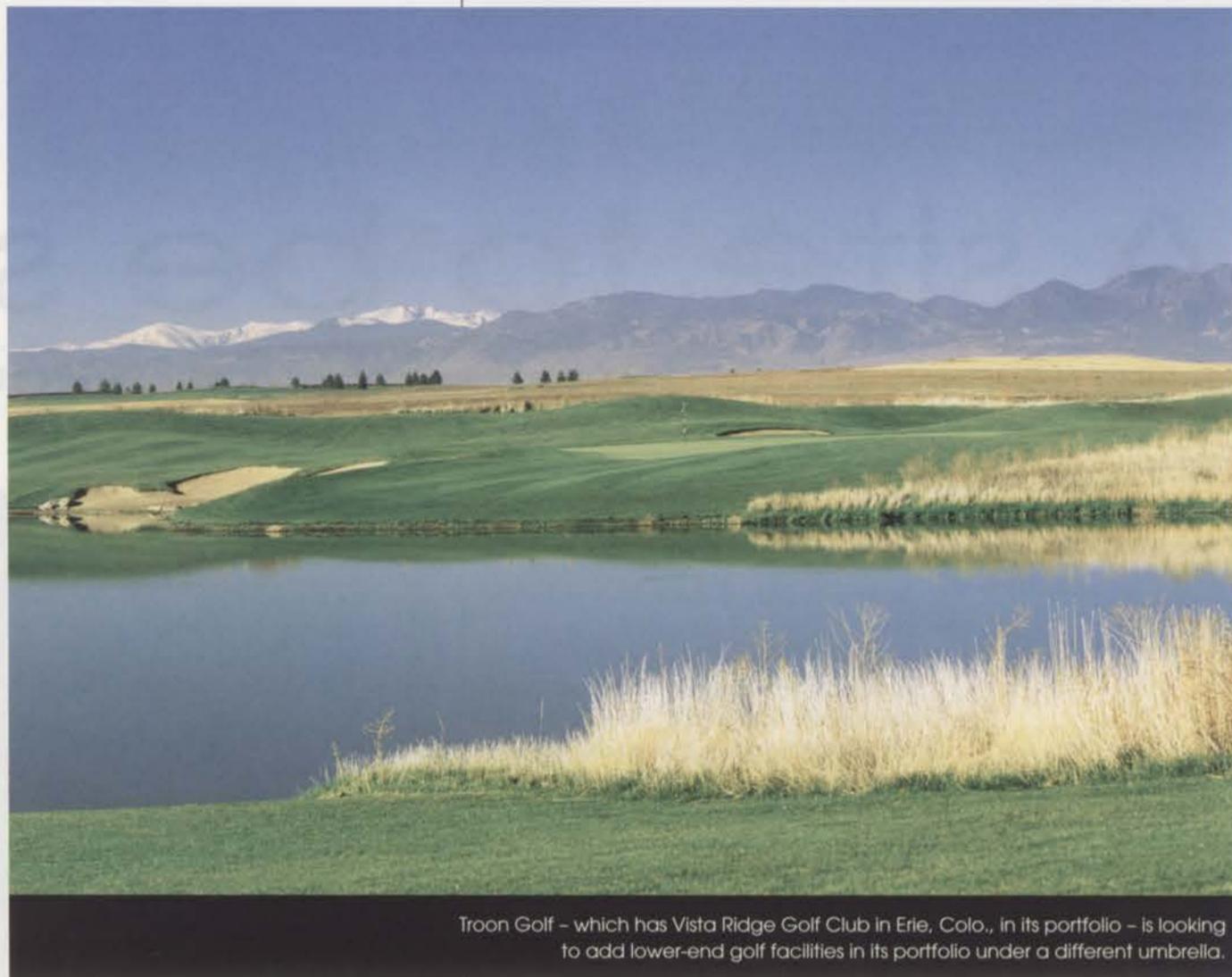


Photo: Troon Golf

Troon Golf - which has Vista Ridge Golf Club in Erie, Colo., in its portfolio - is looking to add lower-end golf facilities in its portfolio under a different umbrella.

Success stories

Management companies have used their expertise to improve many golf facilities. The following are a few recent examples from KemperSports and Billy Casper Golf.

Cypress Head, a property in Port Orange, Fla., is a municipally owned facility that was struggling, according to Steve Skinner, president of KemperSports. The company took over the facility in late 2003 and helped increase rounds 11 percent and revenue 15 percent in two years, Skinner says.

"Course conditions improved because we set new agronomic standards, brought in a new superintendent and had higher expectations," he says. "We had to bring in a new superintendent because the previous one left. We gave more value to golf, spent more time in the community, and worked hard at driving rounds in the off-peak and shoulder seasons."

Another facility in Florida, Ravines Golf & Country Club in Middleburg, wasn't performing well either. The Japanese owner who built it wanted to sell it but couldn't because the course was losing money.



"The market had seen many new, high-end resorts come in, so we repositioned the golf course and changed the pricing strategy," Skinner says. "They were trying to charge the same fee all year round, but you can't do that in Florida. When we left, the course was making \$400,000 and the owner was able to sell it."

Indian Spring Country Club in Marlton, N.J., is a daily-fee facility with annual membership. The owner was having a difficult time meeting a debt service requirement because he wasn't generating enough money, according to Peter Hill, chief executive officer and chairman of Billy Casper Golf. Within nine months of the company taking over the operation, the facility had a six-figure change in gross revenues and net income, Hill says.

"It was about getting more productivity out of the money spent," he says. "We went out and generated more business and improved the product. The price didn't change."

"We were paying more attention to the golfers and advertised," he adds. "We changed the volume of play and the course condition, but it's like steering a big ship - improvements take time." GCN

A site to be seen

LIBERTY NATIONAL, WHICH HAS YET TO OPEN, IS DEVELOPING A HIGH-PROFILE REPUTATION

by
ROB
THOMAS

Real estate's popular idiom stresses the importance of location, and Liberty National Golf Club in Jersey City, N.J., claims to have one of the best.

On the banks of the Hudson River, in the shadow of Manhattan's skyline and under the watchful eye of the Statue of Liberty sits the yet-to-open golf course with an estimated price tag of \$129 million. The course is scheduled to open July 4.

The beginning

Professional golfer Tom Kite, who teamed with golf course designer Bob Cupp to create Liberty National, dates his involvement with the project to 1992 when he participated in a corporate outing at the TPC at Avenel for a law firm in Washington. There he met Rusty Bayliss, vice president, commercial, for the London and Scottish Marine Oil Co.

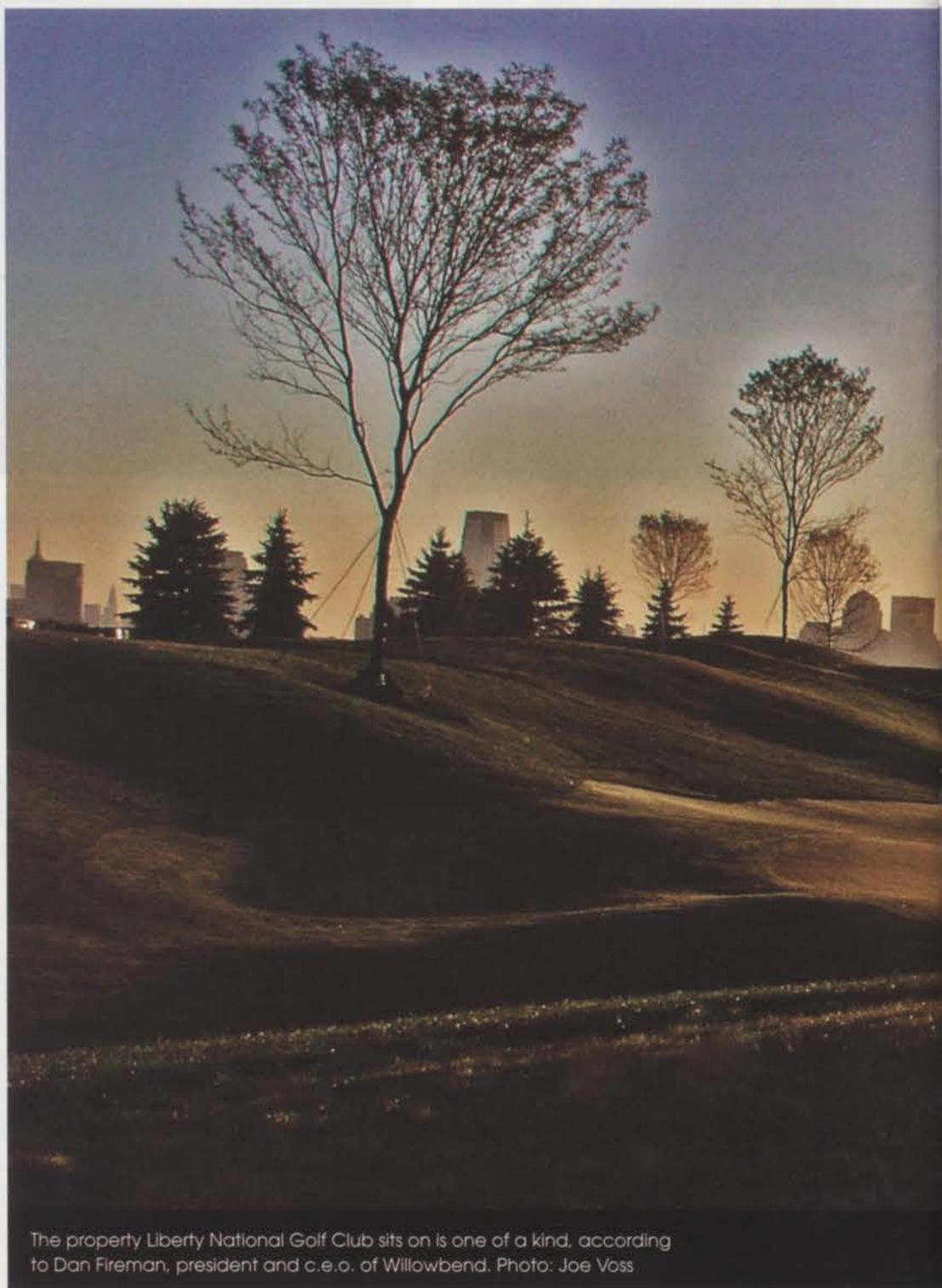
"He had a dream of turning this site into something useful," Kite says. "It was a wasted piece of property."

Cupp refers to the site as 100 years of industrial sins because of its history as an oil refinery and Army base.

Rowland Bates, Willowbend Development executive v.p. and executive project director for Liberty National, started on the project in 1997 when he headed up Golf Realty Advisors, a firm specializing in golf real estate consulting, development and brokerage. Willowbend purchased GRA in 1998 and was introduced to the project.

"The only thing I could see was the proximity to Manhattan, the skyline and the Statue of Liberty," Bates says about the first time he stepped foot on the site.

"It's one of those kinds of projects that's once in a lifetime because of its proximity," he adds. "This is something special and won't come along again, I think."



The property Liberty National Golf Club sits on is one of a kind, according to Dan Fireman, president and c.e.o. of Willowbend. Photo: Joe Voss

When Dan Fireman, president and chief executive officer of Willowbend, first visited the site, there were eight warehouses cluttering the view. Even then he could see potential.

"I came out, saw it and said 'wow,'" he says. "Without a doubt, the majority of the land was blighted. It didn't look good."

At the time, Willowbend managed nine golf courses.

"We were looking for other opportunities, and this was certainly a one-of-a-kind piece of dirt," Fireman says.

Jon P. O'Donnell, division president of

Heritage Links, the builder, was in awe of the views when he first visited.

"It's the most spectacular view of any metropolitan city in the world for a golf course site," he says. "It was a tremendous site observing our bulldozers and finish tractors working in the shadows of one of the most visible attractions in the world – the Statue of Liberty."

Exact specs

Between 2 and 3 million cubic yards of soil were brought in to cap the site prior to construction, according to Fireman.

"It took a lot of time, thought and effort to make sure this thing is contained," he says. "But there's nothing that's extremely toxic under the site."

Being a brownfield site, plans had to be exact, according to Bates.

"We had to follow very specific designs," he says. "We needed to know exactly where we were on the site. It was an extremely difficult and costly project from that aspect ... and we did it in record time."

The drainage installed throughout the course, especially in the driving range, was very deep at times, according to O'Donnell.

"Heritage Links monitored all installation and exact location of installation with their GPS survey instruments so that depths – due to environmental capping – were not exceeded," he says. "A liner was installed during the environmental mitigation of the site and couldn't be penetrated during course construction."

When designing Liberty National, Cupp says the team had to be extremely cognizant of the underground and couldn't go deeper – only higher – with features.

"We had to use our brains below the ground as much as above it," Cupp says, adding that the biggest type of change was altering or eliminating a bunker – no wholesale changes could be made. "We routed this golf course until we were purple."

Kite, who says there's as much as 45 feet of fill above the cap in some spots, says he's never been part of a project with such exacting specifications.

"We ended up with one of the most detailed sets of drawings that had ever been done," he says. "Once the plans were drawn, the golf course had little variation from what had been drawn. We really had to follow the plans. It's a good thing Bob and I are believers in the plan. It's expensive pushing paper ... it's a lot more expensive pushing dirt."

The team's flexibility is an important trait in such a design, Bates says. Whether it had to do with remediation or moving a feature, with a project like this, one has to go with the flow because the unexpected is inevitable.

Super responsibilities

Being a reclamation site, the builders and designers had many problems to deal with. For golf course superintendent Greg James, it was countering the high salinity in the soil that was atop his list. Much of the capping materials were dredged from the bay

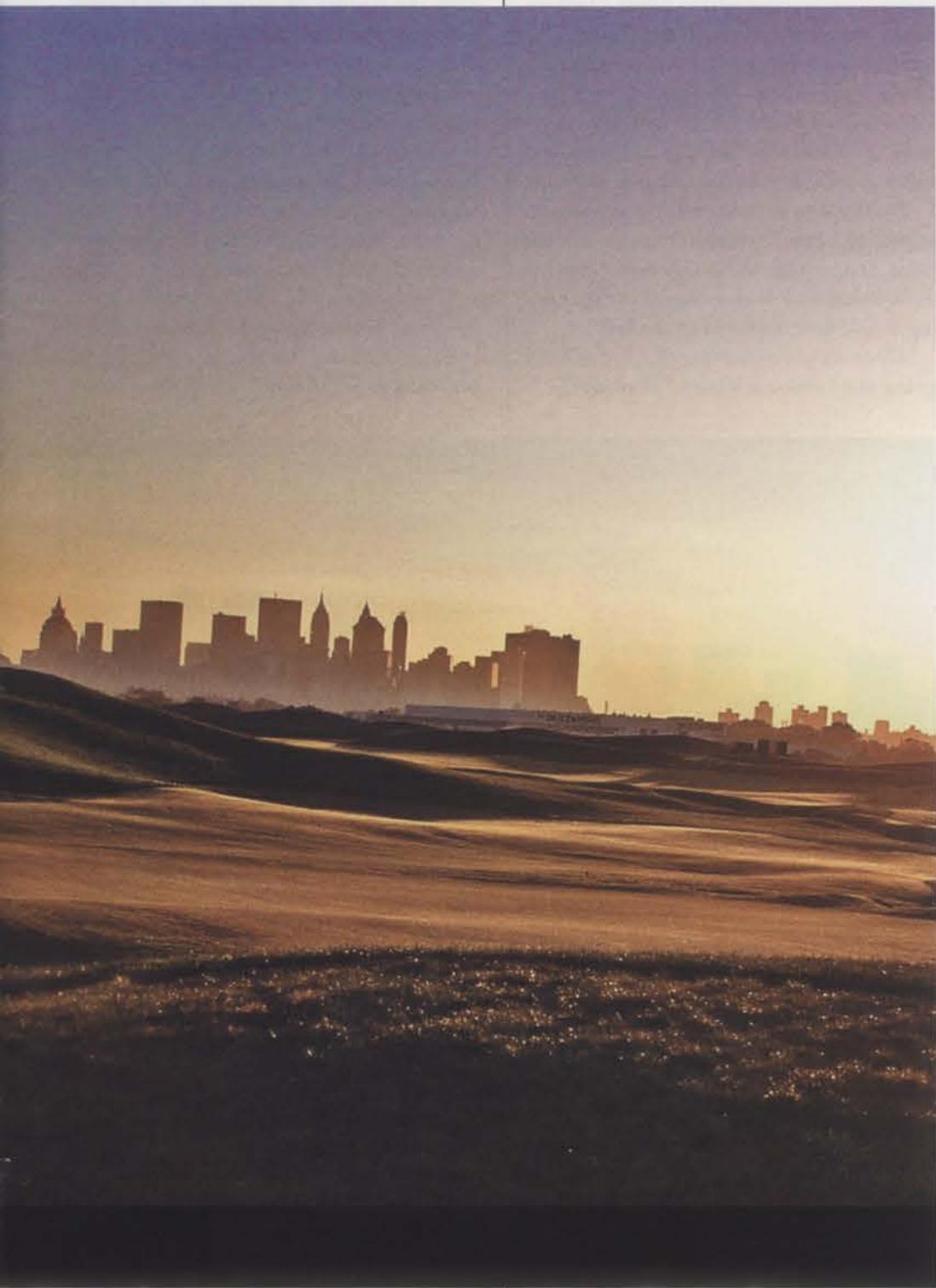




Photo: Dave Cupp

Between 2 and 3 million cubic yards of soil were brought in to cap the site prior to construction.

and nearby rivers, so the sand and soil have high salt content. To combat this, James enlisted cultural practices of applying gypsum and PhysioCal to leach the sodium out of the soil. He's been conducting monthly soil tests that indicate everything is in the

normal range.

James says the 5,200 sprinkler heads are another big chore, but he'll have the benefit of an internship program to add qualified workers to his staff.

Maintaining a green and healthy course is much the same from one club to the next, however, the layout of Liberty National will present unique challenges.

"It's a meticulous place," James says. "It's going to take a lot of hand work."

Schedule

Having started work on Liberty National in August 2004 and faced with the task of completing grassing within a year, Heritage Links encountered tight deadlines. The crews – led by project manager Grayson Cobb and project superintendent Chris Veal – started working long hours (six days a week, 12 hours a day) in May and June. The exceptionally dry weather helped Heritage Links complete its tasks. Because the owners requested 11 to 12 months of grow-in time prior to opening, working hours increased to 80 a week in July and August so the grassing would be completed in the fall.

"Once we got to moving dirt, we've been going at a break-neck pace," Kite says.

Lofty goals

With a price tag that might approach \$150 million when all is complete, Liberty National wasn't conceived merely to host member-guest outings and weekend golfers. The estimated membership cost of \$500,000 will make the club quite exclusive, but playing host to the world's best golfers and the game's most prestigious events will place Liberty National on the map.

"It's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when," Fireman says about hosting championships such as the U.S. Open or President's Cup. "But we're in no rush."

Fireman admits Liberty National won't have the history of many of golf's great courses when it opens, but the area has more than enough history to make up for that.

"We get to marry the tradition of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty," he says.

Kite says he and Cupp designed Liberty National with tournaments in mind – making space for parking, concessions, hospitality tents, grandstands and everything else associated with tournament golf.

"The location and site dictated the quality of golf course we built," Kite says. "Not every golf course has the opportunity to play host to [PGA and USGA] champion-

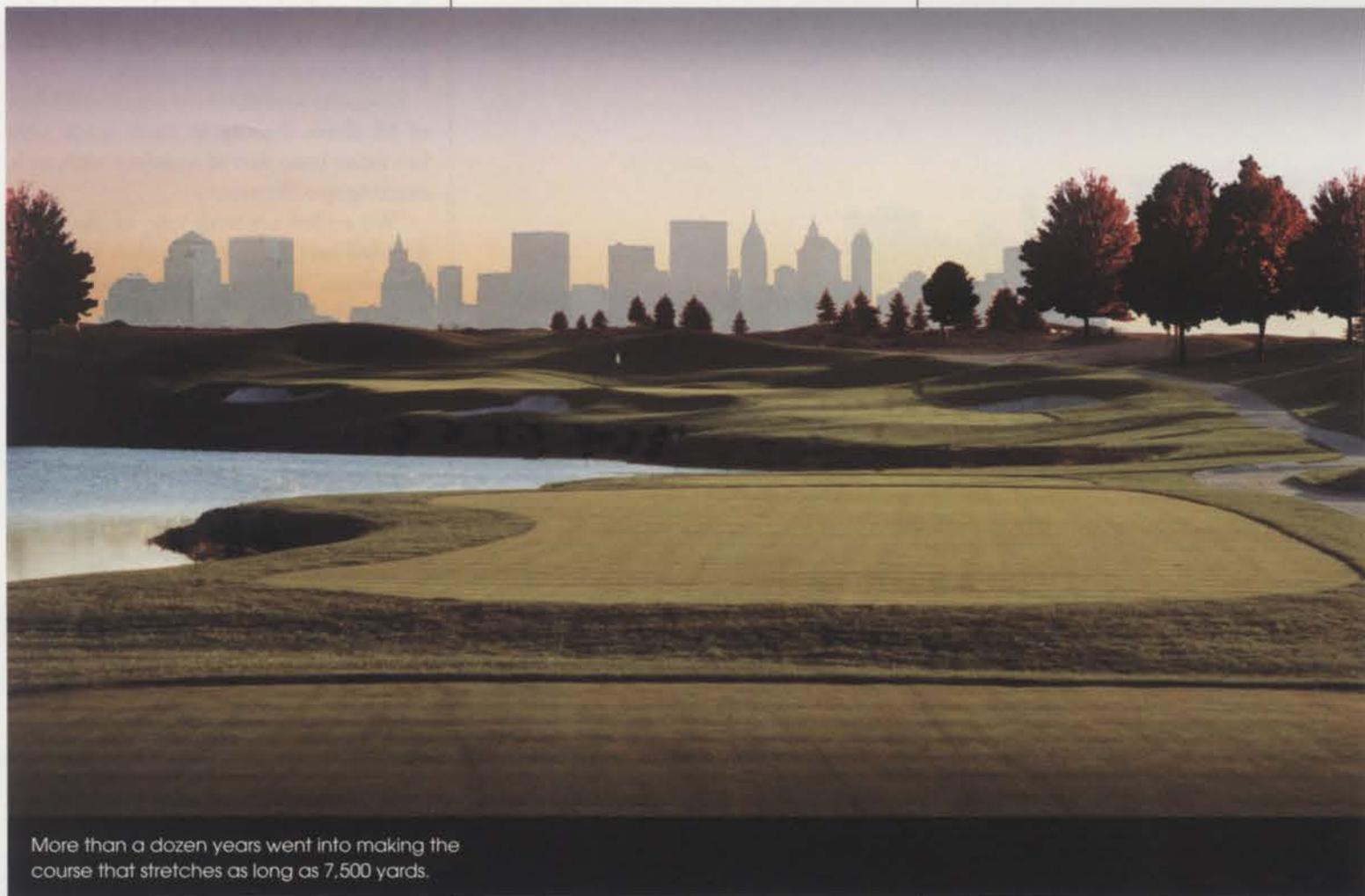


Photo: Dave Cupp

More than a dozen years went into making the course that stretches as long as 7,500 yards.

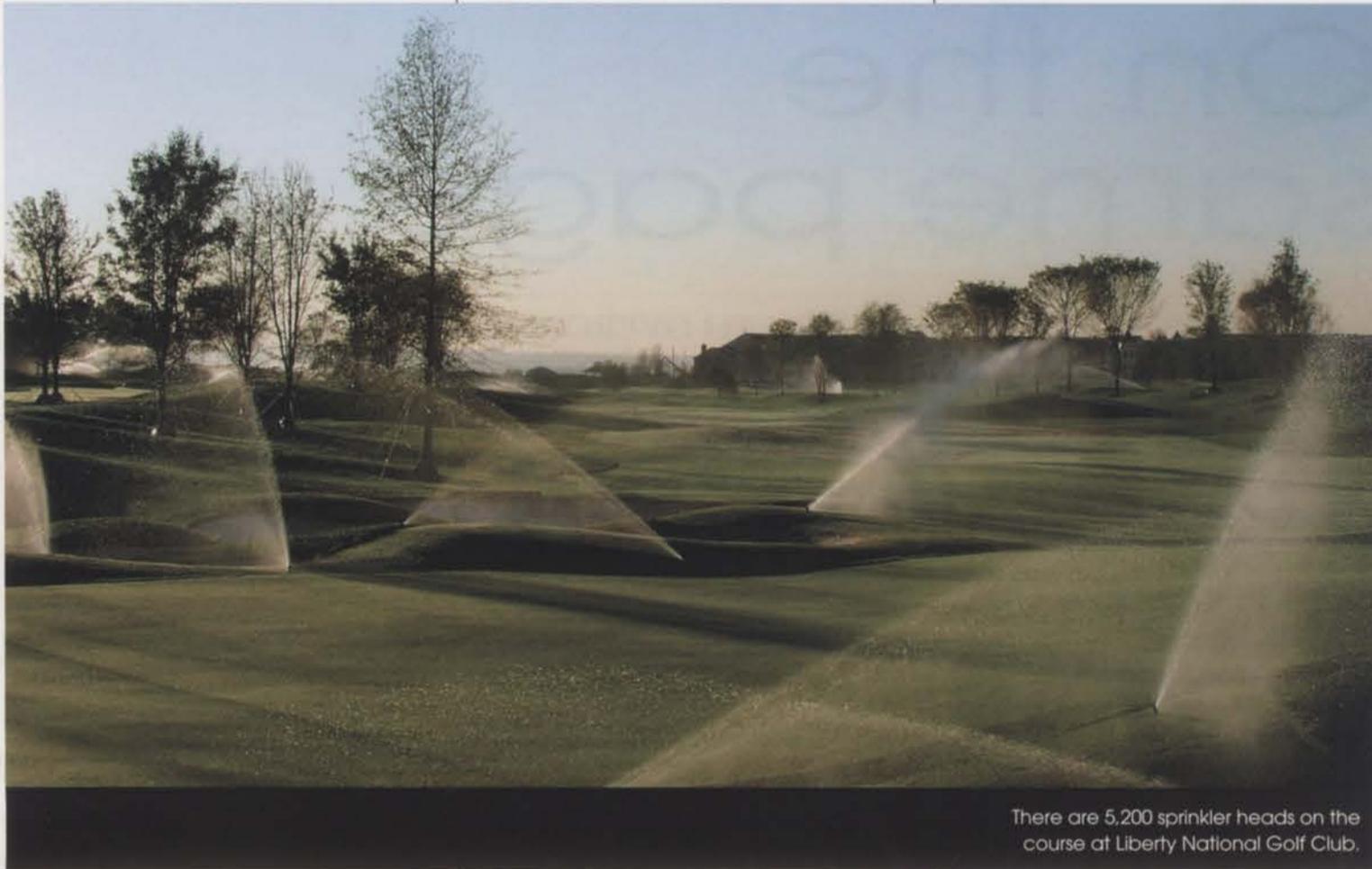


Photo: Joe Voss

There are 5,200 sprinkler heads on the course at Liberty National Golf Club.

ships. This gave us an opportunity to think way in advance of our history ... looking 20, 30, 40 years from now."

Pressure

All who worked on the project felt pressure to get the job done in a spectacular fashion because it's a high-profile job.

"The pressure to not screw it up – to do the best course – was huge," Cupp says.

"Both of us felt the pressure," Kite says about he and Cupp. "But I don't put the word 'pressure' in a negative connotation. You're putting yourself in something exciting. It allows the adrenaline to start pumping. I put myself on the line because I love that feeling."

James admits to feeling pressure, but insists it's no different than what any other superintendent feels.

"In this business, everybody is under a lot of pressure no matter what," he says. "I put a lot of pressure on myself. If you have the resources – like we do – everything should get done and done right."

Fireman, who provides those resources, says excellent preparation relieves any pressure he might feel.

"It's not pressure, it's exciting," he says. "You get so focused on just trying to get it done. We've taken a path, and we're

comfortable with how things are coming along."

Finished product

More than a dozen years went into the making of a course that can stretch to 7,500 yards playing at a par 70 for tournaments, but will generally play at 7,000 yards and a par 72 for everyday use. Fireman says it's important to play from the correct set of tees because the wind coming off the water can be brutal.

Bates agrees.

"The golf course has tremendous teeth from the back tees," he says. "It's designed to host the world's best players."

Cupp and Kite spent a lot of time during the design process to have the course be ready to host a major tournament without having to do much of the extra work that goes into preparing for an event.

"It's like pulling off a 2 1/2 with a full twist in front of 100,000 people," Cupp says using a diving reference. "This is my defining moment ... and I don't plan on retiring."

Kite puts a competitive connotation on Liberty National.

"Playing tournament golf is fun, but some tournaments are more exciting than others," he says. "Just as there are golf tournaments and major championships, there are golf

courses and major golf courses. This is at the top of the list. This is the U.S. Open of golf course design." GCN

AT A GLANCE

Liberty National Golf Club

Location:	Jersey City, N.J.
Owner:	WA Golf Co.
Executive project manager:	Rowland Bates
Vice president and managing director - operations:	Aurelian Anghelusi
Superintendent:	Greg James
Acres:	160
Yardage:	7,413 from championship tees
Par:	72
Construction cost:	Estimated to be in excess of \$129 million
Turf on greens:	A-4 hybrid bentgrass
Turf on tees and fairways:	L-93 hybrid bentgrass
Course architects:	Tom Kite and Bob Cupp
Course builder:	Willowbend Golf Construction LLC & Heritage Links
Clubhouse architect:	NBBJ

On the same page

SUPERINTENDENTS, STAFFS WORK TO OVERCOME LANGUAGE BARRIERS

by
ROB
THOMAS

Communication between a superintendent and his staff can be a challenge under ideal conditions. Throw in two entirely different languages, and the challenge can escalate quickly into a considerable problem.

Overcoming a language barrier isn't unique in business, but in certain parts of the country—where the vast majority of the work force speaks Spanish and little, if any, English—the inability to communicate can cripple a staff and course maintenance.

Whether it's instructing an employee to mow tees and aprons or rake bunkers, a superintendent needs to know his words are getting across. The lack of communication

can result in a range of issues, from unraked bunkers to damaged greens with costs totaling in the tens of thousands of dollars.

Jason Harsh, superintendent at Memorial Park Golf Course in Houston, says he has learned key words in Spanish to work a little better with his employees who speak limited English. Learning the Spanish word for soil, sand, shovel, rake, etc., has been effective for him daily at his 18-hole, city-owned course.

"You don't need to know fluent Spanish to get them to understand," Harsh says.

Harsh purposely doesn't speak too much Spanish at the course to encourage his staff to learn English.

In addition to the few key words he knows, Harsh will make the extra effort of taking his employees to the area and physically show them the task that needs to be done.

Timothy Powers, certified golf course superintendent at the 18-hole, public Crystal Springs Golf Course in Burlingame, Calif., says he knows enough Spanish based on his high school classes and what he's picked up along the way. Powers has 14 employees, most of whom don't speak much English. So Powers, who's been in the business for 25 years, sent one of his employees to school to learn English. That worker now acts as a translator.

"We exchange words back and forth and



just keep working on it," he says. "We get by. They're all trying."

Powers bought a Spanish translation book specifically intended for golf course management and might take a seminar at the Golf Industry Show if he can work it into his schedule. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is offering two seminars in Atlanta that address the language issue: "Managing the Hispanic Work Force" and "Getting Started with Hispanic Labor – Legal and Communication Issues."

Picture this

Gary Dalton, superintendent at San Diego Country Club for the past 16 years, says he'll draw a picture for his Spanish-speaking employees to help them gain a better understanding of what needs to be accomplished.

"A picture is worth a thousand words," he says.

Like Dalton, Harsh says he'll use pictures to get his point across. On a day-to-day basis, he says he uses broken English or broken Spanish along with pictures.

"As long as you get your point across and they understand what you're saying, you can get them to do what's needed," Harsh says.

That said, he admits if a superintendent is a perfectionist, not everybody is going to do it exactly like he wants it done.

Powers uses a dry-erase board in the maintenance facility to draw anything that's not being understood verbally.

"If it's drawn out and they've got directions, they understand where you're going with it," he says.

Powers also cross-trains his employees so everyone knows different jobs and can help each other out – avoiding the language barrier altogether.

Building a team

According to Dalton, 80 percent to 85 percent of his employees speak Spanish, with the vast majority having been with him for 10 years or more. Eighteen of his 22 employees have logged more than a decade at the course. Dalton says he's fortunate to have many bilingual employees and says there would be only four or five employees who would have a problem if San Diego Country Club didn't have people who were fluent in Spanish and English.

As for having the right people on staff, Dalton says his hiring practices have been extremely beneficial.

"It hasn't been a problem for me," he says

Photo: EPIC Creative Communications



Some superintendents make the extra effort of taking employees to an area and physically showing them the needed task.

Breaking the language barrier

- Learn the language
- Learn key words
- Buy a translation book
- Talk slowly and clearly
- Draw pictures
- Use hand signals

about hiring new employees at San Diego Country Club. "I've been able to bring in the right people."

Dalton's assistant superintendent, foreman and irrigation technician are bilingual, but that wasn't always the case. At a previous job, the language barrier was a problem because Dalton didn't have the budget to hire the right personnel, he says.

"Hire the right people or learn Spanish yourself," he says, stressing the importance of having a go-between person.

Dalton has worked hard to keep the people on his staff around through the years, which also has lessened the burden of training employees to not only do the job, but also learn the language.

"A lot of the employees couldn't speak English when they got here," he says. "I've tried hard to treat them right and provide them with good wages."

The job pool used to be much better than it is now, according to Dalton, so that makes retaining his laborers that much more important. He says many of his new hires are

limited in what they can do on the course because of the language barrier, but if they last and learn better English, they receive training and can advance.

Harsh, a superintendent for 7.5 years, says he's been fortunate to maintain his core group of employees from year to year as well. He says if an employee doesn't understand English, it's difficult for him to advance at the course.

Powers never has to go fishing in the job pool. Most of his employees are related to each other or are acquainted with each other and can bring in additional help from their circle of friends and family. Crystal Springs finished many extra projects this summer, such as new cart paths and tees and 18 new bunkers. Powers had his employees bring extra staff to serve as temporary workers and complete the projects.

"I've got a terrific group of kids," he says. "They work hard and get along well together. They've all got great work ethics and want to do a good job."

Powers says his staff polices itself and guys

harp on those crew members who don't carry their weight.

Powers points to the financial benefits of learning the language when encouraging his staff to speak English.

"I tell them 'you can make more money, the more you know,'" he says.

Advice

Neil Payne, managing director of Kwintessential, a provider of cross-cultural communication services, says language represents only 7 percent of what people communicate and there are many ways to overcome the language barrier to allow for cross-cultural communication. Payne suggests:

- Using physical gestures and facial expressions.
- Using emotions to express fright, frustration, anger or joy transcend linguistic barriers.
- Trying out words. Slight knowledge of English or common words shared between the languages can assist com-

munication. Also, saying the word slowly or with a different pronunciation can help.

- Drawing. Pictures speak louder than words, Payne says. Drawing a rake or shovel can be easier than trying to describe it.
- Asking for help. Using a translator can avert problems.
- Confirming meanings. If you're unsure whether the message has been understood, confirm it. Don't ask, "Do you understand?" Try rephrasing what you've agreed or discussed.
- Being patient. It's not your or the other person's fault that you can't speak each other's language.

Payne also suggests slowing down when talking and avoiding slang. Failure to do so can result in the misunderstanding of words and missed meanings. Additionally, be supportive. Effective cross-cultural communication is about being comfortable. Encouraging those who speak weak English

gives them confidence, support and a trust in you.

Broken Spanish is OK for describing what needs done on the course, but Harsh uses a translator when reviewing procedures and disciplinary actions.

Powers advises superintendents to educate themselves.

"Learn the language," he says. "Because communication is the biggest thing. It helps with all the training, safety issues, monthly meetings ... Don't rely on other people to do the talking.

"They appreciate the fact that I make the effort to learn the language," he adds.

In addition to having a translation book handy, Harsh says he tries to get his workers to play golf. His reasoning: If they understand the game, they're more likely to understand the demands.

Dalton believes in a hands-on approach.

"The best technique is to show them exactly how it's done, not just explaining it," he says. GCN



Superintendents can overcome language barriers by drawing pictures of what needs to be done.

Calendar

Jan. 17-19

2006 Midwest Turf Expo

Indianapolis (Ind.) Convention Center
Call 765-494-8039 or
visit www.agry.purdue.edu/turf.

Jan. 26

Northeastern Pennsylvania Turf Conference and Trade Show

The Woodlands Inn & Resort
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
Call 814-238-2402 or
visit www.paturf.org.

Jan. 30 - Feb. 1

Iowa Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show

Polk County Convention Complex
Des Moines, Iowa
Call 800-605-0420 or
visit www.iowaturfgrass.org.

Feb. 1

2006 Turfgrass Advocacy - NYSTA's Lobby Day

Empire State Plaza
Albany, N.Y.
Call 800-873-9973 or
visit www.nysta.org.



Web sites

Those who use Daconil fungicide have a new source of information available at www.daconil.com. The Web site was launched to provide information about the properties and benefits of Daconil. The site also offers labels and MSDS sheets for each of Daconil's three formulations: Daconil Zn, Daconil Ultrex and Daconil Weather Stik. Information sheets and interactive presentations can be downloaded for more information. Daconil is manufactured by Syngenta Professional Products.

There is a new Web site that helps golfers book tee times faster and easier – www.teetimeslive.com. The Web site consolidates the process of booking tee times so golfers can:

- Search for all open tee times in a specific area or just a single course;
- See all the available tee times on screen in real time; and
- Book online immediately to reserve the tee time.

Feb. 6-11

Golf Industry Show and GCSAA Educational Conference

Georgia World Congress Center
Atlanta, Ga.
Call 800-472-7878 or
visit www.golfcourseshow.com.

Feb. 14-17

2006 First Tee Annual Meeting

The First Tee University
St. Augustine, Fla.
Call 904-940-4300 or
visit www.thefirsttee.org.

Feb. 14-17

Turfgrass Producers International's 2006 Midwinter Conference

Westin Savannah (Ga.)
Harbor Golf Resort & Spa
Call 800-405-8873 or
visit www.turfgrassod.org.

Feb. 28 - March 2

Western Pennsylvania Turf Conference and Trade Show

Greater Pittsburgh ExpoMart
Monroeville, Pa.
Call 814-238-2402 or
visit www.paturf.org.

March 2-7

Canadian Golf Superintendents Association's 57th Annual International Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show

Vancouver (B.C.) Convention Centre
Call 905-602-8873 or
visit www.golfsupers.com.

March 6

Western Regional Conference

Buffalo/Niagra Marriott
Amherst, N.Y.
Call 800-873-9973 or
visit www.nysta.org.

March 7

California Golf Course

Owners Association Board and Member Meeting

Strawberry Farms Golf Course
Irvine, Calif.
Call 877-465-3122 or
visit www.californiagolf.org.

March 7-8

Michigan Green Industry Association's 19th Annual Trade Show & Convention

Novi (Mich.) Expo Center
Call 800-873-8873 or
visit www.landscape.org.

March 30

Adirondack Regional Conference

Lake Placid (N.Y.) Resort - Holiday Inn
Call 800-873-9973 or
visit www.nysta.org. GCN

Contact Rob Thomas, associate editor, at rthomas@gie.net or 800-456-0707 to submit information about conferences, Web sites, books, DVDs, CDs and other types of resources.

It's all about the sand

SEVERAL FACTORS NEED TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN FILLING BUNKERS

by
KEVIN
ROSS,
CGCS

Sand bunkers remain one of the most important concerns for golf course superintendents, and like greens conditions, they're controversial. Most of the issue is with golfers, who tend to view sand as too soft, hard, wet, dry or inconsistent. The amount of sand in a bunker also can be an issue. Golfers need to be reminded sand bunkers are a hazard, but at the same time, bunkers need to be a fair hazard.

The major issues with bunkers are sand quality and playability, and obtaining quality bunker sand, which isn't easy.

For many years, selecting bunker sand involved calling the local sand pit. Superintendents were often told, "We have mason sand, brick sand and concrete sand. I think what you want is our mason sand. That stuff

would work great for you." Mason sand might or might not be desirable sand for bunkers, but in the current golf climate, the days of calling the local sand pit are over. There are few places in the United States that have natural sand deposits that meet specifications for great bunker sand. Most premium bunker sand is manufactured in only a few locations throughout the country. These manufactured sands, along with a few rare natural deposits, make the process of finding great bunker sand difficult and expensive.

What makes great bunker sand? That's a complex question. The U.S. Golf Association considers a list of eight factors when selecting bunker sand: particle size, particle shape, crusting potential, chemical reaction

and hardness, infiltration rate, color, penetrometer value and playability. Depending on location and climate, how these factors are ranked vary slightly.

However, there seems to be a common denominator of great bunker sand, and it might be the biggest factor – the fried egg test, or in technical testing terminology, the penetrometer value, which measures the energy required to bury a ball in sand. This value shows the ability of sand to resist the golf ball from burying, or in more scientific terms, its resistance to compression. However, the penetrometer device is questionable, and some think a better device is needed. A chief limitation is that a penetrometer doesn't factor in ball spin, which has major input on the resulting lie in



Some bunker designs (left) can be a real hazard. A big rain can change a bunker's playability instantly (right). Photos: Kevin Ross

a bunker. The two biggest factors affecting the penetrometer value are the particle size and shape of the sand.

Particle size

It's recommended the majority of the particle sizing, about 75 percent or more, fall in the medium-coarse range (0.25 mm to 1.0 mm). The additional 25 percent or less should fall in the medium-fine to very fine range (0.25 mm to 0.05 mm).

One factor that influences particle size when selecting bunker sand is the makeup of the root zone. Sand is blasted onto green surfaces from adjacent bunkers frequently. Therefore, sand can create problems if the particle size is significantly smaller than the root-zone makeup. So it's important to select a sand that also will integrate with the root-zone material and not cause any layering-type problems.

Particle shape

Once sand is found with the correct particle sizing, the job is only partially finished. Particle shape is the next characteristic that influences a great sand and might be the most important of all. This also is the one characteristic that influences the penetrometer value the greatest.

One term frequently used when comparing sand shapes is sphericity. Sand with a high degree of sphericity is one that's round or almost round. Sand that has a low degree

The two biggest factors affecting the penetrometer value are the particle size and shape of the sand.

of sphericity is one that's elongated or flatter. The most desired shape for bunker sand is a particle shape that's angular. Therefore, it possesses many sharp and well-defined edges and has low sphericity. Sand that's smooth and has high sphericity isn't well suited for bunkers.

The difference between these two sand types is the particle shape of the angular sand. It compacts well because of the sharp angular edges and elongated shapes. Round sands can't compact. Therefore, highly angular sand with low sphericity will obtain the best penetrometer reading and offer the best resistance to compression from the golf ball. This translates into a low tendency for a ball to bury in the sand, which minimizes the dreaded fried egg lie.

Penetrometer value

The penetrometer has been the test of choice for determining the potential for a ball to bury. As mentioned above, ball rotation (spin) is a factor not taken into consideration. There are other factors that can determine the ball's lie in a bunker that testing doesn't consider: shot trajectory, ball

angle entry and incoming ball velocity. A ball can enter a bunker at a bad angle when it's 90 degrees to the sand slope with a high trajectory. This angle offers the least reaction between the ball and the sand, and results in the greatest possibility of a fried egg lie.

The speed of the ball (velocity) when it hits the sand is another factor. Many shots, with a high ball speed when entering the face of the bunker, are destined to be buried even with the good bunker sand. When considering these factors, it's understandable why, in recent years, there has been talk of determining better methods to evaluate bunker sands.

Some of the original penetrometer values published by Thomas Turf Services (reference the table at the top of page 48) also are being questioned. Many superintendents agree values should be higher. Using the table, a sand with a value of 2.4 kg/cm² or greater is rated as a low tendency to bury. However, clubs are reporting significant problems with sand of this penetrometer value. Many believe the magic number should be near or greater than 3.0 kg/cm²



Impeccable bunkers are expected on a daily basis at many clubs. Photos: Kevin Ross and John Walsh.

Penetrometer values - potential for fried egg lies (Thomas Turf Services)

Very low tendency to bury > 2.4 kg/cm ²	Slight tendency to bury 2.2 - 2.4 kg/cm ²	Moderate tendency to bury 1.8 - 2.2 kg/cm ²	High tendency to bury < 1.8 kg/cm ²
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to have sand perform as needed.

Crusting potential

Crusting is the formation of a thin, crust-like layer on the surface of the sand. This layer usually ranges from 1/16 inch to 3/8 inch. Crusting is a direct relationship to the purity (cleanness) of the sand. The crusting potential is directly proportional to the amount of silt and clay in the sand. The higher the percentage of silt and clay, the higher the crusting potential.

Crusting occurs when the bunker surface receives moisture from rain or overhead irrigation. With the sophistication of sand production facilities, the cleaning (washing) process all but eliminates any crusting problems when purchased from those facilities.

Chemical reaction

Chemical reaction and hardness will determine the makeup and stability of sand. Some sand, such as calcareous sand, is

prone to physical and chemical weathering. This will cause long-term problems from the breakdown of the sand and a build-up of fine particles. These fine particles will cause firmer sand that will have decreased infiltration rates. Fortunately, the makeup of most sand is quartz, which is silicon dioxide (SiO₂) and resists chemical and physical breakdown.

Infiltration rate

Infiltration rate (hydraulic conductivity) is a straightforward characteristic and is usually high in most sand. This is different than root zones for greens, which normally have an organic component blended with sand that lowers the infiltration rate significantly. Bunker sand should have an initial minimum infiltration rate in the range of 20 to 30 inches per hour. If a sand meets the criteria for particle sizing and has high purity (cleanness), then meeting the infiltration rate usually isn't a problem.

Color

The color of bunker sand is subjective. Most golfers like the look of white bunker sand contrasting with green surrounds. However, white sands can cause problems on bright, sunny days, creating significant glare. Slightly off-white (light tan) might be a better choice. If local sand meets all the performance criteria for great bunker sand, color probably shouldn't be an issue.

Playability

The playability of a bunker sand will differ from golfer to golfer and is another subjective component of bunker sand selection. Unfortunately, not all golfers like the same bunker sand. Tour professionals and most low-handicapped players prefer firm sand, which allows spin to be produced on the ball. A higher-handicapped player, who can't develop the clubhead speed needed to get through a firm sand bunker shot, prefers softer sand.

Comments from players often reflect the type of sand used. If you have firm sand, disgruntled players will insist there isn't enough sand in the bunker. With softer sand, players might insist there's too much sand in the bunker. In both cases the sand

depth may be identical.

One of the earliest methods by which a golfing membership evaluated different bunker sand was the construction of a test bunker. After sand selection was narrowed to three or four similar types of sand, many clubs would divide their practice bunker into sections and fill each section with a different sand. This would give the membership a chance to test the playability and offer feedback.

Another testing ground that's become popular is redoing a worst-case-scenario bunker. This offers a live playing situation a practice test bunker can't. Factors such as the fried egg lie and buried lie can be evaluated under true playing conditions. Maintenance practices and environmental conditions also can be evaluated. This might cause a small problem with the test bunker playing completely different than other bunkers on the course. However, good communication with the membership makes it easier.

Lab testing

The most important part of selecting sand is to have a complete bunker sand analysis performed by an accredited laboratory. Characteristics tested for are: particle size, particle shape, infiltration rate, penetrometer value, crusting potential, color and purity. Some labs also test for chemical hardness.

When considering sand for testing, superintendents should request a minimum of a truckload (15 to 20 yards) to evaluate. There should be a good representative sample of the pile taken immediately after dumping. The preferred testing method should be a 2-inch PVC pipe inserted into the pile in numerous locations. The sand in the pipe should then be combined in a bucket. A one-gallon size sample from the bucket should be used for laboratory testing, which ranges from \$100 to \$200 per sample. This is a minor cost compared to the overall cost of bunker sand for a golf course.

Additionally, factors such as surface and internal drainage, design and maintenance practices influence great bunkers. With an eye on new testing procedures and the ability to manufacture high-quality bunker sand, hopefully the future of bunkers will be less controversial. GCN

Kevin J. Ross, CGCS, is director of golf course management at Country Club of the Rockies, Vail, Colo., and president of Ross Golf Agronomy. He can be reached at kjross@vail.net.



Proper sampling procedures will ensure correct lab results.

Photo: Kevin Ross

A call for help

SUPERINTENDENTS CONTRACT-OUT TREE WORK, AS WELL AS OTHER MAINTENANCE PRACTICES

The scope of responsibilities for maintenance staffs at golf courses throughout the country varies. Some do more in-house than others, and that usually depends on staff size, budgets and expertise. Typically, most maintenance work is done in-house. But sometimes it's better to contract-out certain maintenance practices. Tree work is one example.

At the 18-hole Contraband Bayou Golf Club at L'Auberge du Lac in Lake Charles, La., Ray Butgereit, director of golf operations, contracts-out little. One area where he calls for help is with tree maintenance.

"I handle the fertilization and the watering needs, but if I get dead wood, I hire a contractor to get it out – whether it's a dead limb or the whole tree," he says. "Tree work is a liability. Anybody can cut down a tree, but you need someone to cut down a tree without damaging the other trees or the golf course."

In addition to removing dead wood, Butgereit has been replacing trees that were lost as a result of the damage caused by Hurricane Rita.

Butgereit, who manages a staff of 24 (half of which are part time), says tree work is needed three or four times a year at Contraband Bayou.

Major tree trimming and removal on the four courses at Barton Creek Resort in Austin, Texas, is contracted-out. Photo: Barton Creek Resort

golf



Photo: Conitaband Bayou Golf Club

Possible damage to surrounding trees and the golf course are common reasons why superintendents choose to contract-out tree work.

Ken Gorzycki, CGCS, director of golf course maintenance at Barton Creek Resort in Austin, Texas, also contracts-out tree work such as major trimming or removal because it's work that's over and above what his staff is equipped to do.

"We don't have that expertise," he says.

When it comes to treating the trees at Barton Creek's four courses, Gorzycki hires an arborist to do the work.

In California, Gill Stiles, golf course superintendent at Santa Rosa Golf & Country Club, contracts-out tree work as well. At Santa Rosa, there are hundreds of 50-year-old Monterey pines that were planted when the course was built.

"Pine trees aren't considered a good golf course tree," Stiles says.

Many pines at Santa Rosa are dying be-

cause of pitch canker, which is caused by beetles burrowing in the trees. There are 200 to 300 trees that need to be removed from the course because of that, according to Stiles.

"We surveyed all the trees and have taken trees out on the basis of safety – those are the first to go," he says. "If we have dead trees, we address it quickly because once a tree is dead, it becomes a safety issue. A tree needs to come down in 30- to 40-foot sections, and then each section is run through a chipper. It can cost as much as \$2,000 to remove a tree and plant one in its place."

The tree project at Santa Rosa, which has been difficult because the course has little room on its periphery, started in 2004. Stiles spent \$25,000 in 2005 but doesn't know exactly what he'll spend in 2006 on the tree-removal program.

Expertise needed

Butgereit, who has been at L'Auberge for two years and helped build the course there, says the contractor he hired for tree work understands the delicacy of working on a golf course and stays off the greens and tees and works quietly around golfers.

Stiles says he's gone through almost every tree contractor in his area to hire one.

"It's a lot more difficult and expensive to do tree work on a golf course," he says. "For example, you have to lay plywood down before driving over the turf, and you have to put the chipper in an awkward place so it's out of the way of the golfers because members expect the use of the golf course."

That needed expertise is exactly what The Davey Tree Expert Co. brings to a job, according to Jack Swazye, a consulting forester



Butgereit



Photo: The Davey Tree Expert Co.

The Davey Tree Expert Co. is well-equipped to handle tree removal.

for the company. As many superintendents know, trees are a big deal on golf courses partly because they can create turfgrass problems related to shade.

"We focus on alleviating these problems, which includes tree removal," Swazye says. "Most courses don't have the expertise and special labor, which is primarily climbers working with a rope and saddle, aerial lifts, bucket lifts, cranes, articulating loaders and chippers. We can move 1,000-pound logs without disturbing the turf. We have the expertise to trim trees, keep their shape and eliminate shade problems they create."

The expertise of tree work involves several people working by hand. There are people on the ground and a climber, who ties off a section of a tree, makes the cut and lowers it down. Getting a crane on the course is a weight issue because low ground pressure is needed, according to Swazye.

Additionally, Swazye says the company is launching a new product at the Golf Industry Show in February. LIDAR (light, distance and ranging) mapping technology determines which limbs are creating shade and helps determine which limbs to remove more accurately.

Tree work is risky for golf course maintenance crews because they work with grass, not trees, according to Swazye.

"It's more dangerous working in the air," he says. "Insurance goes into another territory when you're working off the ground. Working with a chain saw in the air is a whole different ballgame than working with a chain saw on the ground. You also need to make proper cuts without damaging the tree."

Swazye says Davey Tree tries to steer clubs

toward a tree management program because they need to know their long-term objectives and how to get there.

"We try to establish priorities," he says.

Swazye also suggests superintendents think about inoculating trees with plant growth regulators to extend pruning cycles two or three times and reduce the size of leaves.

"Trees continue to grow," he says. "The more you do for the turf on your course, the more trees respond because they share the same root zone."

Aerification

Aside from tree work, fairway aerification is another common maintenance practice superintendents contract-out. And Stiles is looking to do just that.

"I haven't had anyone do that in the past, but I'm looking into having someone do it now because we have older equipment and it takes three days to aerify and eight working days to apply the sand," he says. "We do it twice a year."

Other maintenance work Gorzycki contracts-out includes pump station maintenance and repair and soil testing, which is done twice a year. The soil consultant reviews, reports on and analyzes the soil.

"It's valuable to use a consultant to evaluate the soil and use his recommendations," Gorzycki says.

Gorzycki also uses a labor service if he needs additional labor.

Aside from expertise, owning certain equipment also is a factor as to whether one outsources a maintenance practice.

"We probably do less contract work than other facilities because we have four courses, and the scale of economy is easier for us to own equipment," Gorzycki says. "Aerifying, overseeding, verticutting and product application are several items that are contracted-out at other courses that we do in-house. However, we rent equipment, such as a stump grinder, from time to time. We'll run it around the four courses and knock out stumps in two weeks."

A rock saw, similar to a trencher, is another piece of equipment Gorzycki will rent. But if there's major rock work to be done, he'll outsource that as well.

Gorzycki says other ClubCorp properties contract more out. But if there's a concentration of courses in an area, they'll buy equipment and share it.

ClubCorp manages Barton Creek.

Additionally, Gorzycki contracts-out special projects such as leveling tees and redoing bunkers.

At the 85-acre Contraband Bayou, a Tom Fazio-designed course that's part of a \$400-million resort that opened in May 2005, deep-tine aeration might be contracted-out in the future.

"It's typical for us to do a little bit more in-house than the average golf course because of our staffing," Butgereit says. GCN

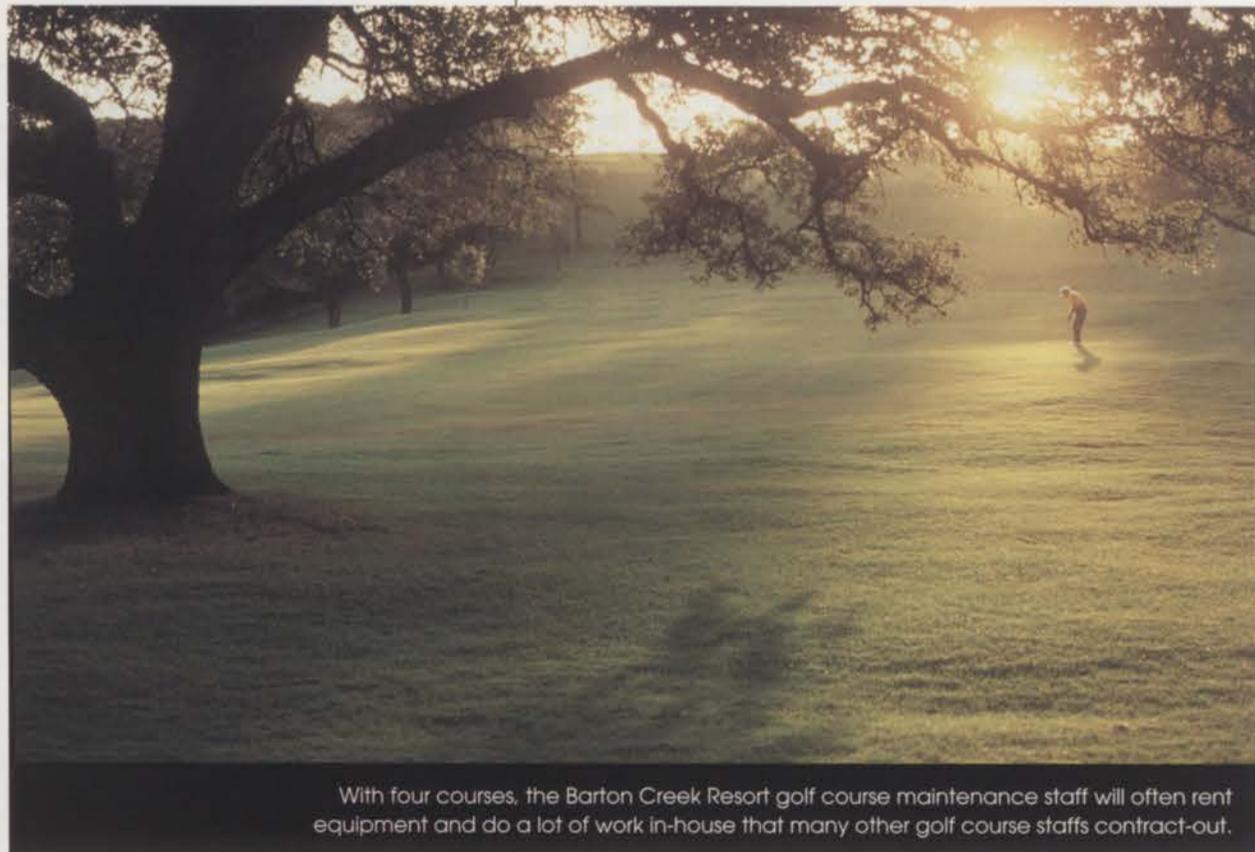


Photo: Barton Creek Resort

With four courses, the Barton Creek Resort golf course maintenance staff will often rent equipment and do a lot of work in-house that many other golf course staffs contract-out.

Rising to the top

by
JOHN
WALSH

Q How long have you been a member of the GCSAA?

I've been a member for 21 years.

Q What made you take the path to become president?

Being a chapter delegate, officer and president of the chapter in Hawaii exposed me to the GCSAA and the importance of belonging and being connected to the national association. That got me involved in GCSAA politics. I don't know what it was or is that made me want to run for the board of directors, other than my desire to participate at that level and knowing I'm good at working as part of a team and representing our members. My background isn't unique, but it's not typical. I felt my moves from Chicago to Hawaii to Oregon gave me insights into superintendents' careers, and I could help them by being a board member.

Q When were you elected to the board?

I was appointed in 2001 in Dallas. I ran for the board of directors and came in fourth. There were five of us running for three positions. But the person who was elected secretary treasurer had a year left on his term. Traditionally, the next highest vote-getter gets appointed. That doesn't happen every time, but in my case, it did. I ran again in 2002 and was elected to a two-year term.

Q When you were first appointed, did you have a title?

We have nine board members. Four of them are officers: the president, vice president, secretary treasurer and immediate past president. There are five general at-large board members of which I was one.

Q When did you become an officer?

I was elected secretary treasurer in 2004. After you're elected secretary treasurer, you run unopposed for vice president. It's always possible somebody can run off the floor, but an orderly progression is set in our bi-laws. Most of the delegates know when they elect a secretary treasurer

Sean Hoolehan, superintendent at Wild Horse Resort Golf Course in Pendleton, Ore., and soon-to-be president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, discusses his involvement with the GCSAA and the organization itself.





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that's the guy they're electing president in two years.

Q Should the governance structure change?

There are few people who dislike the way we have our present governance, officers and political board structure. Generally, it's because of a misunderstanding about the process. When most of the votes are cast by delegates, some chapters appoint a person who casts their votes for them. Some of the chapters might have as many as 360 votes, and some as few as 20. Those delegates who are electing get to know the candidates because they're the ones empowered with the decision-making, generally from their chapter boards.

If you're an outsider and aren't familiar with the process, you wonder how the guys get elected. After you've been around, you know the process is rigorous.

Q Should the presidency be longer to make it more effective?

The way we have it now is you spend four years as an officer, which is better than a two-year term. I've gotten to know quite a few guys who are officers of the PGA, and they're on two-year terms. But some of the guys are owners and are in a different position. When you think about the amount of time spent on the board, especially as president, it's something that lends itself for a superintendent to do for two years.

What's nice about having four officers is we can spread that out. If I can't make something, there are three other guys who can. When we're all there, it's great because we make those relationships and can network as four people, and that helps. Spreading it out fits and works for our organization and profession.

Q What do you plan to do during your presidency?

It isn't about trying to accomplish an individual goal. It's still a nine-member board, and it's not about what Sean Hoolehan wants to accomplish. It's what the board has set as our goals to accomplish for a year. So I don't have an individual goal that I want to accomplish, but I want to support the things the board, and previous boards, have been working toward.

The first would be the implementation of our professional development initiative. It was voted on in 2001, and this summer will be the first period in which we validate the first increment of class A members. So it's an important time. This is a voluntary standard our members overwhelmingly voted for. It's a step up professionally. It's the creation of a credential. When you are a class A member, it means you'll have to have had a certain amount of continuing education. That's the most important thing for 2006.

Q So the president's role is more of a mouthpiece for what the

board has decided to do?

Absolutely. The guys I've served with on the board have represented that during the past two years. We have always been a board united. We decide what's important for the association and work together to achieve it. I've never witnessed an individual who has used his position as president to do something he wanted that year.

Each of us brings his own ideas. It would take years on the board to bring an issue you might want to champion to the point where the association is moving on it. That's because we're a big association, have many members and have limited resources, so it doesn't happen overnight.

Q How beneficial will your presidency be to you down the line?

I've benefited from serving on the board as an individual. I've learned to listen much better than I did when I first came on. I've learned to work as a team professionally and to participate in high-level meetings. It has helped me at Wild Horse. The ideas and things I learned from working at the officer level at the GCSAA or as a member of the board helped us in our operations.

I have no desire to change jobs. I love where I work and have a great employer. I live in one of the most beautiful parts of the world. I've never thought about what it would do for my resume, probably because I haven't updated it in eight years. There's many easier ways to enhance your career than being on the board of the GCSAA.

Q What's the biggest strength of the association?

Our members. They're progressive. They vote to create the standards to put themselves under. They've always been about education. Superintendents are hungry for education, and the GCSAA is an organization that's a source for that. I don't mean we create the education. We're more of a broker. We can validate that the education is quality. Then we put it in front of our members because that's what they want.

Q What's the biggest weakness of the association?

We're going to improve our relationship with our 104 chapters. We need to leverage that relationship better. We need to invest back into our chapters. The chapter relations committee endorsed the GCSAA investing back into the chapters. We're going to look at a pilot program to get the GCSAA out in the field. We're not just going to send educators or speakers to a meeting,



Photo: Wild Horse Resort Golf Course

Whether working at a nine-hole executive course or a multicourse facility, Sean Hoolehan believes it's important for superintendents to be active in their local GCSA chapters.

but send people who can go out and help physically and be a part of that area.

Our chapters are our strength. The way they're made up might not be ideal, but they represent members in every part of the country and that's a nice position to be in.

Q What's the ideal relationship between the GCSAA and its affiliated chapters?

The most important organization to a superintendent is his local chapter. There's no question about that. That's where a guy can get the most help. You're talking about your neighbors and being around people. Their proximity alone gives them the ability to be able to help more.

The problem we have with chapters is there's no standard. We have some great chapters that operate differently and are successful. We've created a tool to help identify chapters that operate well and what makes them operate well. We call it a chapter effectiveness tool. This was designed and developed through our members and committees, and by talking about these things and sharing them with other committees and other groups. We recognize our chapters are varied and need help in different areas. Improving that relationship is what we need to do, and that's what I keep hearing from our members.

Q Is there tension between the chapters and the GCSAA?

I don't think so because the chapters are connected to the GCSAA. We have a committee system that includes as many as 300 volunteers. Most of those guys are active chapter members who are serving on



Photo: Wild Horse Resort Golf Course

Sean Hoolehan worked at courses in the Midwest and Hawaii before making his home at Wild Horse Resort Golf Course in Pendleton, Ore.

When I served as a board member and president of our chapter in Hawaii, I saw guys who hadn't been active in the chapter for 10 years, but they still felt connected to the chapter because they used to be on the board.

How do we get them more involved? Part of that is being in a busy world. We, as superintendents, think we're busy, but I'd bet most people who work in almost any career these days tend to have that same feeling. It's a busy time, and we have many options for what to do with our free time. Serving on a board or being involved in our chapter might not be on the top of the list.

not always a success because it's almost all volunteer-based. In many cases, they can become more. The chapter becomes more directed in its approach with its future, and by doing that, we also leverage the experience we've made with our 104 chapters.

There are similarities among most of our chapters. The Hawaii chapter didn't have much in common with the Midwest chapter I belonged to when I was in Chicago, but we had similar things. Sharing some of our information about how we succeeded in Hawaii with other guys in other states helped them see how they could develop their statewide chapters. Providing the network thread between the chapters is how we can help them the most.

We're going to improve our relationship with our 104 chapters. We need to leverage that relationship better. We need to invest back into our chapters.

a board, were on a board or are connected to their chapter.

But it goes further than that. How do we encase those guys that don't come to meetings? They come and get our education and their points, but we need to get them more involved. When we engage members by putting them on a committee or get them involved as a delegate or just get them to visit Lawrence, Kan., we have an advocate for the rest of that person's career, generally.

It's the same thing with the chapters.

Q How does the GCSAA support local chapters?

We help them most with education. They ask us to get a speaker for a meeting or request a seminar. They want points attached to a meeting so members know they'll get credit for it.

Going beyond that, we support the chapters with long-range planning. We encourage all chapters to take advantage of us. We'll supply them with an individual who's trained to take them through long-range planning. When these chapters do that, it's

Q How has the association's image changed?

Our image in the golf world has improved. It's evident in our salary surveys. The pay is better, and when we ask our members how they feel about their career moves, most of them feel positive about it.

We have moved the dial when it comes to the awareness of the superintendent's role on the golf course. We have conducted surveys with the National Golf Foundation that show avid golfers are aware of the golf course superintendent's importance and him being key to the success of the golf course. That has improved from 25 years ago.

Sometimes the GCSAA hasn't communicated to the average member the importance of his membership. We have come to the conclusion that as the facility goes, so

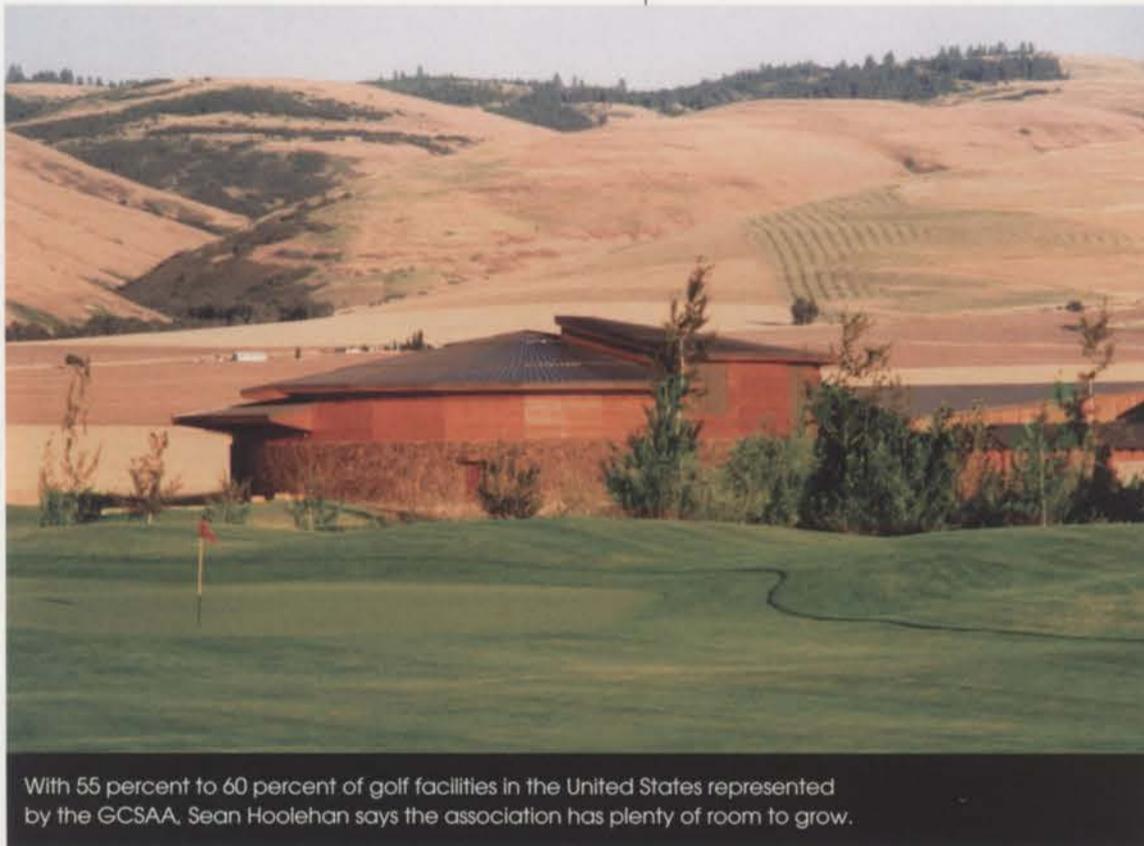


Photo: Wild Horse Resort Golf Course

With 55 percent to 60 percent of golf facilities in the United States represented by the GCSAA, Sean Hoolehan says the association has plenty of room to grow.

goes our members. If the golf course is doing well, our members are doing well, generally. We have to focus on the facility and the success of the facility for our members. There needs to be a tie to what's important to the facility, and we have to communicate that and help our members so they can help and they can attend more meetings.

The network of our friends and peers is

have a much better chance of getting a new member of the GCSAA if he's a member of a chapter. Any growth we have is going to require the growth at the chapter level.

The GCSAA has come up with new ideas about retention. We do a great job retaining members, but we want to do better. We retain about 92 percent of our members every year. We also want to find out why a person

We haven't figured out what we have to do to get at those facilities, but we have a much better chance of getting a new member of the GCSAA if he's a member of a chapter.

critical sometimes, especially when you're having a tough year. I don't know if we've done a good of a job of communicating to facilities to help members justify their memberships and their attendance at seminars and at meetings.

Q Do you foresee significant growth during the next 10 years?

An organization that doesn't grow is unhealthy. We represent 55 percent to 60 percent of facilities in the country. That leaves a lot of room. We haven't figured out what we have to do to get at those facilities, but we

doesn't maintain membership.

A few years ago, 300 new golf courses were opening a year, and we were enjoying the membership that went with that. That's not going to happen in this environment, but there still are many golf courses we would like to penetrate. We recognize the only way we're going to penetrate them is showing them the value of chapter and GCSAA membership to their facility.

Q How does membership work between the GCSAA and the chapters?

We have shared members. Chapters mem-

bers are our members when it comes to our class A and superintendent members. Chapter boards have to consist of GCSAA members for them to be a chapter. You have membership, local dues and national dues to pay to become a member.

In my career, I've paid my own dues, and it was important. I was fortunate that I was trained by professional golf course superintendents. Not everybody comes through that, so they don't have an understanding of the importance of what their membership is. We need to have entryways for these clubs. There are small, affordable golf clubs, maybe nine-holers, par 3s, executives, whatever, around the country that work on shoestring budgets, but it's still golf, it's where people enter the game, and we have to find a way to penetrate those areas better. It's not easy for the chapters because they say these guys are so busy they don't want to come to meetings. They come and ask for help when they need it.

We have to reach out and get more of these affordable, accessible facilities participating in chapters and the GCSAA.

Q So there's a pretty good mix of people on the board?

There used to be this feeling that the board consisted of these elite superintendents. I don't want to say we're not because we're progressive and intelligent guys. But I also recognize the majority of us are at public facilities, and that wasn't always true. There are only three members of the board right now who are at private facilities. There used to be a time when there was one guy from a public facility. There are a wide variety of superintendent and facility types throughout the country. The delegates figure that out for themselves. There's none of this that says we have to have some guys from out West. It just happens. There's no guarantee you'll get elected when you run. There have been good people who've run and haven't made it. It tends to work out.

Mark Kuhns (Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield, N.J.), who's at the pinnacle of our profession and serves on our board, is a candidate for secretary treasurer this year. He started out at a low-budget club. We've all probably experienced those levels at some time in our careers. You don't just start out at the top. Those experiences stay with you throughout your career. Even a guy like Mark knows what it's like to be at a limited facility, and being able to have that connection with our members is important. GCN

Sean Hoolehan can be reached at shoolehan@wildhorseresort.com.

travels with  TERRY

Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, is president of Golf Agronomy International. He's a 35-year member of the GCSAA and can be reached at terrybuchen@earthlink.net.

Globetrotting consulting agronomist Terry Buchen visits many golf courses annually with his digital camera in-hand. He will share helpful ideas relating to maintenance equipment from the golf course superintendents he visits – as well as a few ideas of his own – with timely photos and captions that explore the changing world of golf course management.

Portable air movement

Matthew G. Shaffer, director of golf course operations at Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pa., is proud of his entire golf course maintenance staff and volunteers for the job they did hosting the 2005 U.S. Amateur Championship. The heat, humidity and heat index were some of the highest on record, making it a very difficult year for growing grass in the Philadelphia area, which is traditionally one of the most difficult cool-season grass-growing areas in the country.

To provide the best turfgrass-growing conditions possible, Shaffer and equipment manager Craig Cassaday designed and built portable greens fans to provide much-needed air movement across the greens areas during the dead-air summer months. Shaffer doesn't like to see permanently mounted greens fans when they're not in use. Having portable greens fans allows Shaffer to place as many fans where he wants them – even on tees and fairways – when they're needed. This allows for flexibility.

The trailer portions are made from 1-inch-square tubing that's welded together. The jack stand, axel stubs, rims and turf tires came from Northern Hydraulics Co. The extra support for the collar, which holds the fan in place, and other supports can be made from scrap flat iron, angle iron, round steel pipe or even old greens mower or fairway mower bed knives. Having an inexpensive power band saw also is helpful during the fabrication process.

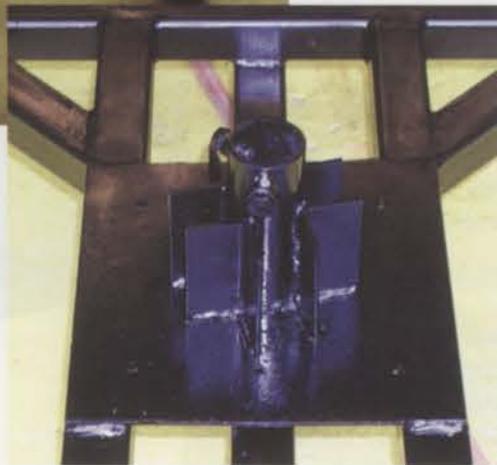
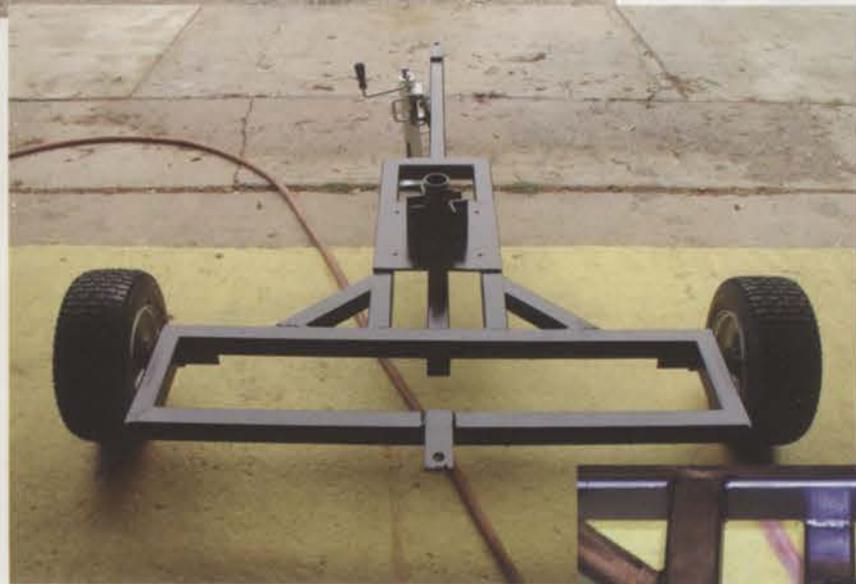
There are tow hitches on each greens fan trailer so several of them can be towed and dropped off where they're needed. Because the fans oscillate, chains are placed on either side of them while they're transported to and from the turf-care center so they remain in place.

The trailer is primed, then spray painted with glossy, black enamel paint that's rust proof.

Portable generators power the fans so they can be used wherever they're needed. The mufflers from the generators are placed away from the fans so carbon monoxide doesn't blow across the turfgrass. The generators and fans are chained together to a permanently mounted stake or tree to deter theft at night when they operate mostly.

The Whisper Breeze blower fans were acquired from Precision USA in Pompano Beach, Fla. They can provide a sustained wind of more than 3 mph and can be operated with single-phase power in 115 or 230 volts.

Permanent, hard-wiring underground electrical wires is another option in lieu of the noise from the generators, especially where noise ordinances are in effect. GCN



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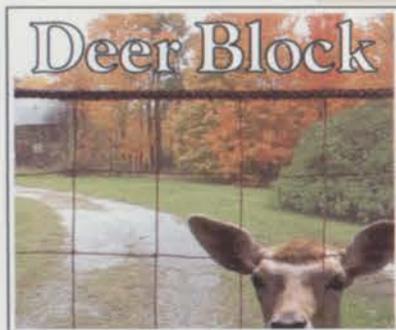


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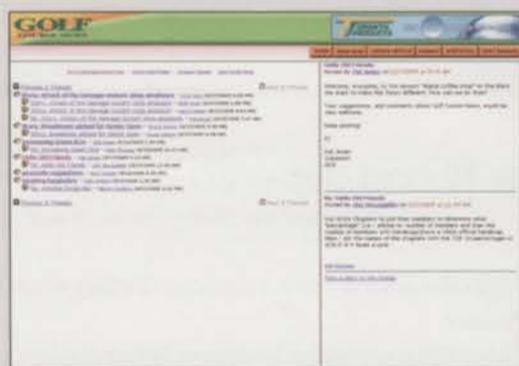


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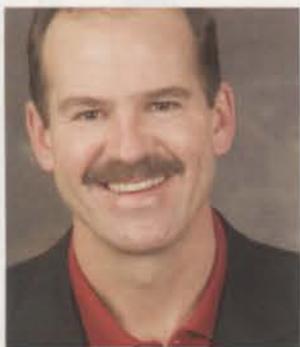
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Pat Jones is president of Flagstick LLC, a consulting firm that provides sales and marketing intelligence to green-industry businesses. He can be reached at psjhawk@cox.net or 440-478-4763.

Nightmare to remember

There are few things worse than being jolted awake by a phone call in the middle of the night. It usually means bad news, or at best, an annoying wrong number. ("Is Cletus there? Tell him I need bail money again.") But, the 3 a.m. call I received the other night was a little different.

It was from my old pal Bubba, and he was in a dead panic.

(An aside here to reintroduce Bubba. He's an old-time, Skoal-chewing, CAT-hat-wearing, dirt-under-the-fingernails, grass-growing greens superintendent. The only necktie he owns currently is being used to hold a pressure regulator in place on his 30-year-old pump station. And he has a gold membership card ... in the National Rifle Association. In short, Bubba is a dinosaur – turfasaurus rex – and proud of it.)

"Jonesy! Are you awake?"

"I am now, you @#%#\$! grease-stained turf monkey."

"Man, I just had an awful, terrible nightmare. I gotta tell you about it. Maybe you can help me understand what it means."

Apparently, Bubba had it in his mind that I'm the Sigmund Freud of the golf business. But, resigned to the idea of hearing him out, I got out of bed and prepared to listen to his nocturnal tale of woe:

"The dream actually started out fine. I got up at 0-dark-thirty, drank my usual three Red Bulls, scarfed down a bowl of Cap'N Crunch and headed off to work. Everything up until then seemed normal. But when I got to the course, things started to get weird.

"The first thing I noticed was my assistant sitting at my desk. 'What the heck do you think you're doing,' I asked him. He said, 'I should ask you the same thing. Why are you down here at the barn? Is this some kind of surprise inspection or did you just get lost?'

"I didn't know whether to smack him upside the head or laugh my butt off at the joke. But, just then, I looked down and noticed that, instead of my boots and Carhartt coveralls, I was wearing a very shiny pair of pointy-toed shoes and some kind of fancy pants. Then – and this was really scary – I realized I was wearing a blue blazer, a girly-lookin' pink shirt and (gulp!) a brand-new red tie.

"Jonesy, I realized at that moment that I was no longer the club's superintendent. I had become (insert dramatic music here) the general manager!

"I was stunned. I staggered up to the clubhouse. That cute little blonde receptionist – the one who'd never given me the time of day before – was all friendly and chirpy: 'Good morning Mr. Bubba. Here's your schedule for the day.' She handed me a neatly typed sheet that read:

8 a.m. – Shuffle papers at desk. Pretend to look busy.

9 a.m. – Meet with food/beverage manager to politely inquire about fifth salmonella poisoning of a member this month.

10 a.m. – Place classified ad to hire new food/beverage manager.

11 a.m. – Brunch meeting with Ladies Beautification Committee regarding the idea of planting begonias in place of practice putting green. (Note: Mrs. Haversham, the chairwoman of the LBC, gets testy if she doesn't have a wee nip before noon. Make sure to bring several complimentary bottles of chardonnay.)

1:30 p.m. – Drop by pro shop to tell Biff that his personal instruction sessions with Mrs. Von Pookenkamp are

causing some nasty whispers around the club. Double-check to make sure display shirts are folded properly.

2 p.m. – Board meeting to discuss whether to budget

\$1 million for desperately needed work on irrigation system or vague plan to redecorate clubhouse offices. (Note: Don't forget to bring carpet samples and wallpaper swatches.)

4 p.m. – Cocktails with golf committee. Make sure to heartily agree with every bitchy comment about slow green speeds and frost delays.

6 p.m. – Dinner with green chairman. (Note: Remember to repeat the phrases, "it's time to take it to a new level" and "we need to make a change" whenever superintendent's name is mentioned.)

"It was a little slice of hell, Jonesy. I had to talk and talk and talk all day long. I was stuck inside in all these dumb meetings. I had to worry about every word I said.

Everyone had a gripe about something. Three waiters didn't show up, and the bartender was stoned out his mind. We had six member dues checks that bounced, and I had to call these snooty idiots to tell them to pay up. Finally, I was getting ready to go home and the worst thing of all happened ..."

"What was that?" I asked.

"I tried to take that stupid necktie off and I couldn't get it loose. No matter how hard I yanked on it, it just kept getting tighter and tighter. It was strangling me. I couldn't breathe. That's when I woke up soaked in sweat and screaming. So I called you to find out what it all meant."

"Well, Bubba," I said. "I'm no psychoanalyst, but it's pretty clear the dream represents the fact that you're torn between what you're doing now and a deep-seeded desire for something else. You got into the golf business because you like being outdoors and working with nature. You love growing things and the challenge of trying to keep the course as perfect as possible. But, obviously, you've been thinking about what it would be like to move inside and become a general manager. Is that true?"

Bubba got very quiet and whispered: "Yep. I guess it's crossed my mind. Grow-

ing grass can be tough sometimes. Plus, those guys make a lot more money, and it seems like a pretty cushy gig."

I sighed. "Cushy, huh? So you figure

the grass is greener on that side of the fence?"

"Maybe," he admitted sheepishly.

"Bubba, here's a newsflash: There ain't no grass inside that clubhouse. You'd just be trading one set of problems for another if you go that route. And, in the process, you might be giving up the things you love most. It's the right decision for some superintendents, but it's definitely not for everyone."

"So you don't think I'm cut out to be a general manager?"

"Bubba, I'm going to say one word to you, and you decide: Necktie."

"Aaarrgghhhhh!," screamed Bubba.

"That's what I thought. Go back to bed, you old turfhead." GCN

THE DREAM REPRESENTS THE FACT THAT YOU'RE TORN BETWEEN WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW AND A DEEP-SEEDED DESIRE FOR SOMETHING ELSE.

We would like to hear from you. Please post any comments you have about this column on our message board, which is at www.golfcoursenews.com/messageboard.





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