



# A Walk Down Technology Lane

*This month, I'd like to talk about technology: what technology has meant to me throughout my 19 years as a superintendent at several golf facilities. My goal is not to cover everything pertaining to technology in our industry, but to relate my experiences in such a way that you, too, will reflect on what technology has meant over the years in your own career.*

*Some would argue that they preferred the simplicity of their early careers, with fewer gadgets; I would include myself in that crowd when the computer crashes. However, I have also adapted to the use of e-mails, cell phones and computer programs to free up and better manage time.*

My first position as superintendent in 1987 seemed to utilize some technology, but this was a far cry from what I use today. I did not have a computer, the irrigation system was manual (but we could advertise watered fairways) and the pump station needed to be primed each evening; I had no cell phone or PDA, but I kept a daily log in a logbook. However, the triplex mowers were improved enough to provide an excellent, smooth cut on greens. Self-contained fairways mowers allowed for striping the fairways (many courses used this fact in their advertising), and new fungicide products came to the market that could give one month's control of dollar spot. And in the next few years, advances in lightweight fairway mowing and vast improvements in watering facilitated many golf courses' changeover to bentgrass fairways. (Those advertising golf courses also jumped on the bentgrass fairways as an advantage for enticing golfers.)

I assumed my second position in 1992 and for me, technology advanced over the next several years. My first computer came with a new irrigation system. Control over watering improved with a double-row system versus a single-row. We also added heads in dry areas on green and bunker banks. The fairways had been converted to bentgrass and we started mowing those greens by hand again. In addition, now that the playing surfaces were more playable than ever before imaginable, we improved the playability of the hazards by replacing the sand and improving drainage in the bunkers. I kept records on the computer and eventually gave up on the daily log due to redundancy.

Following my last move in 2001, technology and my use of it took another leap forward. Once again the irrigation system saw improvements, but this time three rows proved better than two. Greens need heads that throw only at the green, and some only at the banks, and some steep slopes get mini-spray heads. We no longer have irrigation heads on the tees; they are at the perimeter. All landscape beds also have irrigation. We now seem to have ultimate control over watering, allowing us to actually keep a drier course that is more conducive to healthy plants and firm, fast surfaces. (Advertisements for golf courses now proclaim that their fees and conditions are the best bang for the buck.)

Some would argue that they preferred the simplicity of their early careers, with fewer gadgets; I would include myself in that crowd when the computer crashes. However, I have also adapted to the use of e-mails, cell phones and computer programs to free up and better manage time. Yes, I do feel I have more control over my time now, both at the golf course and while away from the course. I can access the e-mails whenever I want, while at work and while at home. The cell phone works everywhere I go, and I can choose to answer and retrieve messages when I want to. In a given busy day at work, I spend

*(continued on page 30)*

great winter-ending opportunity to get the juices flowing for the coming season. "Bull Sheet" will keep you posted on future symposia, and rates the inaugural event a 10.



most of my time communicating verbally, in person, with the crew, staff and members. This daily presence with the crew has elevated worthiness and productivity. The golf staff and clubhouse staff are always on the same page. Furthermore, I can rest assured that the members feel comfortable in communicating their needs to me with respect to playing conditions and the property. Plus, once I leave the

course, my staff is only a cell phone call away and I can make changes to the irrigation settings from my home computer. In many ways, technology has made my life easier.

I'm sure new devices will pop up in the near future and I will be the first to take a look at and utilize them—but only if they will make my life easier.



### CLASSIFIEDS

#### Positions Available:

Due to Tony Bisbee's departure, **Bob Lively** is looking to fill two assistant superintendents' positions at Flossmoor Country Club. Both positions are full-time, and interested parties should contact Bob at 708-798-4700, ext. 241 or at 708-906-8817.

#### Equipment Wanted:

Jacobsen 30-inch fairway mowers and frames in any condition. Please call Ron at 815-468-3438.

#### Equipment for Sale:

Bunton Model G813 walking greens mower in excellent condition. This mower was privately owned and was used to mow a personal putting green. It has been meticulously maintained, and the owner will entertain all offers. Call John Beckway at 847-683-0541 or 847-791-6446.

Inverness Country Club has a Jacobsen TriKing 1900D in excellent condition for sale or trade—\$4,500 cash or equivalent. Please call Mike at 847-358-7030 or e-mail questions to MagicGrKpg@aol.com.

- 1988 Toro Greens Aerator: Model 09110, good condition—\$950.
- 1992 EZGO GXT804 with steel cage for range use, needs engine—\$450.
- 1993 Toro Tri-Rollers for triplex, good condition—\$400.
- 1982 Ryan GreensAire II with quadratine coring heads and newer short block—\$350.
- Toro VertiCut units for triplex, age unknown, good condition—\$150.
- (20) Toro 750 complete sprinklers—\$20 each.
- 1982 Turfco Meter Matic self-propelled top-dresser—still runs—almost free!
- 1968 Rogers Model 40 blower for 3-point hitch, well-rested—almost free!

Call Kurt or Mike at Exmoor C.C. at 847-433-1177.

Timber Trails C.C. still has the following items for sale:

- Jacobsen Greens King V diesel with groomers, very good condition.
  - Jacobsen Greens King VI diesel.
  - Jacobsen TriKing 1900D, very good condition.
  - Jacobsen LF-128, very good condition.
  - Jacobsen GK IV heavy blades.
  - Myer 300-gallon 25 gpm sprayer.
  - TI International reel/bedknife grinder.
  - (2) LF-100s, new reels/bedknives.
- Call Don at 708-372-4482.

The Indian Hill Club offers the following historically significant equipment at crazy low prices—they're practically GIVING the stuff away:

- 10-year-old Club Car Carry All 2—best offer.
- 12-year-old Toro Hydroject, use for parts or large boat anchor—best offer.
- AgriMetal 3-point hitch blower, almost never used, come see it and make your offer.
- Very old Ryan Greens Aire, free with any equipment purchase while supplies last.
- Sort-of-old Jacobsen 3-point hitch blower—best offer.
- TIP Spiker-Seeder, almost new, purchased just before bensusmec application—best offer.
- John Deere 2653, 2,450 hours, make an offer after seeing this beauty!

Call Dave at 847-528-6656 to schedule an appointment and prepare to be wowed. No calls before 8 a.m. please.

Flossmoor C.C. has four complete sets of blue, white, red and gold artificial pine-log tee markers for sale. They are in very good condition and ready to be used. We have decided to use a different style, and would like to find a home for these where they'll actually get used. Contact Bob Lively at 708-798-4700, ext. 241 or 708-906-8817.