BUT IF YOU TRY SOMETIMES...
BRUCE WILLIAMS ON THE ART OF
SALARY NEGOTIATION.
pg. 24
There's cut quality.
Then there's E-Cut™ quality.

No wonder you'll find E-Cut Hybrids, like the 220 E-Cut Hybrid Walk Greens mower, on some of the finest courses in the world. And it's just part of a complete line of hybrid greens and fairway mowers. Contact your John Deere Golf rep or visit JohnDeere.com/Hybrid for all the details.
IN THIS ISSUE

DEPARTMENTS

6 Teeing off
Pat Jones: iCrack

8 Letters

10 The Whiteboard

14 Consumer research

48 Travels with Terry
Equipment ideas

49 Classifieds/Ad index

COLUMNS

16 Outside the ropes
Tim Moraghan:
Balancing the game with the business

23 Design concepts
Jeffrey D. Brauer:
Back to the (irrigation) future

28 Irrigation
Brian Vinchesi:
HDPE versus PVC

35 The Monroe doctrine
Monroe Miller:
How good are you at golf course history?

50 Parting shots
Pat Jones:
Carolina on my mind

COVER STORY

24 YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT
But if you try sometimes... Bruce Williams on the art of salary negotiation.

FEATURES

Q&A

18 BACK TO THE FUTURE
Bob Farren and his team at Pinehurst are doing the unthinkable... turning back the clock on the look and feel of one of America's greatest courses.

Turf maintenance

29 CUT TO THE CHASE
Verticutting is just a screwdriver in a box of tools. But, is it also a viable method to dethatch?

Equipment

36 DON'T THROW OUT THAT OLD TOOTHBRUSH
Top sprayer maintenance tips.

Course maintenance

38 FIX YOUR CROWN
Avoid sand buildup that can cause your collars and approaches to become crowned and thus impede proper drainage off of the putting surface.

Course renovation

42 FIRM, FAST AND FURIOUS
Through a links enhancement project, Half Moon Bay Golf Links transformed into the links-style course it was always meant to be.
Like our proven brands, Syngenta’s 2011 GreenTrust™ 365 Golf Program provides outstanding value throughout the year. You can lock in your yearlong rebate percentage with only $5,000 in purchases of Qualifying Products during the Early Order Period (October 1, 2010 through December 10, 2010). The more you purchase during this time, the better your rebate percentage—as high as 10%. These Qualifying Products purchases make you eligible for GreenTrust Rewards Points, new for 2011.

Syngenta also offers product assurance opportunities and deferred payment until June 6, 2011 for most purchases made during the Early Order Period. Visit greentrust365.com today to plan your purchase and lock in your yearlong savings.

Full Program terms and conditions are available at greentrust365.com.
As regular readers of my columns know, I have a wee bit of an addictive personality. Give me a taste of something good — booze, cigarettes, crossword puzzles, Facebook, fly fishing — and I'll generally find a way to turn it into an obsession. I'm fun like that.

Thankfully, one exception is I've never been a technology junkie. Unlike many friends, I've never stood outside of Best Buy at 5 a.m. to get the newest gaming system, smart phone or 72-inch HDTV. I don't anxiously count the days until the new "Madden NFL" is released. My car is GPS-free but the glove box is still stuffed with badly refolded, old-school maps.

My BlackBerry is a tool with which I have a love/hate relationship. To me, it's just a phone with e-mail on it. I cannot, as I have aged boys, succumb to a love/hate relationship. To me, it's really just a phone. (It sounds or make cartoon kittens talk. I had invested a rent check (or two) in downloading every David Hasselhoff song ever recorded. I had smoked the iCrack... and I liked it.

As the father of two teen-aged boys, I did succumb to the scourge of texting. (It was that or not communicate with them at all.) I do, however, insist on annoying them by using standard grammar and spelling. Instead of "R U home?" I will text "Have you successfully arrived at your residence yet?" Drives them absolutely nuts.

I don't own a TiVo and only have basic cable. That's fine because, with the exception of sports, my only must-see TV is "Hoarders." Any regular reader of my columns knows I love "Hoarders." If you haven't seen it, the only way I can describe "Hoarders" is that it's about people who are so crazy that they purposely live in their own filth and will argue for hours when a sane person tries to help them by throwing away their 6-foot-high pile of "Cat Fancy" magazines. It's a wonderful, awful train wreck guaranteed to make even the gooliest amongst us feel superior. I adore it. But I digress...

As a techno-skeptic, I've never been very impressed or interested with any of the much-ballyhooed Apple products. Never had a Mac — always a PC. Never owned an iPod — my Walkman is still awesome. And, thanks to a million-year ironclad contract with Verizon, couldn't get an iPhone if I wanted to.

That's why I was gobsmacked, befuddled and otherwise discombobulated to find a brand spanking new iPad sitting on my desk. It was, I was told later, part of a company-wide program to promote our vast superiority in every aspect of digital communications. I was to learn how to use it and take it with me to trade shows, conferences and meetings to demonstrate all of the amazing geeky things we can do to communicate with you, my early-adapting friends.

I eyed the thin black thing with suspicion and disdain, slid it under a pile of papers and pretended it wasn't there.

Finally, with the weekend approaching, I stuck it in my backpack and took it home to at least figure out how to turn the damned thing on. Saturday morning rolled around and I warnly punched buttons until the device lit up.

About 96 hours later, I was sitting in the same spot... hollow-eyed, dehydrated, fingertips swollen from millions of taps and swipes... completely, utterly and unabashedly in the throes of iPad addiction. I had downloaded 652 apps, most of which were freebies that create fart sounds or make cartoon kittens talk. I had invested a rent check (or two) in downloading every David Hasselhoff song ever recorded.

I had smoked the iCrack... and I liked it. Curiously, among the thousands of apps you can download, there are very few for turfheads. I did find BASF's cool new web-based disease ID app online, but if you go to the App Store, GCI is the only magazine that has an app... and it's damned good.

Anyway, the current dearth of maintenance apps will undoubtedly be filled soon. It seems logical that little helper apps BASF's that you can use in the field are perfect for these devices. Need quick info on how to change a belt on an XYZ brand fairway mower? There will be an app for that. The iStimp? Gotta have it.

The point is the world is coming to our hands via iPads and smart phones whether we like it or not. The question is not whether we will be using them, but how.
New Ecologic SG's organic Ecklonia maxima Kelp formula naturally increases root volume and root tips.

- Increases turf's natural ability to uptake moisture and nutrients
- Improves turf's natural resistance to the stresses of drought, nutrient deficiency and salinity
- Can reduce the amount of traditional fertilizer applied
- Saves time and money: No extra application steps necessary - in most cases SG can be co-applied with existing fertigation programs

Full disclosure

Editor’s Note: The response to Pat Jones’ August column (“Catharsis”) continues to pour in. We’d like to share some more of them with you. We’ve decided not to identify the letter writers since many included personal comments. Readers seeking info about alcoholism and addiction can find out more at the Alcoholics Anonymous site: www.aa.org.

“I just finished reading your column in the August issue after digging it out from under the pile of trade mags I’ve been carefully stacking on my desk since June. I don’t mind saying there was a tear in my eye as I finished reading your piece. Kudos for having the guts to put that in print for all to see! I agree that our industry has more than its fair share of ‘alcoholics’ who come to depend on a buzz to get them through the twists and turns of this highly stressful career path. Just as we would share with each other what growth regulators work best on what turf at what time of year, so should we allow ourselves the vulnerability to lay out more personal issues and to seek help, love and support from our trusted peers. After all, who else can come closer to knowing and understanding within the length of a gnat’s eyelash what all we struggle with professionally than our very own peer set? I applaud your honesty and courage to bare all of this to your readers and sincerely hope that it will serve as a wake-up call to those who are only fooling themselves with even the slightest addiction to alcohol, or any other drug. As you so eloquently put it – ‘Life’s too short and too beautiful to be viewed through the bottom of a bottle.’”

“I was catching up on some trade pub reading, and as I often do, I went directly to my favorite publication and my favorite publication feature; Pat Jones’ GCI column. Wow! Your August column caught me off guard with your personal disclosure and confession. Hats off to you for sharing your story and reaching out to others! As a frequent bar fly, I agree with your assessment that the booze flows pretty freely in our industry and you are not alone in facing the challenges it brings. It warmed my heart to hear of the peace, healing and satisfaction being clean has brought to you!”
TARGET TOUGH WEEDS

- Triclopyr for Tough Weeds
- Fast Visual Response
- Cool Weather Performance
- Energized with Sulfentrazone
E-15 UPDATE

Last month, The U.S. EPA announced it now will allow up to 15 percent ethanol to be blended with gasoline in motor fuel - but only for use in cars and trucks built since 2007.

The current allowable limit is 10 percent, and remains so for older vehicles, all motorcycles, heavy-duty vehicles and non-road engines - everything from leaf blowers to mowers.

However, this sets up potential confusion at the gas pump. Buyers could have to choose not only among octane ratings but also between E-10 and E-15. And while E-10 now is fairly common, stations are not required to offer it or the new E-15 - and some already say they are going to sit out E-15 for now.

Even though the E-15 blend is intended for cars and trucks - indeed, it's technically illegal to use it in other engines - the small-engine lobby figures it'll nevertheless wind up in the hundreds of millions of chainsaws, leaf blowers, lawn mowing equipment, boats, all-terrain vehicles and the like.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) recommends the following measures to protect your equipment and avoid voiding warranties:

1. Read and follow the owner's manual. The owner's manual will clearly explain what fuels can be used to ensure a properly functioning product.

2. Do not put any fuel containing more than 10 percent (E-10) in small engine products, unless otherwise stated.

3. Be aware of gas pumps at local gas stations that offer both E-10 and E-15 or any other mid-level ethanol fuels dispensed by blender pumps for "flex-fuel" automobiles. Higher ethanol fuel (E-15) may be less expensive than regular (E-10) fuel. However, putting E-15 into an E-10 approved product could cause product failure and void its warranty.
ROLL CALL

Frank Dobie, superintendent and general manager at the Sharon Golf Club, Sharon Center, Ohio, has been selected to receive the 2011 GCSAA Col. John Morley Distinguished Service Award.

Paul Backman, the former executive director of the Western Washington Golf Course Superintendents Association and the Northwest Turfgrass Association, was posthumously awarded the 2010 Distinguished Service Award by the Northwest Golf Media Association.

SAGE Golf Group Worldwide appointed Chris Freeman the new general manager at Raveneaux Country Club in Spring, Texas.

Aspiring golf course superintendent Victor Manuel de la Cruz won a $9,500 scholarship to Michigan State University from Valderrama Golf Club in Sotogrande, Spain.

Clemson University turfgrass pathology professor Bruce Martin receives distinguished service award this month from the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association.

Chris Vernon joined Jacobsen as vice president of marketing and product management.

The South Carolina Golf Course Owners Association selected Legend Oaks Golf Club in Summerville as the 2010 South Carolina Golf Course of the Year, and Brian Ouse of Daniel Island Club the Tommy Cuthbert Employee of the Year.

Nutrients PLUS has appointed Jeff Thrasher to head the company's national distribution and business development.

STEC Equipment hired David Smith as sales representative and promoted Jason Sentell to director of sales and marketing.

Yamaha Golf-Car Co. has placed Kevin Norcross in charge of its direct nationwide sales team.

Architect Robert Von Hagge passes

Global golf course architect Robert von Hagge died Oct. 16 at the age of 83.

Von Hagge's professional life stretched from his early teen years as a caddy to international fame as a master golf course designer and architect. During his career, Von Hagge vaulted to the top ranks of golf course design and architecture, became a dominant force in the European and Mexican golf world and moved into golf design throughout the world. Many consider him one of the most influential course designers in the history of golf.

During his six-plus decades as a master golf course designer, von Hagge created some of the world's most outstanding and award-winning courses, and has been responsible for the design, re-design or partial design of more than 250 courses in the United States, Mexico, the Caribbean and 16 foreign countries.

Les Bordes, set in the middle of the Loire Valley in France and ranked as the No. 1 golf course in Europe, is considered von Hagge's piece de resistance.

HUNGER PAINS

Is your crew taking its lunch break? According to a recent study conducted by Monster.com, 60 percent of workers responded that they're not taking their full lunch break, 7 percent of who are risking their health by not eating lunch at all.

"Taking a lunch break is very important to keep healthy and refreshed," says Monster rep Jeffrey Quinn. "Our bodies and brains need fuel to operate... if people feel they're too busy, they should take stock of their workload and try to plan (lunch) into their day."

The data also indicates that US workers, when compared to their international brethren, are most likely to eat while they work. However, 58% of French workers say they take their full lunch break.
Get the look of a champion.

The best recovery shot on the course, Tournament-Ready® Soil Surfactant is the ideal wetting agent for dry spot problem areas. And the Pro-Ap® hose-end liquid applicator features an adjustable product rate setting for quick, consistent application. Get a free Pro-Ap with qualifying purchase.

Tournament-Ready®
SOIL SURFACTANT

www.kalo.com
Ball and club sales

This recent recession has been more severe than previous ones, and effects on golf equipment sales have been meaningful, according to recent research conducted by the National Golf Foundation.

With regard to club shipments, units and dollars peaked in 2005-2007, and have since declined. Units are off 21 percent from peak and dollars are off 27 percent, according to NGF data.

Ball shipments also continued to drop in 2009. Units are off 25 percent over the past three years and dollars are off 17 percent, according to NGF data.

However, the NGF does not believe this decline is unusual, relative to the drop in consumer demand for similar discretionary items.
You've got enough things to worry about. But with Tower® herbicide, weeds aren't one of them. Featuring a new active ingredient for turf, Tower delivers broad-spectrum preemergent control of more than 50 broadleaf weeds, grasses and sedges, including goosegrass and yellow nutsedge. Plus, its liquid formulation makes it easy to apply. Say no to weeds. Try the herbicide that towers over the competition: Tower.

betterturf.basf.us

Not registered in CA or NY.
WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM CANADA

No matter what happens on a golf course, no matter how many precautions we take, much of the public perceives golf courses as places of danger, spreading pesticides and other chemicals into our food and water and unfairly using water for a sport that only benefits an elite few.

This is not a problem unique to the U.S., which is why I spoke with Teri Yamada, executive director of Integrated Pest Management of Canada, a group teaching turf grass, landscape and vegetation managers how to properly use and apply pesticides.

Based on her experience in Canada, Teri has great ideas about dealing with public misconceptions. Everyone needs to be on the lookout for the following actions that can severely affect our ability to do our jobs:

• Whether local, regional or statewide, cosmetic pesticide bans include pesticide management codes, which then can limit lawn pesticides, concentrates, weed and feed and non-essential pesticide prohibitions.

• Legislation begins at a local level then moves up the ladder. If local groups propose bans on pesticides, then explain the importance of pesticides throughout our communities—not just to golf.

• These usually result in the removal of products from store shelves or stringent requirements for application with lowered dosages for less environmental impact.

• Water is the next gold, so be alert for efforts to limit course irrigation, as well as lawns and private property.

• Golf superintendents must become the leaders at the grass-roots level in educating politicians and voters. If we’re unable to explain who we are and what we do, then these issues will be debated and decided at state capitols and in Washington D.C. If it gets to that point, we will lose all control and should expect increased government oversight and bans. When dealing at local and state levels, keep in mind:

  • It’s about the bottom line. Laws are made and changed when someone’s livelihood is affected.

  • Environmental groups deal in emotions, not facts, starting with the notion they’re saving the planet. Convince people you’re doing the same.

  • More citizens are in activist roles than ever before, especially women and young people, two groups who, while golf friendly, have not been good advocates.

  • Superintendents must change the perception of how agronomics are managed. Stay on top of your community’s environmental issues, from land preservation and water use in parks and ball fields to fertilizer runoff into local streams.

WATER. There is no more controversial subject and in the public’s emotional way of thinking, golf is a big offender. Expect local groups to ask for closer monitoring of your water use. As with other environmental issues, get involved at the local level because this is where decisions will affect your ability to do your job.

• Document exactly how much water is used and when.

• Provide an accurate irrigation audit prepared by accredited irrigation auditors. They should detail system improvements, upgrades and modification and reinforce the fact that water is not wasted. Note how water use changes during wide climatic swings, not only on golf courses but everywhere.

PESTICIDES. The issues are similar, but not identical, to water. Whereas everyone expects ready access to clean water, they want to be free of pesticides; something we must teach is impractical and potentially harmful. The following should help:

• Learn to read public opinion and know what the local population believes about the environment. Watch for trends.

• Marshall the forces within the industry to make your case. There are plenty of resources available.

• Change golfer expectations. This will be difficult and take time.

• Produce conditions that are reasonable and safe. If you’re not preparing a tournament course then don’t make it look like one.

• Communicate with those who disagree and offer to educate them that standard golf practices are environmentally safe and produce a helpful, green resource.

• Bring accredited environmental decision makers to meetings, but be sure they speak plainly and can handle negative reactions.
OHIO UNIVERSITY
Central Environmental Nursery Trade Show
January 24-26, 2011
Greater Columbus Convention Center
Managed by: The Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association
72 Dorchester Square • Westerville, OH 43081-3350
Phone: (800) 825-5062 • www.onla.org

CENTS
2011
Central Environmental Nursery Trade Show
January 24-26, 2011
Greater Columbus Convention Center
Managed by: The Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association
72 Dorchester Square • Westerville, OH 43081-3350
Phone: (800) 825-5062 • www.onla.org
Bob Farren and his team at PINEHURST are doing the unthinkable — turning back the clock on the look and feel of one of America’s greatest courses.

When you think of “brand,” you probably think of Coke or Nike or McDonald’s. Now think about brands among America’s great courses. Augusta National is perfection. Whistling Straights is rugged, sandy and windblown. Oakmont is harder than forged steel.

For two decades, the brand at Pinehurst No. 2 has been manicured but menacing. The brand grew as it became a favored U.S. Open site. As golf evolved in the new millennium, the fairways narrowed, the bunkers became whiter and tighter and flawless turf became the standard from every tee box to every buried-elephant Donald Ross green.

So why is owner Robert Dedman, Jr., having his best-in-class maintenance team work with Ben Crenshaw and Bill Coore to blow up that carefully cultivated brand and return the course to the look and feel of 70 years ago?

We asked Bob Farren, the guy who oversees all of Pinehurst’s courses, that very question and got some interesting answers.

Farren is a second-generation superintendent born and bred in small-town West Virginia. His pop started on a small nine-holer he’d helped to build, graduated to an 18-hole public facility and finished his career on the private side, so Farren got to see all aspects of the business from the time he was in diapers.

Growing up, his dad’s course was on one side of the neighborhood and the elementary school where his mom taught was on the other. “I was either at the school shooting baskets on the playground or out on the course with my dad pretty much all the time,” he recalls. He started working for his dad at 12 (“I thought it was fun until I figured out they were supposed to pay me”) and by high school he’d caught the bug and decided to follow in his father’s professional footsteps. And, early on, he decided for reasons now obscure that he wanted to end up working in North Carolina. He would get his wish in a big way.

Donald Ross has no comment about the changes at No. 2. He earned his degree in parks and recreation management in 1979, went to work for the county surrounding Charleston, W.Va., and got his first taste of multi-course management. He started as an intern and worked his way up to supervisor of the county’s four courses. When a position opened at Pinehurst, that experience — along with the fact that Pinehurst’s then six courses were being managed by fellow West Virginian Lou Metz — really paid off. He started in 1982 as superintendent of the No. 4 course at a time when the resort was in bankruptcy. He left briefly in 1984 when Club Corporation of America bought the facility and there was uncertainty about Bob Dedman Sr.’s plans, but quickly came back once CCA’s vision for the property became clear. “Looking back, he was the savior. He bought it at the perfect time and had the resources to do the capital improvements. Property values went up fast and memberships sold like crazy.”

Farren’s return in 1985 to become superintendent of No. 2 was also the beginning of his partnership with his longtime boss, Brad Kocher. He quickly moved up to become Kocher’s second-in-command and stayed in that role for 20 years of growth, major championships and success.

How has your job evolved over the years first working with Brad Kocher and now in the director role yourself? Brad and I were a great team. We had awesome resources from a capital standpoint and the owners had confidence in our ability to deliver. I was able to grow myself and grow my career and be involved in so many different things from golf course construction, reconstruction, redesign, major championships, the resort component, the membership component — I got to have my finger on all of them without having to change jobs or relocate.

It was all timing. The membership grew by leaps and bounds in the ’80s and ’90s. The big key to success was the arrival of (legendary director of golf) Don Padgett in 1987. He’d been at Desert Mountain and was a past president of the PGA and was extremely well-respected and
smart. He was largely responsible for attracting the attention of the golf community and getting us back into the mix for championships. It was largely because of him that we got the Women's Amateur in '89, plus the PGA Tour Championship '91 and '92. That led to the Senior Open in '94 and the Opens in '99 and '05.

Mr. Padgett really was the key. There are not very many golf destinations as historic as Pinehurst where someone from management has a building named after him, but he does. He was a very key part of our success.

Describe the Pinehurst business culture.

It’s all about return on investment. Every dollar we spend, we consider an investment and not an expense. Mr. Dedman Sr. believed in reinvesting resources and capital providing you get the right return. Brad really understood and respected the business plan. He could put conditioning into quantifiable terms. Most courses spend a great deal of money to reach the desired threshold of conditioning. Once you go beyond that, the return diminishes. We do, I think, a good job of balancing that. You can have an 18-hole facility with a $500,000 budget and people will enjoy that. But, if you can spend another $100,000 and bring in $200,000 more (in revenue) because of that increased quality, then you should. If it only generates $75,000, you shouldn’t. That’s our philosophy in a nutshell.

I gave a talk (at GIS) last year in San Diego on sustainability, and part of that is economic sustainability. Up until the past three or four years, people were spending a lot of money on things that they’ve had to ratchet back like overseeding wall-to-wall or hand-raking bunkers. Now they’re finding some of that isn’t sustainable from an economic standpoint.

It really comes down to knowing what people will pay for. If you’re a member-owned club and you tell them it’s going to cost $50,000 to overseed next year and they don’t want to pay an increase, you have to tell them what that means. At every course, there needs to be a menu of things to spend money on and they have to choose.
What drove the decision to redo the No. 2 course?
It started in 2008 during the U.S. Amateur. Mike Davis (of USGA), Brad and I started talking about how No. 2’s allure had to do with its sandscapes – the wiregrass areas – and they had become less of a factor because the turfgrass corridor had grown so broad. They had less and less significance to play. We identified a few areas where we thought some of those sandscapes could spill back into play. At the same time, we started seeing more “natural” courses on the rise. There seems to be a romance with the Bandon Dunes, Erin Hills, Whistling Straits, Shinnecock and the like and there was a buzz about Doak, Crenshaw and other guys doing that kind of minimalist design.

The more we looked at No. 2’s history and why it got its reputation, the more we realized it went back to the ’40s and ’50s and that original minimalist, sandscape look. When you read the quotes from great golfers who played here, it’s clear they loved the course because the ball would leave the fairway and you never knew what was in store after that. That aspect had been diminished over 20 years because of the improvements we’d made in the turf. Ironically, the same reputation that had gotten us those championships was beginning to change because of what we were doing to accommodate those championships. We had to reconsider whether to stay on that course or turn back the clock.

Why Crenshaw?
Who has the respect in the industry as far as history, knowledge, passion, and credibility? Who would you select to help you with a project like this from all the experts in the country today? Who’s not interested particularly in leaving their personal stamp on a great course? It had to be Crenshaw.

How did those conversations become a full-blown plan?
Brad had retired and the next thing I knew, Bob Dedman Jr. and Don Padgett II (who came from Firestone to be Pinehurst’s president) were totally committed to doing something significant. They really drove the train. The thinking was, if we’re going to do it, we have one shot at it to get it right and make it significant. I had lunch with them at Bethpage during the (2009) Open and they laid the whole thing out. I was flabbergasted. As we say down here, the plan was to go big or go home. The decision was to do something dramatic to recapture everyone’s imagination and change the way people think about the Pinehurst brand. So, that’s when the plan to look at naturalizing a few areas became a much larger project and that’s where Ben Crenshaw came into the picture.

Did you have to gulp hard when you realized that a lot of the work you’d done for two decades was about to be undone?
(Laughs). It’s funny, everyone – including Bill and Ben – has been very sensitive to the fact that I’m emotionally involved in everything that’s been done here for 25 years. Look, it has
been a great era for Pinehurst, but I embraced the changes very quickly. I had to convince them that I wouldn’t be offended when they suggested that less turf and less irrigation was better. I’m not bothered by it— I’m excited about what we’re uncovering.

**Uncovering? That’s an interesting choice of words.**
That’s what we’re doing – uncovering what used to be there. It’s not a restoration and it’s not a renovation. We’re peeling back layers of years of improvements. If you look at a set of irrigation plans, and you peel a decade’s or two of heads we’ve added it takes you back to something different and more interesting. It’s like finding an old painting in the attic with layers and layers of paint and you peel them back and to find a Rembrandt underneath.

**The old irrigation plan has dictated a lot of this, right?**
It’s essentially back to the centerline plan from the 40s and 50s. We’ve gone from 1,100 heads down to 450. The old line is still out there, so we pulled a tape measure from that line about 70 feet or so both ways and that became the new fairway line. That’s the backbone we’re working from.

**Other than the original irrigation lines, what’s your benchmark for the work?**
We have an aerial photo that was taken on Christmas Day in 1943. The quality is amazing considering how old it is—you can actually see people playing golf. I can’t really say who took it or why it was taken, but we’re pretty close to Ft. Bragg and this was during the war so you can draw your own conclusions. That photo has been an inspiration for Bill and Ben—it’s been a huge source of information and ideas—but we’re not trying to duplicate it.

**I hear Crenshaw’s been there a lot. What’s it been like working with him?**
One thing that’s been amazing is his approachability and his casualness. He and Bill like to walk the course. They both have a great distaste with riding on golf cars. And they haven’t worked on a lot of courses that are open for play so they’re interacting with golfers. It’s funny because Bill wants Ben’s full attention and wants to get things done while he’s on site, but Ben loves just to go up and talk with golfers. He usually initiates it. He loves being here and getting out there on the course and hearing what players think. Lots of our guests have gone home with stories.
about how Ben Crenshaw interrupted their round at Pinehurst.

Other than the sandscapes, the big focus seems to be on fairways, right? Ben’s goal is to put strategy back in to the course. There’s no strategy with a 26-yard-wide fairway, but with a wider landing zone you have to think more about the approach.

It’ll require you to think about positioning, not just hitting a landing zone. In fact, we’re trying to get away from even calling them fairways — it’s just turf where the ball lands.

Do you get longer to compensate for the new widths or do the tougher bunkers achieve that goal?
We have added a few tees and added a little length to offset some of the broader landing areas. On holes 2, 7, 16 and 17 particularly where the fairways are nearly twice as wide, so we pushed them back a little. Now Kevin Robinson, our superintendent, has a big challenge getting those fairways firm again to get bounce and roll, so he has a pretty extensive topdressing program going on.

What else will be different?
We’ll only have two cutting heights — putting surface and everything else. You’ll start from the tee and the turf just goes from there to the greens surrounds. No first cut, second cut or rough lines. It’s kind of like when I first came here and we had a guy with a tractor and a set of gang mowers. The cutting units never left the ground from first tee to 18 green if you didn’t have to refuel. Everything that’s not a putting surface will be mowed at ½-inch.

Kevin kind of got thrown into the middle of this process. How’s he doing?
He was totally prepared and he’s loving every minute of it. Kevin’s a guy who started as an intern here 20 years ago. He came over to take this on from No. 6 and No. 7 in June. He’s absolutely laser-focused on the concept and doing an outstanding job. He’s obviously working closely with Bill and Ben — one of them is here at least once a month — but Toby Cobb is their on-site guy and he and Kevin work together nearly every day.

Okay, how much has this cost?
It’s hard to characterize, but it’s safe to say we’ll spend more than a million dollars on this. It sounds contrary to what I said earlier, but this isn’t about money. We certainly expect to make money because of it, but this is not a business plan to save money. Really and truly, it’s about our role as the trustee of this property and getting it right.

Final thoughts?
We’re doing all of this to position the No. 2 course where it needs to be for the success of our entire business model for the next 50 years. We want its place in history — its stature — to be ensured for generations. We’re recreating our past to build our future.
Jeffrey D. Brauer is a licensed golf course architect and president of GolfScapes, a golf course design firm in Arlington, Texas. Brauer, a past president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, can be reached at jeff@jeffreydbrauer.com.

**A CART PATH CONSTRUCTION PRIMER**

Back in 2004, I wrote about cart path design, and that it is only half the equation in a successful cart path project. Many courses add paths each year, with bad results and poor construction. With today's cost-cutting culture, I suspect more cart path projects will be done in-house and with low-cost contractors. So, I offer some thoughts on building cart paths correctly. As with all the other generalized advice, this column is no substitute for determining a program based on your site-specific conditions, but covers the most typical problems I have seen.

**REINFORCEMENT.** Most cart paths are built using only "fiber mesh" reinforcement, usually for speed and cost reasons, whereas most concrete work is reinforced with wire mesh or re-bars.

Fiber mesh increases tensile strength and controls hairline cracks caused by shrinkage. However, finishing can be harder to do well, and it's a non-load bearing surface. If you are using only fiber mesh, you should consider increasing pavement depth from 4 inches to 4.5-5 inches.

You need more reinforcement if you have expansive clay soils, slopes over 5 percent or extreme temperature variances. You may also have a few areas carrying heavier loads — often near the maintenance area — that require extra reinforcement. Most specs call for the reinforcement in the vertical center of the pavement, but setting and keeping the mesh or re-bars within 3/4 inch of the top surface, during concrete pouring, is the only way to get any benefit in crack control.

**EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION JOINTS.** Approximately 1/2-inch wide wood or rubberized expansion joints are required adjacent to any structural elements, and along the path. There is a formula that varies with temperature extremes and soils, but maximum spacing is 80 feet. Contraction joints sawed partially through the concrete are placed even more frequently to control cracking, with a good rule of thumb being to place 5/8-inch-wide joints at the lesser of 1.5 times either the width of your pavement (12 feet apart for an 8-foot-wide path) or the depth of your pavement (6 feet apart for 4-inch-deep concrete). And in bigger areas, like turnaround circles, you must have them at no more than 180 degree angles to prevent cracking pavement.

**SUB-BASE.** The best base material is usually to cut the path into native soils, with no sand or aggregate leveling course required. Just don't cut so deep as to leave drainage problems and compact to 95 percent standard proctor density — which is usually easy to attain with rollers. Import fill used to raise the base must be similar soil material or you will have different shrink/swell conditions which lead to cracking. Gently wetting the sub base prior to installation achieves optimum soil moisture and minimizes cracking down the road.

**MATERIAL PROFILE.** Most cart paths are 3000 psi concrete strength. I specify six-sack rather than five-sack concrete mixtures, which often yields over 4000 psi. The additional 20 percent concrete cost yields another 33 percent of strength and is a good value. It's also becoming more common to use fly ash as 10-15 percent of the cement mixture, which reduces heat in the hydration process, is cheaper and produces a harder, denser surface.

Each project should have a unique concrete mix, so there are other concrete components to be aware of. For example, site conditions sometimes require use of air entraining, water reducing to achieve a lower water-to-cement ratio for greater strength using less cement and retardants or accelerants to slow/speed drying in hot/cold weather.

You will also need to consider extras like colorants, sealants and textural finishing to attain your desired results.

**KNOWING MORE THAN THE CONTRACTOR.** It's imperative you know all of the above and more and that the contractor knows you know it. Testing and inspection is the key to quality work. You will need periodic samples tested as they come from the plant, and there are many in field tests, like slump tests, that will verify you get the concrete you specified. Be diligent. In cart path construction you don't get what you expect, you get what you inspect! 6C1
You Can't Always Get What You Want

BUT IF YOU TRY SOMETIMES...

BRUCE WILLIAMS ON THE ART OF SALARY negotiation.

by Bruce R. Williams, CGCS
A STANDARD.
Once an appropriate range for compensation is established then it is time to examine the benefit package.

I often hear clubs have the "standard" benefits package. Is there really a standard benefits package anymore? Investigate what the package contains and how it impacts your bottom line as compared to other courses. There will be things that are very important to you and more valuable to others. For example, younger superintendents will value health insurance coverage for their families more than life insurance.

Also, be aware of tax implications for your compensation and benefits. Taking advantage of things like deferred compensation and 401(k)s can defer your taxation until retirement when it is likely you will be taxed at a much lower rate.

After establishing the market-appropriate salary range it is time to discuss with your current or future employer what each side has to offer. List what is important to you and always be ready to discuss concessions that may come up in a negotiation. In the current economy it is not uncommon to receive requests for salary or bonus adjustments or for an erosion of benefits. Should this come up be prepared to counter those issues with viable alternatives. If a club historically offered a bonus and recently eliminated it then it would be wise to counter with a potential increase in vacation time or some other benefit of equal value.

CAREER STAGES.
Every superintendent goes through various phases in his or her career. Here are a few common examples of what an individual might ask for along his career path.

At the early stage of a superintendent's career compensation will be toward the lower end of the overall salary spectrum. And until an individual proves himself, there isn't a lot of room for adding benefits. However, know the correct range for that particular market and that you are compensated in a range that is similar to your peer clubs.

Too often I see a superintendent taking his first job at a price that is well under the standard market range. If it's necessary to land the job, then I suggest a 5-year goal is set to get within the market-appropriate range. This may include defined step increases, such as pay increases of $3,000 to $7,000 per year, or it may include pay increases of 3-6 percent based on employer-defined criteria.

By the middle stage of a super's career you should have a well-established employment record. Remember, there is value in experience and most employers are aware of this fact. This affords the superintendent more bargaining room. Typically, superintendents in the middle years of their employment are compensated fairly. Their employers want to keep them as a valued asset to their team. They have a portfolio of annual reviews that are stellar and both parties want to continue the employment relationship in the immediate future.

Again, in this economy, pay increases are the exception and not the rule, so look at benefits to make up fair compensation.

So what works? From my experience, housing has been a significant superintendent benefit for decades. For example, many clubs in my native Chicago provided superintendents with on-site housing. And while few staff homes are being built on golf properties, that doesn't mean this benefit is gone forever.

I have seen many cases where clubs opted to pay rent or help the superintendent purchase a home through a signing bonus/down payment or shared equity that diminishes over a 10-year period. This is a win-win situation as it assists the superintendent and entices him into long-term employment. Housing costs
should include utilities, taxes, monthly payment and standard upkeep. Keep in mind the cost of living variances between major metropolitan and rural areas. These costs of living adjustments are negotiable because it will cost you more to live in Los Angeles than in Lincoln, Neb.

In the later years of employment, and at higher salary jobs, there are options for developing a creative compensation package.

Utilize the current compensation info for not only your area but clubs that are similar in both your geographic area and across the country. Multi-course facilities should be compared to similar properties. Top 100 courses should be compared to similar courses in that particular niche. Also, it’s important to know the overall financial health of the facility and what you can do to improve its financial position. Better course conditions lead to more guest fees, green fees and memberships where appropriate.

Again, housing is a viable option as compensation, especially at high-end properties. Evaluate your health care plan and see if the employer will pick up your family costs. Life insurance becomes a higher priority at this stage of your career. Be sure the policy is transferable if you choose to keep it at retirement. Dental and vision insurance are nice add-ons, especially if the employer pays the premium for your family.

Each facility has its own parameters for either deferred compensation or retirement programs. Check with the employer to see what they are able to offer. If there is little or no opportunity here, then you’ll need to beef up the base salary. Higher end facilities may offer programs that put 2 percent of the individual’s income into a retirement account and match up to 4 percent. If your income is $150,000 then the club would be placing $3,000 into your retirement account and if you placed $6,000 into your own account then the club would match that with another $6,000. At $15,000 per year and the ability to have that grow with interest (tax-deferred) over time is a wonderful long-term strategy for financial security. While current interest rates are low, the value of compound interest is often overlooked.

Vacation time has value but is seldom considered in a compensation package. Many businesses offer one week of vacation for one year of service and then that increases to two weeks after two years. While this is normal for most businesses it does not consider the hours and days required to perform the job of a golf course superintendent. Most superintendents work long hours, including holidays and weekends. Argue that, while long hours are a part of the job, it is reasonable to receive time off for paid holidays and/or time that requires you to work a seventh workday in a week.

And in tough economic times you can more easily negotiate additional vacation time than more salary. If the course is in fantastic condition and your reviews are all positive – but the club is not raising salaries – then it is time to ask for more time off. This not only includes vacation, but also to receive outside compensation on your own time with the approval of the club. This then allows you to consult with other clubs.

**BONUSES.**

Bonuses are another negotiation tool and there are various types of bonuses that apply. Performance bonus is the most common and a pre-approved value or percentage of the salary that can add up. There are costs for housing, mortgage fees and temporary housing. I suggest placing a reasonable value on those at the time of hire. Golf courses are like any business and there is an expectation that attracting the best candidate requires a financial expense.

**SEVERANCE.**

Nobody likes the word “severance,” but it’s a business reality. While most states do not require an employer to provide any severance it is a prudent discussion point to have with an employer. After all, the goal is for both parties to have a mutually beneficial agreement. Most agreements are part of a contract with the employer but can also be stipulated as a letter of agreement. Should the situation develop that it is time for a change of the guard at the facility it will make the transition much smoother for both parties.

**OTHER OPTIONS.**

There are many other possible negotiation points. The following are examples of existing forms of compensation that I am aware of or have helped to negotiate.

- Golf ball concession on the ponds can be a small revenue source.
- There are also bonuses for project management, construction or significant tournaments are common. Then there are goals such as the development of an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program at your facility, which can serve as a bonus incentive.
- Some facilities provide annual stipends for maintaining GCSAA certification and also for serving as a volunteer leader in the golf course superintendent industry with your chapter or GCSAA.

---

**"Short-sided thinkers try to get the most up front without thinking of a long-term relationship... The ultimate goal is a win-win outcome that pleases both parties."**

**FAIR AND REASONABLE.**

I cannot overemphasize that the whole premise of negotiating compensation and benefits is based on what is fair and reasonable for both sides.

Short-sided thinkers try to get the most up front without thinking of a long-term relationship. In any relationship the two parties must develop trust, a track record and mutual respect. The ultimate goal is a win-win outcome that pleases both parties.

A number of golf courses have seen the wisdom in this and have done and offered the right things to retain a quality superintendent for the long term.

Good luck and remember: You can get what you want if you negotiate correctly. GCI

Bruce R. Williams, CGCS, is the principal in Bruce Williams Golf Consulting and Executive Golf Search. He is an author and speaker in the golf industry as well as a GCSAA past president. Reach him at BruceWms1@hotmail.com
IRRIGATION ISSUES

BUNKER IRRIGATION

Recently, bunker face irrigation has become increasingly popular. As architects designed and renovated courses to have steep, grass bunker faces, the difficulties in maintaining these faces without irrigation became obvious.

Bunker face irrigation can provide significant improvement to the quality of the turf over time. Figure 1 shows a bunker face with irrigation covering only part of the bunker. You can see the irrigated side (right) is in better shape than the non-irrigated side (left). There are ways to irrigate bunker faces that have been attempted over the years, but many lack the ability to maintain the face within tolerable parameters.

In the past, many designers assumed the green or green surround sprinklers would cover the green side bunkers or that an expanded fairway irrigation system would cover the fairway bunkers. In many cases, a double-row system would be expanded to a triple row that included part- or full-circle radius in a block configuration, but these still overwatered the surrounding area and did not provide adequate control.

Next, small, spray-type sprinklers were tried. The spray sprinklers were installed at the top of the slope above the bunker face using part-circle sprinklers in a block configuration with the number of sprinklers varying depending on bunker size and how much face there was to water. Spray sprinklers are somewhat fragile and also have a very high precipitation rate. The high-precipitation rate, even when operated for a short time, caused the bunker to wash out. Cycle and soak was not an option given the short runtimes required by the high-precipitation rates. Despite the drawbacks, these type systems were the most popular solution.

Today’s bunker systems utilize small, multiple-stream, multiple-trajectory (MSMT) type nozzles (Hunter MPRotators, Rain Bird Rotary Nozzles and Toro Precision Series Rotating Nozzles) on spray head bodies equipped with pressure regulating stems. MSMT nozzles have much lower precipitation rates than spray heads, in the 0.6-inches-per-hour range versus the 1.75-inches-per-hour range and higher uniformities. The sprinklers are still installed at the top of the slope and water just the area of the bunker that has the face. A 12-foot to 20-foot spacing works best. The sprinklers should be regulated to 40/45 psi for optimum uniformity. Their high uniformity, when compared to spray sprinklers, allows for reduced runtime, saved water and dryer sand.

Not all bunkers need to be irrigated, but those that are south-facing or with very steep faces should be. The flat part of the turf around the bunker will still be watered by the regular irrigation system. Individual valving per bunker is preferred, but bunkers with similar exposures can be valved together to save money. There are still maintenance issues with the sprinklers, but it is a compromise between good irrigation and slightly higher maintenance.

Brian Vinchesi, the 2009 EPA WaterSense irrigation Partner of the Year, is President of Irrigation Consulting Inc., a golf course irrigation design and consulting firm headquartered in Pepperell, Mass., that designs irrigation systems throughout the world. He can be reached at bvinchesi@irrigationconsulting.com or 978/433-8972.
Verticutting is just a screwdriver in a box of tools. But, is it also a viable method to dethatch?

by David McPherson

Sometimes it all goes back to the turf textbook. And, sometimes, superintendents rely too much on what they were taught, rather than experimenting with new methods. Today's topic is whether a regular verticutting of your greens and fairways can eliminate the need to do a separate cultural practice to get rid of the thatch below the surface? Let's let a couple turf professionals and one supplier weigh in on this subject and then you can decide.

Darren J. Davis, director of golf course operations at Olde Florida Golf Club doesn't believe the two can be interchanged. He uses both methods as cultural practices at his course in Naples, Fla. First, he does a light vertical mowing using a Toro
Triplex greens mower with vericut blades on it.

"We do that as needed to control leafiness on the putting surface and to increase the trueness of the ball roll," Davis says. "It is an excellent tool if done light and infrequently to increase the speed, trueness and smoothness of the greens. I would never consider that a dethatching method though by any means. We are just barely getting to the surface, if at all... just pulling up the leaf blades, and, we often go in two directions."

Davis goes back to his turf school days and the definition of dethatching to explain why he believes you can’t use a verticutter to also

"Light verticutting for me is grooming, perhaps it is just verbiage, but grooming for me means **removing leaf tissue**, whereas verticutting means removing sloughed off leaves and old roots or thatch. I groom to increase speed and smoothness on my greens."

— Matt Shaffer, Merion Golf Club
Darren J. Davis, director of golf course operations at Olde Florida Golf Club doesn't believe verticutting eliminates the need for thatching. Davis and his crew uses both methods as cultural practices at his course in Naples, Fla.
"It's like asking a superintendent, 'do you believe that you should grind or do a touch-up grind.' I believe the answer comes from their schooling. They come out of school with an answer and it just sits in their brain and no matter what anyone tells them, their way is the right way."

— David Ramirez, Ariens Co.

dethatch. Instead, he prefers to use a Graden vertical mower, which he uses once a year on his greens.

"I hear some people talking about these vertical mowers you can use to detach, but I go back to turf school and the definition of thatch," he says.

"To dethatch means getting into the thatch, which is below the surface, and blades on a vertical mower don't do that," Davis says. "Instead, I use a walk-behind Graden unit once a year on my greens. I use a 2-millimetre blade at 1-inch spacing and at a quarter-inch deep. This lets me cut all the way through that thatch. The Graden has a saw-like blade on it and it cuts through the thatch and pulls it all up. The amount of thatch the Graden can pull up is tremendous. I recommend it as an excellent dethatching tool."

Matt Shaffer, director of golf course operations, at Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pa., takes a bit of a different approach to verticutting. He can't imagine using venting and light verticutting in the same sentence. Shaffer goes back to the textbook and to his learned definitions to explain what makes the most sense from a turf theory point of view.

"When I think of venting, it is an air shaft open or filled with sand," he explains. "Light verticutting, for me, is grooming. Perhaps it is just verbiage, but grooming for me means removing leaf tissue, whereas verticutting means removing sloughed off leaves and old roots or thatch. I groom to increase speed and smoothness on my greens."

When your groomers are set at the effective depth you can't see any lines, Shaffer adds. "I verticut to remove thatch, you will see the grooves whether you chose to leave them open or topress them shut with sand," he says. "I vent to bridge the gap between full-blow aeration. You won't see these for long especially if you roll right afterwards. I aerate to remove earthy material and replace with sand to increase my percolation and to place amendments deep in the profile. If you can't see the hole, then you haven't aerated. In my opinion, all of these are independent actions that aren't the same."

According to some suppliers, if done frequently, verticutting can replace the need to dethatch.

David Ramirez, Ariens Co. manager of product training, says a light, frequent verti-
Most golf course superintendents will verticut three times per year. In the fall, if overseeding, then again in the spring, and finally, depending on the conditions, will verticut once again in the summer. While cultural practices for verticutting and dethatching, along with frequency, vary from greenkeeper to greenkeeper depending on their education and experience and the unique characteristics of their course, seasoned superintendent Brian Nettz sums it up best with the following analogy.

"Personally, I don't think you can rely on one thing, like verticutting, to control your thatch," says the golf course superintendent at Presidio Golf Course in San Francisco, Calif. "You need to examine all parts of your plan. It's like a puzzle; you can't see the picture if you're missing one piece. If you have verticutting, but don't have topdressing or fertility, you have no picture. On poa/bent greens I would say verticutting on a frequent basis would be adequate to control thatch. This would differ depending on climate and turf species, obviously. For us, it works well in combination with a dialed-in fertility plan and a frequent—weekly—light topdressing plan.

"You have to dial all the components in," he concludes. "That is a time-consuming process. I have yet to find where a solution to any agronomic problem is as simple as one solution. We do way too many things to our turf to consider just verticutting a solution to thatch. You have to examine how the thatch got there and what can we change to keep from creating it. Verticutting is just a screwdriver in a box full of tools."
an answer and it just sits in their brain and no matter what anyone tells them, their way is the right way.”

According to Ramirez’s way of thinking, the only difference between the two depends on the application and the equipment used. Ariens tow-behind verticutter is one of its best-selling products and Ramirez says golf course superintendents like it for three reasons.

“First, its aggressiveness,” he says. “It aggressively gets the thatch out. The blades are accepted by superintendents as one of the better blades on the market because of its carbine tip; they last longer, especially when you get to places like Colorado and even Hawaii where the soil is hard. The blade tip stays sharp even in these tough soil conditions.”

Ramirez says that a blade-type verticutter allows you to verticut and dethatch – letting a superintendent get two jobs out of one.

“The second thing superintendents like about our blades is that you can set them to go down as deep as one inch,” Ramirez continues. “But, we don’t recommend this because it takes more to clean up.

“Instead, we recommend you set the blade to go down ⅛ to ¼ of an inch and then you are actually alleviating the soil,” he adds. “You are not doing a true aerification, but you are relieving some of that compacted soil – getting into the roots faster or allowing the grass to germinate quicker if overseeding at the same time.”

Ramirez says his company’s verticutter doesn’t damage the turf and force superintendents to shut down their course for several days to clean up the thatch.

“I know some products sold have a spring time for dethatching and those tines abuse the grass more than a blade,” he explains. “That spring is just sheer pressure on the ground and it will flick and tear; it doesn’t leave a consistent groove in the ground if you are trying to break that compaction. It will do a great job of getting the thatch to the top, but it’s not essentially doing the two things that a blade verticutter can do.”

David McPherson is a freelance writer based in Toronto.

So where do you stand on the verticutting debate? Does this practice make sense for your course and how do you use it effectively? Weigh in on this topic by sending your thoughts to gc@gie.net. We will feature some of your responses in future issues.
Recently I was daydreaming about my dad, thinking about how much I miss him and the questions I'd like to ask him. This reflection led me to wonder about ancient relatives who I have spent a lifetime studying through various genealogy projects. Soon I was imagining which ancestors I would like to meet. I could see how they stood, hear their voices and ponder their views on the world and life.

Before long I was thinking about important people in history – Presidents Washington, Monroe and Lincoln, to name a few. Wouldn't it be something to meet old William Shakespeare and listen to what the world's greatest wordsmith had to say? Or how about Mozart, Beethoven or Bach? I would love to meet Martin Luther and John Wesley, Michelangelo, to know him a bit. He shared stories about his father, Joe. They were great and I wish I'd known him, too.

Good fortune allowed me to meet Sherwood Moore, a gracious gentleman who was a giant among us, so much so he was given the Old Tom Morris Award by GCSAA. I never had the opportunity to meet John Bone, a predecessor at my club of 36 years. He was one of our state chapter's founders and the only man to serve three terms as its president. He wrote extensively in the Green Section Record and the National Greenkeeper. I would have learned a lot.

And who wouldn't cherish the opportunity to meet Col. John Morley, the visionary who led the formation of our modern day GCSAA?

I have been lucky to known many of the professors and scientists who advanced the profession through research, teaching and extension activities. From those at our own land grant university to various men and women around the country – so many to name I'd surely leave someone out. But I have attended their classes, read their textbooks and sought their advice on a personal basis. They all made phenomenal contributions. I can go back as far as Dr. Fred Grau, but I never met Dr. Burt Musser, well known in his time because of his excellent and widely used textbook.

And speaking of textbooks, I'd love to have met Drs. Piper and Oakley, USDA turf researchers who in 1917 authored "Turf for Golf Courses." It was a standard text for years and both were influential in the Green Section. Add to this list other well-known professors who played a role early in our business, such as MSU's William Beal, Cornell's Liberty Hyde Bailey and Wisconsin's Aldo Leopold.

Then there's O.J. Noer, one of turf's all-time great agronomists, who died before I was a turf undergrad. He was a great man, a pioneer and an intellectual and writer who was accorded the GCSAA DSA three times.

Like most superintendents, I have an interest in course design and designers. It has been a privilege to enjoy a friendship with Geoffrey Cornish. Many of those his junior have been friends, also. And wouldn't it be great to meet Alister Mackenzie, A.W. Tillinghast and C.B. Macdonald and Donald Ross? The best we can do is study their work and read their words.

As a bibliophile I've had contact with many golf writers. I had a warm relationship with Hebert Warren Wind, met the Graffis brothers and have a nice collection of autographed golf books. But in golf's history, Bernard Darwin stands out. Gosh, I would love to have heard his voice and engaged him in conversation.

I would include some tangential individuals, such as equipment pioneer John Deere, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead and U.S. Senator Justin Smith Morrill. Surprisingly, the only players on my list are Bob Jones, Walter Hagen and James Braid.

This brings me to the person I would like to have met the most. He is the obvious choice. – Old Tom Morris.

Norman Rockwell. Paul Revere, Ernie Pyle and E.B. White, along with Tom Edison and Henry Ford.

Soon I was contemplating professional ancestors. The relative youth of our profession, my age and many fortuitous opportunities have allowed me to meet and know many industry luminaries and leaders.

I once shared a cab ride with Eb Steiniger, and fairly early in my career I was introduced to Chet Mendenhall. Founding GCSAA member Harry Hanson lived close by and I visited him often. Once, Walter Wood and I were on a program together and he invited me to stay with him if I ever visited St. Andrews. Years ago I had lunch with Richie Valentine and I was delighted

This all brings me to the person I would like to have met the most. He is the obvious choice. – Old Tom Morris.

Monroe Miller is a retired golf course superintendent. He spent 36 years as superintendent at Blackhawk Country Club in Madison, Wis. Miller can be reached at groots@charter.net.
Don’t throw that old toothbrush away.

Don’t be so quick to chuck that frayed and weathered toothbrush you’ve thought can no longer help prevent cavities. While it may no longer work to clean your teeth, it’s a perfect tool for cleaning the tips of your sprayers. That’s one of several tips Peter DeHaan offers to help greenkeepers maintain this heavily-used piece of equipment. As the technical support representative from TeeJet Technologies, DeHaan is duly qualified to speak on this subject.

The most important thing, according to DeHaan, when you use a sprayer on a daily basis is to rinse it out after each use. Allowing the residue to dry and harden will only make cleaning more difficult. “That can definitely help as far as the tip clogging,” he says. “It can also help prevent later damage to its internal parts. By letting some of the chemicals you use sit in the lines and in the tank, you will cause mineral and chemical build up in the lines that will eventually cause clogging of your tips, so always rinse your sprayers out after each use.”

GET TO THE TIP OF THE MATTER. DeHaan says equally as important is to not neglect the tips. This is where clogging can occur and he always recommends superintendents use tip strainers, not just line strainers. If you get clogging in the tips, it will cause an uneven application.

“A lot of people think they are a pain and they don’t use them, but if you use them, you will see the benefit,” he says. “Most
“Tips are essential to get an even spray pattern, so if you use something to clean them that is too coarse, you can damage them. And, a damaged tip can actually have worse distribution than a worn tip.”
— Peter DeHaan, Teejet Technologies

**Grow out toothbrush**

by David McPherson

Sprayers come with inline strainers that filter the sprayer right at the tip. Even if you are just spraying water, the minerals in the water will build up in the line at the tip, so it’s good to perform this routine maintenance as the last check right before the nozzle.

As mentioned, one of the best ways to clean the nozzle is to use a toothbrush since you want something softer than the tip that is non-abrasive. DeHaan says TeeJet sell tip cleaning brushes, but they basically perform the same function as a toothbrush.

“The reason you want to use something like a toothbrush is because the tips are pretty delicate,” he says. “Tips are essential to get an even spray pattern, so if you use something to clean them that is too coarse, you can damage them. And, a damaged tip can actually have worse distribution than a worn tip.”

At the same time you clean your tips, check them for wear and tear. Don’t use them for multiple years without changing. The best way DeHaan recommends to check your tips for wear is to keep a new tip on the side and then once or twice per year, put that on and compare a spray with it to the old tip for a minute at a certain pressure.

“Compare the difference in the flow you get out of each tip,” he explains. “If there is more than a 10 percent difference, it’s time to change the tips. Don’t base your decision to change the tips on how many hours you’ve used them or how much acreage you have because that’s vague… tips are going to wear differently at different pressures and different materials used.”

Always clean your sprayer and tips immediately following each spray application. Allowing the residue to dry and harden will only make cleaning more difficult, says Warren Wybenga, turf equipment manager at Donalda Club, Toronto, Ontario. Never use a piece of wire or any sharp object such as a piece of wire or dental pick to scrape residue from the nozzle as scratches or other damage to the nozzle will negatively affect its spray pattern and performance characteristics.

“If one nozzle is performing poorly while the others seem to be working properly and cleaning doesn’t seem to make an improvement, consider replacing all nozzles instead of just the suspect one,” he says. “As a set of tips gets more hours of use and depending on the product used, they will tend to wear out. Replacing one at a time will give an equally unacceptable, non-uniform appearance to the spray pattern.”

As a set of tips gets more hours of use and depending on the product used, they will tend to wear out. Replacing one at a time will give an equally unacceptable, non-uniform appearance to the spray pattern.

And finally, thoroughly clean the sprayer and always use the recommended PPE’s (personal protective equipment), even when cleaning the nozzle tips.

**Get ready for Winter’s Long Embrace.**

Just like putting away any of your equipment in the fall, when it’s time to put the sprayer away for the winter, DeHaan says to make sure the valves are cleaned out. “You don’t want any fluids sitting in your lines for the winter because they will expand, freeze and eventually crack,” he says. He adds that the end of the season is also a good time to replace any seals if you’ve had any leaks.

While most of these tips are common sense, DeHaan says just like the homeowner with his lawn mower, when superintendents and equipment managers are time-pressed, these simple maintenance practices are sometimes skipped.

David McPherson is a freelance writer based in Toronto.

---

**Top sprayer maintenance tips**

- Always rinse your sprayer thoroughly and immediately following each application.
- Soak the nozzles in hot water before cleaning.
- Use a toothbrush to clean the tips, followed by a blowout from some compressed air; Never use a piece of wire or other sharp object to scrape residue from the nozzle as damage to the nozzle will negatively affect its spray pattern and performance.
- Always wear personal protective equipment.
- Do a collection/calibration test to check for wear and tear of your tips; this ensures you have good, even distribution.
Fix your crown

Avoid sand buildup that can cause your collars and approaches to become crowned and thus impede proper drainage off of the putting surface. By Dustin Riley, CGCS

The summer of 2010 delivered some extremely challenging weather for golf course superintendents all across the country. In Wisconsin and parts of the upper Midwest, record rainfall totals, high humidity and lengthy stretches of above average night time temperatures throughout June, July and August provided stresses that superintendents and their turf hadn’t seen since 1995 - albeit Summer 1995 still ranks No. 1. Water management is crucial in assisting the turf survive these types of environmental stresses. And yes, irrigation scheduling and proper hand watering techniques are the obvious responses for proper water management. And, of course, drainage is always something that becomes obvious as water accumulates in low areas following rain events.

But, what if this accumulation of water is occurring on your putting surfaces as a result of slowed or impeded surface drainage? As superintendents, we focus on providing the best root zone medium for the turf on our putting surfaces. Sand topdressing is a major component in maintaining or modifying the root zones and improving putting surfaces. Throughout the growing season, sand is periodically applied to the putting surfaces as part of turf management programs - deep-tine aeration, core aeration and topdressings. If these turf management programs are in place for many years, a buildup of sand can develop on the collars and approaches as a result of the repetitive brushing or dragging of the sand across the putting surfaces. This sand buildup can cause the collars and approaches to become crowned and thus impede the proper drainage off of the putting surface. Since the crowning slows the surface drainage, more water is forced to enter the soil at the front of these greens. The increased soil moisture can raise soil temperatures, reduce air filled pore space, negatively impact turf rooting and induce disease concerns. All of which impact turf health and quality and could lead to potential thinning, which many witnessed this season.

To improve the turf health, crowned areas need to be corrected to assure there’s positive surface drainage off of the green surfaces. I’m sure there are various methods which could be used to correct a crowned collar or approach.

Here are two methods that have worked well and could be considered if you encounter a similar situation. GO

Dustin Riley is superintendent at Oconomowoc Golf Club in Oconomowoc, Wis.
Method #1:
Slight Crowning (<1"")

1a. Identify the crowned area.

1b. Aerate crowned area with ½” or greater hollow tines. 2” spacing (or tighter if possible)

1c. Remove all cored material.

1d. Hand water cored area until saturated.

1e. Roll area with drum style roller (Sidewinder style greens roller, 1 ton asphalt roller) forcing the aeration holes to collapse and close. This process could result in a ¼"-1/2" drop in elevation per event.

1f. Allow to heal and repeat as necessary until crown is removed and proper surface drainage can be achieved.
**Method #2: Moderate to Severe Crowning (>1”)**

2a. Identify the crowned area.

2b. Remove sod and carefully store. Label and place each row of sod so each piece can be easily returned to the exact same location it was taken from. This is crucial to promote faster healing and to avoid “sod square” discoloration.

2c. With sod cutter, set depth of blade to match desired soil removal. Cut and loosen soil throughout the crowned area to desired depth and remove material. Repeat until crown has been removed. Measure surface elevation with transit to ensure proper surface pitch.

2d. Finish rake and float the soil surface in preparation for sod replacement. If soil surface is too soft, lightly roll and pack to reduce any unevenness or foot printing.

2e. Apply starter fertilizer and begin replacing sod in reverse order. Again, replacing each piece exactly in the same location as before will promote a faster healing and eliminate any future “sod square” discoloration.

2f. Following sod replacement, blow the surface clean of any debris or soil.

2g. Slowly roll the entire area to smooth the surface and seal the seams.

2h. Hand water area to begin the healing process.

2i. All of us manage turf in different locations with varying degrees of geographical and environmental influences. Unfortunately, summers such as 2010’s highlight and enhance turf concerns that may not normally be visible. Renovating a crowned collar or approach is not a complex process. But the result can become extremely valuable in assisting the surface drainage component of your water management for your greens.
Firm, *Fast* and Furious

Through a links enhancement project, Half Moon Bay Golf Links transformed into the links-style course it was always meant to be.

“From a playability standpoint, our objective was to challenge golfers in the fairways with tight lies, while providing shorter approach shots that hold greens. Bunkers should become magnets, if effect, for off line shots that would normally get hung up in the rough.”
Firm and fast" has been the preferred playing condition of British links courses for centuries. Only recently has the trend found acceptance in the U.S., where a handful of courses have transitioned from lush green to a drier shade of brown.

This is partly borne out of necessity: parts of the Southeast and Texas have been mired in one of the worst droughts in recent history, and water shortages in Southern Nevada, Phoenix/Scottsdale and Palm Springs have wreaked havoc on the water supply of these popular golf vacation hot spots.

At Half Moon Bay Golf Links, Half Moon Bay, Calif., the idea of converting the Arthur Hills-designed Ocean Course into a firm and fast, links-style playing experience was the brainchild of Kenmark Golf Management, operators of our 36-hole facility just 40 miles south of San Francisco.

Since opening in 1997, the Ocean Course had gradually morphed into a Poa annua playing surface similar to so many of Northern California’s coastal facilities. Rough was high and thick, the greens surrounds were spongy and mowed well above green height, and putting surfaces were quick, but not necessarily firm.

Yet everything about the Ocean Course cried out for it to be a links style course, not an aerial golf affair: the tra-
The goal of the links enhancement has been to reposition the Ocean Course as one of the best links golf experiences in the U.S. through a series of agronomic upgrades creating a firmer, faster playing surface with an emphasis on shot values and the ground game.

In an effort to capitalize on these elements, and restore the Ocean Course it links golf intent, Kenmark Golf Management initiated the “Links Enhancement Project.” It has become the primary focus of our agronomic plan over the past 18 months, and its principles will continue to guide maintenance practices well into the future.

A word about the Ocean Course: to this day, Mr. Hills considers the seaside layout one of the best marriages of golf, land and sea in North America. The first two holes take golfers out past the onsite Ritz-Carlton, Half Moon Bay and the ocean.

Holes No. 3 through No. 9 turn inland, with holes separated only by fescue mounding, sporadic bunkering and a water feature on the seventh hole. The back nine begins the dramatic return trip to the ocean, and the final three holes play along a cliff overlooking the crashing waves of the Pacific.

The goal of the links Enhancement has been to reposition the Ocean Course as one of the best links golf experiences in the U.S. through a series of agronomic upgrades creating a firmer, faster playing surface with an emphasis on shot values and the ground game.

In August of 2009, several areas on the Ocean Course were rejuvenated through seeding and mowing, bringing hazards and fairway bunkers back into play off the tee. In late July this year, the installation of five new tee boxes added 200 yards to the course and created new angles and strategic approaches.

To this day, Arthur Hills considers the seaside layout one of the best marriages of golf, land and sea in North America.
days per year, we were still able to accomplish our goal of harder surfaces throughout the Ocean Course.

To do so, irrigation was drastically reduced from previous years. Year to date, the Ocean Course is using about 50% less water than it did in 2009. With drier, harder conditions the ball rolls farther off the tee, allowing for variety in club selection (but also bringing numerous hazards back into play). The ground game is back in play around the greens, allowing for a range of shot options and fostering player creativity.

_Poa annua_ remains the predominant grass on the Ocean Course, however irrigation practices are designed to maximize the growth of the perennial ryegrass. The _Poa annua_ is allowed to stress out and, in some cases, even die in order to maintain the hard fast conditions we are striving for.

From a playability standpoint, our objective was to challenge golfers in the fairways with tight lies, while providing shorter approach shots that hold greens. Bunkers should become magnets, if effect, for off line shots that would normally get hung up in the rough.

**NATIVE GRASS CONVERSION.** Approximately 2.5 acres of maintained turf was converted to native grass in the fall of 2009. This is the first phase of a three-year program to convert a total of 10 acres, reducing the total amount of maintained acreage from 85 to 75.

In preparation for the native conversion, turf was sprayed once with “Round-Up” for four weeks prior to seeding. A second application was made two weeks prior to seeding to pick-up any areas that were not controlled after the first application.

Most of the dead turf was removed before seeding using dethatching reels on a National 84” triplex mower to insure better seed-to-soil contact. Finally, the seed was broadcast on the surface at a rate of 60 pounds per acre and incorporated into the soil using the same de-thatching reels.

Keeping the seed moist was not a problem as the irrigation heads were still in place. The new native areas not only reduce irrigation and fertilization, but enhance the appearance of the golf course.

The converted areas were closely monitored to gain an understanding of how play was impacted. Mowing of the rough was discontinued in March at the end of the rainy season.
We allowed the areas to grow without water and, as the season progressed, the grass became thin and more playable.

Areas throughout the Ocean Course that appear thin will be reseeded prior to the beginning of rainy season in November. We have initiated the process of converting three more acres to native areas and will closely monitor it as the climate and seasons change.

MOWING, DESIGN AND CONDITIONING. To give golfers the option of playing an array of shots and clubs around the green, the rough around greens was completely eliminated to provide a uniform surface. This mowing strategy also places a greater premium on hitting the greens: errant shots that miss the green can now come to rest some 30 feet from the putting surface or in a bunker.

Speaking of mowing: The net effect of the water reduction and native area conversions has been a drastic reduction in the mowing frequency from tee to green. This has allowed for a reallocation of staff to other areas and responsibilities.

Future phases of the Links Enhancement include converting a series of sand bunkers to stacked sod (we've already converted one on the No. 8 hole) without altering the contours of the course. If golfers find themselves in a new stacked sod bunker, they will still be able to take a full swing, but the lie and feet placement could create a new (and more penal) predicament.

The feedback from our members, daily fee guests and even local and national golf media has been outstanding. Even Arthur Hills sent us a wonderful email thanking us for restoring the Ocean Course to its intended design pedigree and agronomic condition. Courses and clubs that have been hesitant to transition to faster, firmer conditions might find the rewards greatly outweigh the risks. GCI

Dan Miller is director of golf course maintenance at Half Moon Bay Golf Links.

The primary agronomic objective of the project was to create decidedly firmer and faster fairways.
ORDERTODAY!
Call 800.456.0707 or visit www.golfcourseindustry.com/store
CART CONTROL

Golf cart traffic control has been made a lot more functional with these decorative, customized 4” x 4” posts that were manufactured in-house. This idea replaced the traditional ropes and stakes, which are spread out much wider and they provide the same cart control affect with impressive aesthetic appeal. Greg Goecker, 1st assistant; Chris Hedberg, 2nd assistant; and David J. Soltvedt, CGCS, of The Ridge at Castle Pines North in Castle Rock, Colo., managed by Troon Golf, teamed up to design the 4” x 4” x 12” posts, which have a 30-degree angle cut on each side’s top portion, with a 3/8”-diameter rebar for holding it vertically into the turf. The posts are then stained and sealed with a wood preservative, which ensures they will hold-up extremely well to irrigation cycles and last for several years. The Brand-First Branding Iron (www.brand-first.com), which puts the club’s customized logo onto the top portion of the posts, is a Model BF200-L that costs $300. The wood costs about $80 and the stain and wood preservatives cost another $80. The initial process involved an efficient assembly line process that took about 40 hours from start to finish.

THE MIX MASTER

This homemade pre-mix tank used for mixing water soluble fertilizers, to speedup the mixing and loading process, was conceived by David L. Smith, superintendent; built by James Lee, irrigation technician; and assisted by Alan Brissette, foreman, at the Fawn Lake C.C. in Spotsylvania, Va. The used 500-gallon tank costs $300 and the valves, fittings, trash pump and lumber were already in stock and it took about one day to build. The tank is filled from the irrigation system through a 2”-diameter PVC irrigation swing joint that swivels over the top of the 500-gallon tank fill-up opening. The 2”-diameter, 4-HP Honda trash pump agitates the mix through 1”-diameter PVC “ports” inside and on top of the tank. Then a series of valves are opened and closed as it transfers the chemical to the sprayer fill-opening through the same swing arm. Another unique feature is that quick-connect couplers are hooked-up to the hoses and pipes so the trash pump can be easily removed to be used on the course.
Let us help you get the WORD OUT.

Golf Course Industry provides a cost-effective, high impact way to promote your company's products and services.

Our professionally designed article reprints can be used as direct mail pieces, sales literature, training aids or trade show handouts.

For even more targeted marketing, add your customized advertising message, logo, mission statement or other valuable company information.

ARTICLE REPRINT SERVICE
800-456-0707 to learn more.

GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

FOR SALE
Discount Small Engines & Parts
Small engines & parts from Briggs & Stratton, Kohler, Tecumseh, Robin and more.
www.smallenginesuppliers.com
Also, look up your own parts and buy online at www.smallenginepartssuppliers.com

Winter Problems?
Get the IMPERMEABLE barrier!

Featuring the NEW Air Flow System!

Minimizes temperature fluctuations • Protects from ice damage, crown hydration and desiccation Lightweight and durable for years of easy installation & storage.
GreenJacket.com/gci 888-786-2683

FOR SALE
How to Outsmart Mother Nature...

Use EVERGREEN™
The Turf Blanket the World Relies On

• Earlier spring green-up
• Faster seed germination
• Deeper root development
• Delays dormancy in fall
• Ideal winter blanket
• Best for quick turf repairs
• Available in any size
• 3 or 7 year warranty covers

For details call 1-800-387-5808 today!
covermaster.com
E-MAIL: info@covermaster.com

Golf Course Industry
PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD TODAY
Call Bonnie Velikonya at 800-456-0707 or email her at bvelikonya@gie.net.

AD INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>WEBSITE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>RS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BASF</td>
<td><a href="http://www.betterturf.basf.us">www.betterturf.basf.us</a></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bioverse</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bioverse.com">www.bioverse.com</a></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champion Turf</td>
<td><a href="http://www.championturffarms.com">www.championturffarms.com</a></td>
<td>12-13*</td>
<td>15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clivus Multrum</td>
<td><a href="http://www.clivusmultrum.com">www.clivusmultrum.com</a></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Products</td>
<td><a href="http://www.1stproducts.com">www.1stproducts.com</a></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hustler Turf Equipment</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hustlerturf.com">www.hustlerturf.com</a></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigation Consulting</td>
<td><a href="http://www.irrigationconsulting.com">www.irrigationconsulting.com</a></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacobsen</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jacobsengolf.com">www.jacobsengolf.com</a></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Deere Golf</td>
<td><a href="http://www.deere.com">www.deere.com</a></td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRM</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jrmonline.com">www.jrmonline.com</a></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalo</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kalo.com">www.kalo.com</a></td>
<td>12-13*</td>
<td>16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid Fence Co., The</td>
<td><a href="http://www.liquidfence.com">www.liquidfence.com</a></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Grows</td>
<td><a href="http://www.newenglandgrowers.org">www.newenglandgrowers.org</a></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Nursery &amp; Landscape Association</td>
<td><a href="http://www.onla.org">www.onla.org</a></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBJ/Gordon</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pbjgordon.com">www.pbjgordon.com</a></td>
<td>9, 34</td>
<td>14, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quali-Pro</td>
<td><a href="http://www.quali-pro.com">www.quali-pro.com</a></td>
<td>47</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEC</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stecequipment.com">www.stecequipment.com</a></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stens</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stens.com">www.stens.com</a></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syngenta Professional Products</td>
<td><a href="http://www.syngentaprofessionalproducts.com">www.syngentaprofessionalproducts.com</a></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tee-2-Green</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tee-2-green.com">www.tee-2-green.com</a></td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WeatherBug</td>
<td><a href="http://www.weatherbug.com">www.weatherbug.com</a></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Denotes regional advertising
PARTING SHOTS

Carolina on My Mind

People often marvel about how much I travel for business. I probably hear “I bet you get to travel a lot with your job” almost as often as “Do you know you look like Bill Cowher?”

(Column Interruption: I got a short break from hearing the Cowher thing recently. Last month, to inspire the hapless little-league football team I coach, I bet them that I’d shave my mustache off if they won a game. The little raggamuffins promptly pulled together and stomped a rival team for their only win. So off came the ‘stache that I’d worn for pretty much my entire adult life. Not only did I not look like Bill Cowher, I looked like an alien. My lip weasel has since returned.)

Anyway, the outward glamour of business travel disguises the grind of standing in airport security lines, eating cruddy food, dealing with rental car morons and never knowing what to expect when you check into a hotel.

(Column Interruption: My all-time favorite hotel horror story occurred when I checked into a Marriott in Miami a few years ago. I noticed the carpet in part of my room was soaking wet and the place smelled like cleaning solvent. I looked behind a curtain and there was an ominous red substance splattered on the wall. Turns out some guy had blown his brains out in the room the night before and the Marriott guest suicide clean-up crew had not exactly done a thorough job.)

Yet, despite my whining, I cannot deny that I get to go some nice places as part of this job. Nor can I deny that Pinehurst is one of my favorites.

There is an aura about the entire Pinehurst experience that is hard to describe. The Carolina Hotel – one of the grandest old places in golf – drips with history and ambience. The people are fabulously friendly and interesting. It’s like they jam an IV drip of Southern hospitality in your arm the moment you walk in the door.

But, there’s far more to Pinehurst than fantastic golf and idiosyncratic ante-bellum charm. Look underneath the gorgeous veneer and you’ll find a steely modern business model that should be the envy of everyone in golf.

I was reminded of that when I interviewed Bob Farren, Pinehurst’s director of grounds and golf course management, for this month’s Q&A (page 18). I’ve known Bob for 20 years but I think this was the first extended conversation I’ve had with him. Over the years, whenever I’ve talked with someone from Pinehurst’s management team – from Bob Dedman Sr. and Jr. to Brad Kocher to Paul Jett to Bob Farren – I was blown away at how smart and focused they are.

(Column Interruption: No. I did not ask Bob Farren about Paul Jett’s departure. Nor did I ask Paul. None of my damned business, thank you very much.)

Here’s what I was reminded of about Pinehurst’s philosophy in my conversation with Bob:

They measure the right things. Beneath the casual Southern gentility beats the heart of a ruthless Yankee accountant. They know to the penny their revenue and profit per guest and what their maintenance cost per round and per hole is on each course. As Bob pointed out, return on investment and economic sustainability should be the primary metric used in deciding how every dollar is spent.

They understand branding – not just marketing. As much as I love the aggressive advertising and promotion done by the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail and the Myrtle Beach folks, Pinehurst gets branding better than just about anyone else. Everything they do supports the brand: Quiet, casual yet elegant, historic but fun. Changing the look and playability of No. 2 is not a renovation or restoration... it’s a rebranding of the entire facility. The bottom line is that after redoing No. 4, building No. 8 and playing around elsewhere, the place was in danger of becoming homogeneous. Why would you want eight courses that were kind of all the same?

As ROI-focused as they are, this was a “gut” decision. Neither Mr. Dedman or his father ever shied away from taking calculated risks when their heart tells them it’s the right thing to do to profitably steward Pinehurst. Personally, the decision to turn back the clock, leverage the trend toward minimalist/naturalist design and retake the attention of the golf world is nothing short of brilliant. Do you seriously believe any of their core customers will refuse to play No. 2 because it looks “messy” compared to a year ago? Can you imagine the buzz this will create in the run-up to back-to-back Mens/Womens U.S. Opens in 2014?

(Column Interruption: No one has ever hosted back-to-back majors before. This is borderline crazy. But, if anyone can do it, it’s Bob and his team.)

As much as business travel grates on me, you will never hear me bitch about a chance to head to the Sand Hills and point my rental car toward the Village of Pinehurst where beauty, elegance and great golf blend with a savvy and sophisticated business approach everyone should study.
MORE POWERFUL THAN EVER

Introducing the Jacobsen® R-311 Turbo™:
Power through the most challenging sites.

Take the work out of hills and rugged terrain with the new Jacobsen® R-311 Turbo™ wide area rotary mower. Reliable, comfortable and easy to maintain, it combines a powerful turbo-charged engine with the low cost of ownership you have come to expect from Jacobsen. Contact your local Jacobsen dealer to demo the new R-311T or ask about our full line of mowers.

www.Jacobsen.com
Reduce Costs, Not Expectations.

Economic times may be tough, but golfers still expect pristine conditions. Manage the budget and expectations by seeding the Penn bents — specified by architects and superintendents more than any other bentgrasses in the world.

Do the Math.

TEE2GREEN

Why Use Anything Else?

800-547-0255 • www.tee-2-green.com • bentinfo@tee-2-green.com

www.golfcourseindustry.com/readerservice - #30