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THRU THE GREEN

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From The President

Having just returned home from GCSAA's 67th International Golf Course Conference and Show, I would like to offer some random observations from the show.

It's amazing just how large the show has grown over the years. I can remember a few years ago when the show was half this size and we still had just as many choices of products. Maybe this speaks for the dollars that we as superintendents control, and the ever increasing number of companies that are vying for those dollars.

The GCSAA has done an excellent job in limiting the non-golf related businesses that exhibit at the show. Gone are the vibrating massage chairs and neon glow sign companies. Companies selling environmentally sound products and services are abundant. Gone also are the models and cheerleaders showing off the latest products. I guess it's just a sign of the times.

Do you think that some of the exhibitors just camped out at the convention center between the recent PGA show and our trade

show?

Computers are everywhere. Irrigation systems were probably our first use, but it seems that every company is now advertising their home page on the "net". Is the telephone going to be obsolete in the future when we order parts and supplies? What did you think of GCSAA's home page that will be fully functional later this year?

Did the cashier lines at the GCSAA merchandise booth ever go down? The merchandise is great and the prices can't be beat, but the lines were outrageous. Shouldn't GCSAA put on a few extra cashiers? Maybe catalog ordering with our gift certificates is the best way to go.

The convention centers are getting so large. It took two or three days to get familiar with the layout. By the time I was able to figure out what level I was on, or where the next meeting or class was, the conference was winding down. It would surely be nice if the meeting rooms were closer to the trade show.

Last year's hot item, the

greens roller, was nowhere to be found. Is no one buying these rollers? This year, it seems like many exhibitors were selling biological products. . . Bio this and Bio that. . . I think we're going to see this trend continue well into the future.

Congratulations to couple of local heroes. Nicholas Checklenis of Silver Creek Valley Country Club and Joe Rodriguez, CGCS of Rossmoor Golf Course were Merit Winners of GCSAA's 1996 Environmental Steward Awards.

Next year's show will be in Las Vegas. Our State Association will again be required to staff a "next year's host booth" when the 1998 show will be in Anaheim. This was a rare off year, but it sure seems that we have staffed these booths almost every year. We get a slight break with San Francisco out of the rotation but San Diego has not been added with the conference scheduled there in 2001. I guess it's the price we pay for living in California.

Have a great Spring,
Richard Lavine, CGCS

Office Notes

By: Barbara Mikel

Well, I am back, or at least I will be by the time you are reading this!

I will shortly be sending notices for the annual meeting, proxies, bylaw changes, etc. It is very important you return these to the Association or the person you want to hold your proxy. I think your Association has a very high response and participation rate so keep it up. I know you may have a million things on your desk and will be April soon and all the course related

work starts going double time; but take a minute to help the people giving their time and effort to keep your Association healthy.

I get a lot of calls from people requesting job information. I know some of these people have talked to you and you probably give them the office number. The Board of Directors' policy is to circulate job notices to GCSANC members only. We provide this service to our members and the clubs they

represent. Before a job notice is published by our organization, we make sure our member is aware of the publication, has already left the position, or the position is a new opening. Each time I receive a request for job posting, the club or organization requesting the notice is also informed of the other Associations and the State Association, so if they choose to circulate the notice to other organizations, they certainly have the option of doing so.—See you in April.

USGA

And Some Things Do Change

Mike Huck, Agronomist
USGA Green Section, Wester Region,
January, 1996

Last month's article examined a number of subjects, from Dr. Alister Mackenzie's book, *The Spirit of St. Andrews*, that seem to have not changed over the years. As a follow up I thought it may be interesting to take a look at some things that have changed in golf course maintenance.

The popularity of golf has changed and the amount of play courses now receive is phenomenal. I doubt if at the time George Thomas designed Riviera, or Mackenzie built Pasatiempo, they ever intended their greens to support anything in excess of thirty to thirty-five thousand rounds a year. (Maybe not even that many.) To my knowledge both receive somewhere near two times this amount, a reason for more aeration.

People's attitudes have changed. Golfers

expect a higher level of maintenance on a daily basis (due to the influence of television.) The public is concerned about what it takes to keep golf courses green. More regulations govern maintenance operations than ever before and along with this the educational requirements for superintendents have risen.

Pest pressure has changed, and this may be related to several of the "old standby" chemicals being removed from the market place. New products are more pest specific and less broad spectrum in nature. Weak diseases that were not considered a consequence 15 years ago now surface on a more regular basis. The Black Turfgrass *Ataenius* has become a resident in Palm Springs and is now moving into other areas of Southern California.

Mowing heights have changed and some place complete blame on the Stimpmeter. Yes, this device had an influence, but I don't think it was the sole catalyst. If you think

back about 1978 there were no such things as "super thin" or "tournament" bed knives. Back then, without grinding the bottom of a bed knife, there was no physical way to adjust a mower less than 3/16". So don't place all the blame on the Stimpmeter — some creative mechanic helped with this one. While we are on the subject, equipment has most definitely changed. Rarely does one see a ground-driven gang mower on a fairway, *light-weight* is the buzzword now. Riding aerators, high pressure water injection, deep tine machines and core harvesters have changed cultivation programs. Electric equipment is now being developed to respond to noise ordinances and residential development courses. (It's funny that everyone wants to live on the course but no one wants to listen to you maintain it.) Computers are common in the superintendent's office for record keeping

(Continued on page 6, Col. 3)



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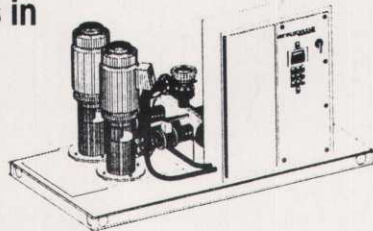
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I Want To Go To Work, But I Can't

By Pete Bowman, CGCS

I do not mind admitting that in my career as a Golf Course Superintendent, there were a few days when I did not want to go to work. Having worked at eight golf courses — five as Golf Course Superintendent — in the last eighteen years, there have been more than just a few days when I did not want to get out of bed to go to work at that #/@/% golf course again! But I did get out of bed, wishing that I was the kind of guy who did not feel guilty about calling in sick when I knew I was not, and went to work anyway, pretending to enjoy myself that day.

On each of those days, whether it was frosty or raining, or hot or humid, or the new boss' first day, not matter how badly I wanted to stay home, I could always manage to get to work and did.

I now have a job that no matter how badly I do want to get to work, and believe me, I do want to get to work, I cannot. Well, at least for a few days at a time, anyway.

The Diablo Grande project is under construction in Patterson, California, in Stanislaus County. Plans call for a world class destination resort with two 18-hole golf courses, hotel and conference center, spa, eques-

trian center, shopping, a private label winery, and several thousand homes. Future plans call for another three to five golf courses. Diablo Grande will be a sister resort to Chateau Elan, the resort in north Georgia where the Gene Sarazen World Open has been played in November of the last two years. Open champions from all over the world are invited to play at The Legends Course, in Braselton, Georgia.

Patterson, California, as I am sure you all must already know, is the self-proclaimed (I think) "Apricot Capital of the World." What do you mean you still do not know where Patterson is? Well, for those of you who still do not know, Patterson is about twenty miles or so south of Tracy, California, and about that far west of Turlock, California. Okay, for those of you who still have no idea where on earth Patterson is, it is a little less than two hours east of San Francisco and about that far south of Sacramento, on Interstate 5. We are about an hour east of Livermore, and south of Stockton. Pull out a map of California, I think we're on it. Patterson is a flat, Central Valley farming town for the most part, with a population of roughly 9,500.

All the problems arise when you get off Interstate 5 at the Patterson exit. The Diablo Grande project is actually about eleven miles west of Patterson, on Oak Flat Road. Oak Flat Road from the Highway 5 underpass to the golf course is about ten miles of twisting and turning, mostly one lane dirt roadway. From about 100 feet above sea level at Interstate 5 to the golf course, the road climbs 1,100 feet through some fairly rough terrain. At 1,100 feet elevation, we have been above the tule fog on all but a few days so far.

On a dry day, Caterpillar 637 scrapers and D-8 dozers, water trucks, and road graders rule the road, and if they are coming your way, you better pull over, and fast! Mountains can be moved, thanks to dozers and dynamite. The road is itself quite a project, not to mention the golf courses. But only on the dry days do we have to watch ourselves on the road. The wet days are a different story.

When I started at Diablo Grande in September, 1995, my first question was "when is the road going to be done?" The project manager chuckled and replied "next spring, if we're lucky!"

"Surely, you must be kid-

ding," I said, "after all, I have to be able to get employees in to do necessary maintenance work all winter. I will need to have equipment, seed, fertilizers, topdressing sand, and other supplies delivered all through the winter. So, come on, really, when will the road be done?"

"No, I'm not kidding," he replied, "and don't call me Shirley." Okay, I'm kidding about 'Shirley' but not at all about the road.

Between December 10, 1995, which was the first rain we had since last spring, and December 23, 1995, I was able to get to work and back exactly four times. That one lane dirt roadway is now a one lane mudway. We got in on Sunday, December 17, after a full week of not being able to get in. Luckily, we were able to mow greens, fairways, and roughs. At that time, we did not have any tees ready for mowing. We were also able to get in on Friday and Saturday, December 22 and 23, and got some mowing and fertilizing done. January was a 'good' month, we missed only three days due to sloppy road conditions.

The golf course itself weathered the rains quite well with very little erosion or other damage. In fact, once we were



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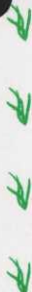
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able to actually get to the course, the maintenance tasks were almost as easy to accomplish as they were before the rains. Only once did we get a mower stuck. Thankfully, only one green had been damaged by wild pigs which come out of the hills at night, and it was only slight damage. Call me if you want to go pig hunting.

But then there are the cows! We had some cattle on ranches surrounding my last course, (Merced Hills, in Merced, California) but only once did any get on to the golf course, and at the time we did not have much grass, so they did not stay long. Diablo Grande was a 33,000 acre cattle ranch, and mostly still is, except where we are actually developing areas. If there is anything I know about cows that I never knew before, it is that they know the color green! At least six times we have had to play cowboys with our carts in order to run them off the course, and on all but one occasion, the same cow and her calf were the culprits. No matter what gate we took them to, they would find their way back to the green grass. Luckily, they do not seem too attracted to the low cut greens, much preferring freshly laid blue/rye sod. The guys who sell Primo can safely say that

Primo does not kill cows. I almost wish it did. We had several acres of sod treated with Primo before it was cut in the field. Seems that it is working great, except that it does not ward off hungry cattle. If you have never had cows on your course, count your blessings. Call me if you want to go cow hunting. Pete Bowman, CGCS and C. Certified Golf Course Superintendent and Cowboy. Cowboy. Time to update my resume!

Back to the road story . . . on Monday, December 18, 1995, we were able to get to work but left early because it started to pour around 11:00 a.m. The contractor building the road called up to the course saying that he was sending his employees home, and that if we wanted to get towed out if we got stuck, we better leave right away. He would wait for our last car out before going home himself. It usually takes about twenty-five minutes to get back down the hill on a dry day. Well, we left right away, and three and a half hours later made it to the freeway after getting stuck, even in a four wheel drive truck, and getting towed out by a Cat D-8 and a chain. Four more days off after that one.

(Continued on Page 6, Col. 1)

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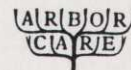
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I Want To Go To Work, But

Have you ever tried to be a telecommuting Golf Course Superintendent? It is impossible. I managed to get a few items ordered over the phone with a few vendors, even though I could not take delivery because the road was too muddy. Can you imagine only being able to wonder what your golf course will look like after some heavy downpours, wondering because you know you cannot get there anyway?

What a strange feeling that is. Think about it for a moment. Most of us can at least get to work to survey the damage after a storm. Even if I cannot do anything about the rain, I at least want to know what my course will look like afterward. I have had what seemed like sleepless nights before in my career, wondering how my Poa annua greens would look the next day after the stifling summer heat in southern California. Sleepless because I would wonder whether my outdated irrigation system would have shut down during the night. But now I lose sleep wondering what my course will look like . . . wondering if I will even be able to get there in the morning.

I want to go to work, but I can't . . . what a feeling. I guess it is not as bad as wanting to go to work but not having a job.

Have you ever heard the saying, "you can't get there from here?" That is how I have felt the last couple of months, and who knows, if this winter is anything like last winter, maybe I'll have that feeling from now until April. I am beginning to think that instead of a company truck, I will need a company helicopter to get to work!

Project update: as of February 1st, we still have two fairways and tees, and one green to seed on The Ranch Course (first 18), with a hoped-for opening in late Spring, 1996. Rough grading has begun on eight holes of The Legends Course (second 18) with several lakes dug already. We hope to open The Legends Course Summer, 1997, and host the Gene Sarazen World Open soon thereafter. The hotel and winery will begin construction Spring, 1996, with homes sites following. Of course, all those dates depend on how bad the rest of this winter is, because we might not be able to get there anyway. What a feeling! ♦

Pete Bowman, CGCS, recently joined the GCSANC. Pete is Immediate Past President of the Sierra Nevada GCSA, and current President of the California GCSA.

And Some Things Do Change

(Continued from page 3)

and operating the irrigation system. Who would have ever thought?

Grass varieties have changed. Seeded bermudagrasses are getting finer textured, Kentucky bluegrasses tolerate slightly lower mowing heights, perennial ryegrasses and bentgrasses more heat tolerant. This is not to mention endophyte enhancement and the possibility of introducing a gene into turf that would make it tolerant to glyphosate applications. Zoysiagrass and buffalograss may in the future hold great potential as low maintenance turfs for roughs and fairways.

Water quality has changed, and mother nature has had little to do with it. Politics and availability in arid climates have placed golf courses in the position to become water recyclers. Effluent, reclaimed or non-potable, no matter what you call it, golf courses are now using it. In the future, whether effluent is used or not, we can expect further restrictions to be placed upon golf courses, like those currently in Arizona. Using low quality water as impacted how greens are managed from day to day. Gone are the days of firm, dry greens, as leaching salts must be

performed regularly. More aerations are also needed in these situations to improve infiltration.

Believe it or not even mother nature, or at least some local climates, have changed. California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) records for the Palm Springs area confirm this. The average humidity during the months of July, August and September has risen approximately 13% during the time span from 1984 to 1994. (Is it global warming or all the water sprayed in the air each night to irrigate the golf courses and landscapes?)

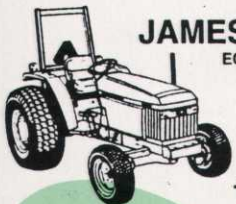
I suppose, the fact that *some things do change* keeps this business interesting. Looking back, however, it is almost frightening that most of these changes have taken place over the past ten to fifteen years. It only makes me wonder, what do we have to look forward to during the next decade? ♦

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Strictly Business

By Bob Costa

Much of what we accomplish in life, both personally and professionally, can be attributed to our attitude. An upbeat optimistic approach to the daily challenges we all face generally results in a positive outcome, or at least provides us with a valuable learning experience that we can grow from. There isn't a more fundamental

ingredient for success, or happiness, than a positive attitude. Conversely, a negative pessimistic attitude often results in failure and frustration and more often than not, we wind up blaming others for what we are unable to achieve.

Think about it for a moment, all the great accomplishments that we witness, hear, or read

about are the result of people who believed that no matter what the odds, they couldn't be stopped.

I have compiled a list of "Can and Can't" do attitudes that illustrate how the simple arrangement of a few words can have such a powerful impact on our lives.

Can't

It will never work
 We never did it before
 It's too complicated
 There's no way it will work
 There's not enough time
 It's a waste of time
 It's a waste of money
 It's good enough
 We're understaffed
 It will never fly
 It's not going to get any better
 It can't be done
 Isn't it time to go home
 I don't have any idea
 It's not my job
 Let somebody else deal with it

Can

We'll give it a try
 We have the opportunity to learn something new
 We can figure it out
 We can make it work
 We can make the time
 Think of the possibilities
 The investment will be worth it
 There's always room for improvement
 We'll have to be more efficient
 We'll never know unless we try
 We'll try one more time
 It'll be a challenge
 Days go quickly around here
 I'll come up with some alternatives
 I'll be glad to take the responsibility
 I'm ready to learn something new

Water Movement In Soils (Cont'd)

If a clay layer exists within a sand, the water will be less restricted in its movement into the clay layer from the overlying sand than in its movement out of this clay layer to the sand under it. Water tables normally do not build up over a silt lens because of the inability of the silt to absorb water but rather because the water movement to the layer beneath it is restricted. As saturation builds up above a sandy layer, eventually the water will move into the sand. When it does, it will move through the sand and into the soil beneath it.

The question is frequently asked — would water move

differently if the sand layer under a loam soil were slightly moistened, that is, moist enough to support plant growth. Again, it has been found that water will not move down through the soil into moist sand any more readily than if the sand layer is dry.

In comparing the rate of water entry and movement through a uniform sandy soil with loam or clay loam soil, water moves into the sandy soil at a faster rate than it does into the clay loam soil because of the difference in pore size. Despite this fact, the net usable water, once the soil is wet, in the clay loam soil is greater than in the sandy loam soil. This means a clay loam soil

should need to be wetted less frequently than a sandy loam soil. Water normally will need to be applied to the clay loam soil at a slower rate for good absorption than to a sandy loam soil.

It is important to understand the relationship of water movement to the movement of fertilizer materials which may be in the soil. Fertilizer materials applied to the soil will not necessarily move uniformly down through the soil but will be carried in several directions with the moving water. Therefore, in areas where two wetting fronts come together, as when

(Conclusion on back page)

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