



Palm Beach Trade Winds



By Mike Bailey
The Falls Country Club

Need Help? Call The Doctor!

How often have you made a statement about something and then had your superiors express their doubt about your competency on the subject? Just because we are golf course superintendents we are not automatically to be considered experts in every area of golf course management, but we are responsible for knowing where to get the expert to advise us on the best possible way to solve any problems in our area of management. Because we are second guessed by so many armchair-quarterbacks it often may appear as if "everyone" doubts our management practices!

Sometimes it seems that the only way for us to build our credibility is to get that second opinion. My attitude has been that when I need help to confirm my programs I call for help — "I call the doctor". Namely this person would be a specialist within a specific field and one who is generally considered to be an expert. This person consults with me to determine if I am correct or incorrect in my statements. Yes, I do believe that consultants are a must within our industry where the fine line of science can be so greatly altered from day to day.

During my seven years as the golf course superintendent at Boca Greens Country Club I was unfortunate to experience several occurrences during my tenure that could easily have persuaded me to want to pursue another career. If it had not been for certain consultants, who I also regard as my friends, I would have moved on. It was my personal desire and choice to be able to help build a golf course, grow it in, maintain it for a developer, convert it to the membership and do a good enough all around job to retain the position of superintendent after the conversion, and to ultimately have a very stable private country club, after all was said and done.

I must thank at least the following specialists within their own field who I called upon to help:

Joseph Lee: The golf course architect who saw to it that the golf course is built in the proper fashion, assuring the developer of this fact.

Vernon Lowell & Bill Roach: Consultants hired by the developer (Development Corporation of America) to advise on the formation of the club, the by-laws and the general designs of such.

Dr. Max Brown: Hired by the membership to help advise on the conversion of the club. His review of the golf course, examination of general maintenance practices, equipment and shop reviews put the members at ease in regards to exactly what type of club they were purchasing. Dr. Brown was also involved with various on-going problems throughout the years such as the herbicidal contamination of the lakewaters, (which will be discussed later).

Sam Kruger: A hired consultant by Development Corporation of America during the early stages of construction and irrigation installation to oversee the time frame for scheduling. This put the developer at ease to realize that all was going well and on line.

Mr. Lynn Griffith & A&L Laboratories: Were involved for nearly the entire duration in regards to laboratory testing. Mr. Griffith advised on issues concerning nutritional levels, diseases, various cultural practices and most importantly, recognizing, identifying and suggesting remedies for excessive herbicidal contaminations found within our lake water supply.

Mr. Tom Stone & Brookside Laboratories: Were also involved with the review of lake water contamination.

Mr. Bill Irey & Dupont Chemical Company: Were valuable in regards to analyzing the generic chemicals associated with the vaxious that were found within the lake water supply.

EPA (Environmental Protection Agency): Handled the investigation of chemicals found within the lake water supply. This valuable data concluded that over \$40,000. worth of trees had died because of the misuse of herbicidal chemicals, which showed that the golf course superintendent was innocent of any such misuse.

Mr. Scott Wanzor & The Monsanto Chemical Company: Addressed the project managers previous speculation, that trees were dying because the golf course superintendent was incorrectly applying Round-Up at the base of trees. Ironically, various trees were dying because of another source, not because of the Round-Up applications.

Mr. Todd Himelburger: Was instrumental in advising and setting up an aquatic spray program which allowed
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the country club to set up their own spraying program with my aquatic license.

Mr. Elray Timmer of Florida Aquatics: Was able to speculate on various chemicals and their usages in regards to the aquatic program.

Mr. Mike Bodle, South Florida Water Management District: Was beneficial in the setting up of aquatic spraying permits, chemical usage and reports filed to the bureau.

Mr. Joe Konwenski: A turf consultant reviewed contaminations found within the greens.

Mr. Dubble of Texas A&M: A turf breeder specialist, was employed for the examination and the keying out of various speculated contaminations that were scientifically concluded to be found within the greens, which eliminated the previous accusations that the golf course superintendent was responsible because of planting errors.

Dr. Phillip Bussey of IFAS: A turf breeder who reviewed the problems of contaminations found within the greens, an on going review for the past two years has concluded the new greens to have been replanted with pure material, showing no signs of contaminations, they still look good.

Dr. G.C. Horn: Was hired to review the greens and the contamination problems because of his vast experience and university work in this area.

Mr. Ralph White: Was also instrumental in the evaluation of greens material and gave suggestions for curing the problems along with **Dr. Tim Boyer.**

Dr. Jim Reinert: Was instrumental in the extensive research work that has been performed on the property for the eradication of mole crickets.

Dr. Bill Howard & Jim Castner: Have performed various biological control projects for mole cricket control with work still on going.

Dr. Max Scowyers of Mobay Chemical Company: Has performed many experimental products along with chemical performance tests that have proved to be instrumental in the labeling of Nematicure 3 for turf along with analyzing the synergistic effects of Oftanol combinations with Nematicure.

Mr. Mike Cook: Has performed various chemical tests also, in regards to mole cricket control.

USGA, United States Golf Association: Under the representation of **Mr. Bud White, Steve Batten and John Foy** has been most beneficial in communicating with the membership in regards to golf course conditions, maintenance practices, cultural practices, reviewing of the greens contamination, suggestions for projects and the examination of the golf course in regards to the membership conversion take over from the previously developer owned country club.

Most importantly, but not last, has been the fellow golf course superintendents within the industry who have so graciously given their time to help advise and consult with

me their valuable advice so I could then put it all into the proper perspective. These are the people who genuinely understand my my problems and give me the moral support that is so necessary. It is a sad fact that the golf course superintendent generally does not command the respect from the golfing public for being the true specialist that he is. But then we must always be aware that "the armchair quarterbacks" will be out there on your course telling you exactly what you did wrong yesterday. My brother David has probably advised me the best, "remember you do not own the deed to the land, so therefore do only what is best for you and the course - do not take complaints as personal comments."

A fellow superintendent brought to my attention a fact of the business world that I guess I really never had thought about before. Large corporations hire teams of consultants to advise the heads of companys on nearly every facet of the business. Literally thousands upon thousands of dollars are spent in acquiring second opinions. Often a second and third team of consultants are hired to confirm the facts given by the first. A chairman of the board never wants to make a wrong decision. They need facts to fall back on if something goes wrong. That is simply good sound business. So why should we be so offended if a consultant comes in to confirm your thoughts and projects. I have found enough good specialists within our industry, who are truly doctors, so when I have a problem, I never hesitate to give them a call. They have come through for me time and time again and I will continue to need their advice until the day I retire. I believe anyone who is qualified to give a second opinion regarding the first individuals opinion is in essence a consultant. In other words, when I need help — I call the doctor. ■

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