Katana™ Turf Herbicide

Speed and precision – that is what the ancient Samurai expected from their katana swords. Katana cuts through transition time and quickly removes overseeded ryegrass from bermudagrass and zoysia grass - even in cooler temperatures.

CONTROLS:
Clumpy Ryegrass | Fescues | Kyllingas | Poa | Broadleaf Weeds

SIMHARA SAMYO KAISHA LTD
ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS. Katana™ is a trademark of Simhara Samyo Kaisha, Ltd. *Not labeled for residential turf. Pending state registrations 03930

Gordon PBI
An Employee-Owned Company
800.821.7925 • pbigordon.com/katana
the club because they knew he owned 7 Springs and was an experienced operator of a public course, to which they wanted to convert Colony West.

But the family couldn’t get the deal done without putting 7 Springs up as collateral to purchase Colony West. Alas, the deal stalled.

That’s when Mark Kuehner, the Racks’ grandson, entered the picture.

At the time the deal was being discussed, Mark’s brother, Dale, was attending Penn State University and studying agronomy. The family business plan called for Dale to be golf course superintendent at 7 Springs. But Mark, Dale’s younger brother who was leaving the Navy soon, had no firm plans for his future. While Mark longed to return to the family business where he had worked as a teenager, there wasn’t a spot for him or enough money to pay him so he could make a decent living.

Realizing this, Gen began to rethink her position on the Colony West deal. She wanted badly for Mark to work in the family business. She also realized the acquisition would give future family members the chance to work and grow in an expanded family business.

Gen decided that putting 7 Springs up as collateral to make the deal was worth it if it meant opportunities for Mark and others. The deal was made shortly thereafter.

It was decided Dale would move to Florida to become director of golf maintenance at Colony West, and Mark would become superintendent of 7 Springs upon his departure from the Navy.

“I can’t describe how appreciative I was to have grandparents like that who were willing to make that sacrifice,” says Mark, now in his 23rd year as superintendent of 7 Springs. “They could’ve told me, ‘We can’t do it. You’ll have to get a job elsewhere.’ ”

It was not lost upon Mark at the time that his aging grandparents had little to fall back on if Colony West would’ve continued to flounder and sunk the family business.

“The kids working in the business were young enough to move onto to other things, but my grandparents were too old to learn a new trade,” he says. “They took a huge risk.”

ON A RECENT sun-splashed day, Mark, Dale and their mother, Janice Sherman, visit a memory plaque located in a garden near the 7 Springs clubhouse. The plaque is in memory of Gen, who died Jan. 12, 2009, at 93. It reads: “Loving and caring in all her ways. Generous to the end of her days. Sincere and true in heart and mind. A beautiful memory she leaves behind.”

The brothers and their mother will never forget Gen and the legacy she left behind. Gen knew little if anything about turfgrass maintenance, but she knew a lot about family maintenance. She was the family’s calming force. “Family first” was Gen’s motto.

“The business was an extension of the family,” Janice says. “The business was never going to shatter the family if she had anything to do with it.”

If there were disagreements between family members, Gen made sure they were smoothed out, says Janice, who called her mother the “gentle authority.”

Continued on page 44
How effective is Provaunt® against caterpillars? Good luck finding one to ask.

Advanced chemistry that leaves caterpillars speechless.

DuPont™ Provaunt® insecticide has earned high praise for its outstanding performance against turf and ornamental pests, including caterpillars and annual bluegrass weevils. Even with its low application rates, Provaunt® performs extremely well. What’s more, the active ingredient in Provaunt® has a favorable environmental profile. Learn more by calling 1-888-6DuPont (1-888-638-7668) or by visiting us at proproducts.dupont.com.

Family Matters

Continued from page 42

“We were always instilled with the message that family is the most important thing you’ll ever have,” Janice says.

“Gram,” as the grandchildren called Gen, made everyone in the family realize the importance of family, the 45-year-old Mark says.

“She made us realize that material things don’t mean squat if you don’t have a good family behind you,” he says.

Eddie Rack, who’s 96 now, began the family business with Gen in the 1950s. The two were married 75 years.

“It was a Depression-type story,” the 47-year-old Dale says of how the family business was born.

Eddie’s father died when he was a young boy. He had four siblings and had to help his mother support the family. Eddie caddied at the Youghiogheny Country Club, where he met a lot of influential people, including W.D. Mansfield, who convinced Eddie not to drop out of high school and later gave him a job at his newspaper after graduation. Mansfield, who was also the president of a Pittsburgh bank, later loaned Rack the money to buy 7 Springs.

“They made the deal on a handshake,” Janice says.

The Rack family wasn’t rich. They put a lot of the money they made back into the golf course.

Eddie has enabled the business to Janice, who lives on 7 Springs. While Dale and Mark make any decisions related to golf course agronomics, they report to their mother, who has the final say on matters. Dale calls his 70-year-old mother an “intense individual.”

“It’s amazing how hard she works,” he says.

Janice has also assumed Gen’s role in the business. “She’s the matriarch of the family and keeps us all together and grounded,” Dale says.

Dale’s sister Lynne and cousin Tracy operate the 7 Springs pro shop with Janice. The Kuehner children’s stepfather, Robert Sherman, is a starter. Their cousin Craig is the general manager of Colony West, and their stepbrother Toby Sherman is the pro shop manager there.

Continued on page 46
If you want help, count on us. We can customize financing to maximize your available cash flow through John Deere Credit. We are the only company in the industry that can assemble integrated equipment, irrigation and agronomic packages. And we have an army of experts that can both see the big picture—and help you with all the details. So contact your local John Deere Golf rep or call 1-866-769-4859. Consider us part of your crew.
Family Matters

Continued from page 44

Dale’s wife, Cindy, who went with him from Pittsburgh to Fort Lauderdale, works at Colony West and takes care of human resources and payroll. They’ve been married 20 years.

“For any family that has been involved as long as we have in a business like this, it’s amazing we get along as well as we do,” Dale says.

There are no green committees at the two courses to talk about course conditions and other business. But that doesn’t mean things don’t get discussed. Most every family function turns into a meeting about the golf courses. It goes with the territory.

“We have a greens committee meeting at Christmas; we have one at Thanksgiving and one at every birthday party,” Dale says. “If there’s something wrong with the golf courses, my brother and I get grilled.”

Says Mark: “It’s nice when you work with family. It has its moments when it gets contentious, but it’s better than working for some jerk you don’t know.”

DALE AND MARK HAD to learn a lot and quickly when the family acquired Colony West. Dale, who was going to Penn State when the deal was made, had to learn how to manage bermudagrass on the fly. To help him do so, he joined the local Golf Course Superintendents Association chapter in southern Florida to learn the nuances of maintaining the variety.

“When I went to my first meeting, I found out who the best superintendents were and I made friends with them right away,” Dale says.

For several months, Dale oversaw 7 Springs and Colony West while Mark finished his Navy duty. He would return to Pittsburgh for a few weeks at a time in the summer to help run Seven Springs. He also returned to Pittsburgh in the winter to complete his two-year certificate program from Penn State, which he had to put on hold after moving to Florida.

Dale became a certified superintendent when he was 23, a month after he received his turfgrass certificate. He achieved certification quickly because he didn’t want to be pegged as someone who became a superintendent just because his family appointed him to the position. “I wanted people to respect me as a superintendent,” Dale says. “That’s why I became certified. It didn’t do a darn thing for me financially.”

Mark had no formal education agronomically. But one of the first things he did after getting home from the Navy was join the Pittsburgh GCSA to learn the business. At Dale’s advice, Mark also consulted the top superintendents to gain knowledge.

“It was on-the-job training,” Mark says. “I made a lot of mistakes. You’re not a superintendent until you kill your first 2 acres of turf.”

You’d never know Dale and Mark are brothers. They don’t look alike. Mark is taller and has a shock of black hair under his cap. Dale is mostly bald. They also have different personalities — Mark is more boisterous (in a good way) than the more business-like Dale. But they’re similar as superintendents — both like to get down and dirty on their courses.

Dale and Mark and the family business face numerous challenges in this challenging economy. Rounds are down at 7 Springs and holding steady at Colony West. While green fees at the two courses haven’t increased, maintenance costs have. The two men have looked to trim costs wherever they can to save money.

Even several family members, including Dale and Mark, took pay cuts last year to keep the business running steady.

“You have to do what you have to do,” Dale says matter-of-factly.

You could say Dale, Mark and their relatives took one for the team — or in this case, the family business. ■
Introducing the industry’s only hydraulic-free riding greens mower.

One look at the new Jacobsen® Eclipse™ 322 and you’ll see a greens mower that’s completely hydraulic free and can be customized to meet the specific requirements of your course. There are no oil leaks, valves or hoses to worry about. Instead, it features a programmable frequency of clip, individual reel control, Classic XP™ Reels with Advanced Relief Technology™ and an array of features designed to reduce your operating costs by up to 86%. Use the Cost Calculator at www.Eclipse322.com and see how the Eclipse 322 can help your bottom line.
After the Deluge

By Curt Harler, Contributing Editor

The shock and awe of large-scale flooding can be blinding to superintendents. But it can also open their eyes on how to prepare for future rain events.

Catastrophic flooding across the country in 2009 brought back bad memories for Brad Babeck, golf course superintendent of the Territory Golf and Country Club in Duncan, Okla. Last year’s flooding reminded Babeck of the four rain events that dumped between seven and 10 inches of rain on his course in the spring and summer of 2006.

Fortunately, Babeck’s golf course wasn’t damaged badly. The flooding his course experienced also didn’t compare to the flooding that courses in Georgia, Iowa and others states experienced last year. Still, Babeck says the flooding was enough to make him want to renovate his course to keep flood damage from ever happening.

The superintendents whose courses were flooded last year find themselves thinking like Babeck. And they expect to continue such repairs and renovations well into 2010.

Last September, a flood in Georgia, classified by the U.S. Geological Service as a “once in 500 years flood,” wreaked havoc on state golf courses, which were left covered by dirt. The putting greens were under water so long that they suffocated and died. Bridges on the courses were washed away and electrical infrastructure was destroyed.

Already soaked from a wet season, there was nowhere for water to go long before the flooding occurred. Four holes at the Atlanta Country Club were under water, says Mark Esoda, the course’s certified golf course superintendent. The flooding produced rapid-moving and standing water that, in some cases, stayed for days.

Once silt and debris — including Continued on page 51
WITH THE NEW CHEMISTRY OF FLUOPICOLIDE AND THE PROVEN POWER OF PROPAMOCARB COMBINED IN ONE PREMIX, STELLAR® FUNGICIDE PROTECTS YOUR COURSE WITH POWERFUL PYTHIUM CONTROL. AFTER ALL, YOUR TURF IS ALREADY UNDER ENOUGH ATTACK, ISN’T IT?

YOU’LL HAVE TOTAL CONTROL OVER PYTHIUM. GOLFERS NOT SO MUCH.
Great things happen when passion and commitment combine with technology and value. To learn more about how Nufarm's passion for turf can help you, both agronomically and financially, see your distributor or go to www.nufarm.com/us.

“We’re just as CRAZY ABOUT PERFECT TURF as you are.”


© 2010 Nufarm. Important: Always read and follow label instructions.