

# Central Florida Crowfoots



By: Joel D. Jackson  
Lake Buena Vista Club



## SQUEEZE THAT DOLLAR Till The Eagle Screams

During the buffet lunch at our September meeting of the Central Florida Chapter at Errol Estate Country Club, I took pen and pad in hand and stalked the buffet line like a hungry snook moving in on a nervous school of mullet. Well, I was *hungry* for some original ideas for this article, and I had my fellow superintendents somewhat cornered in the slow moving line. I made eight successful strikes before the school, I mean members, scattered for their tables and tee times. After being productive, here are the ramblings and pearls of wisdom from the "Errol Estate Eight" as I call them. Alphabetically:

**Karl Anken, Tuscawilla Country Club** — "We are trying to cut back on the amount of fertilizer we use. It is a challenge to educate the golfing public that "LUSH GREEN" is not necessarily a healthy green for grooming and conditioning."

**Jim Ellison, Bay Hill Club** — "We have 152 bunkers on the course and it was taking two men 3-3 1/2 days per week to edge and clean up the traps. We are now trying one man three days a week with a weedeater to keep them trimmed lightly without excessive trimmings to clean up and with out the harsh, sheared look around the edges. Another problem we have had was the maintainence of the cart path edges. We have reduced a formerly 60-70 hour per month task to just 4 hours per month by utilizing a 26 gallon tank mixed with Round-up and mounted on a golf cart. The driver edges the path chemically with a fixed nozzle by driving slowly. It has worked great so far this summer."

**Brad Fellrath, Sweetwater Club** — "I am using flexible scheduling to eliminate the over-time on weekends. We also have frequent meetings to stress productivity and set goals. We have each operator service his equipment at the end of the day to save the mechanic some time. We utilize R & R and other generic parts whenever feasible. I like to "brainstorm" with other superintendents to get

more ideas."

**Charles Garrett, Florida Irrigation** — "People should consider installing computer controlled irrigation systems for more efficient use of water and electricity to save on utility bills and conserve water. Of course there is also the side benefit of record keeping with the computers."

**Dick Medford, Daytona Beach Golf & Country Club** — "We have eliminated our rough cut. This speeds up play which means more rounds of golf, and it frees up a mower or eliminates it. We schedule our mechanics to start before the crew to check out the equipment to avoid wasted time in the morning due to balky equipment. The second mechanic ends his shift after the crew leaves to service and/or repair equipment for the next day. The mechanics also service all seasonal equipment in advance of renovations to minimize down time at this critical time when the course is closed. We plan 10 hours of work for an 8 hour day so that the crew will always have something to do and won't be wasting time finding something else to do when a task is done. All of our purchasing is done by competitive bidding between vendors."

**Joe Ondo, Winter Pines Golf Club** — "I like to purchase versatile pieces of equipment that can perform more than one task by using quick height adjustment. We also share seasonal equipment with neighboring courses during renovation. We are now on an effluent system with the city of Winter Park and this will help on utility costs."

**Dave Wilder, Wedgefield Country Club** — "My job is to use all the chemicals and fertilizers as efficiently as possible. I'm keen on calibration."

**Steve Wright, Suntree Contry Club** — "We are trying  
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part-time labor on the weekends to eliminate the overtime, and during the winter we work half days on Fridays to cover half days on Saturdays and Sundays. Like most courses we use a competitive bidding purchasing method for bulk consummable supplies. We also installed an "Off Peak" meter on our irrigation system to water during the least expensive of electrical use. The initial cost was paid back within months and we saved at least 10% off of our annual bill. However, during the prolonged drought, we were penalized when we had to pump during "Peak" hours. It is another tool to consider."

As you can see there is no one, magic formula out there to make it fast and cheap. At each level of maintainence demanded by the club, there will be subtle ways to maximize efficiency and minimize waste. That's our challenge, to continually find those ways, through experimentation and education, that help to stretch that dollar with the screaming eagle. There is a quotation from Walt Disney that is used throughout our corporate literature that goes something like this ". . .you can design and build the greatest attractions in the world, but it takes people to make it work. . ."

No matter what gimmicks, products, or equipment we try to employ to save or stretch dollars, it will be the people who work with you that will do the most to affect costs and productivity. In order to make those people effective and productive, you must EDUCATE, MOTIVATE, AND COMPENSATE them in a manner that generates pride and self esteem in their work and themselves and that is one of the greatest tasks that faces any superintendent. ■

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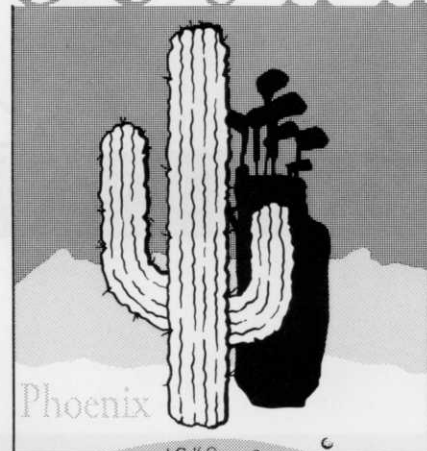
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