

*The brand new clubhouse at Palm Beach Country Club, set off with tall, majestic Malayan palms, blends right in with its environment, some of which had been planted 30 years previously.*

# Bet you never thought you'd have to build one of these!

*Most superintendents tend to shy away from clubhouse construction projects, but the experience can be rewarding*

**BY MIKE BAILEY**

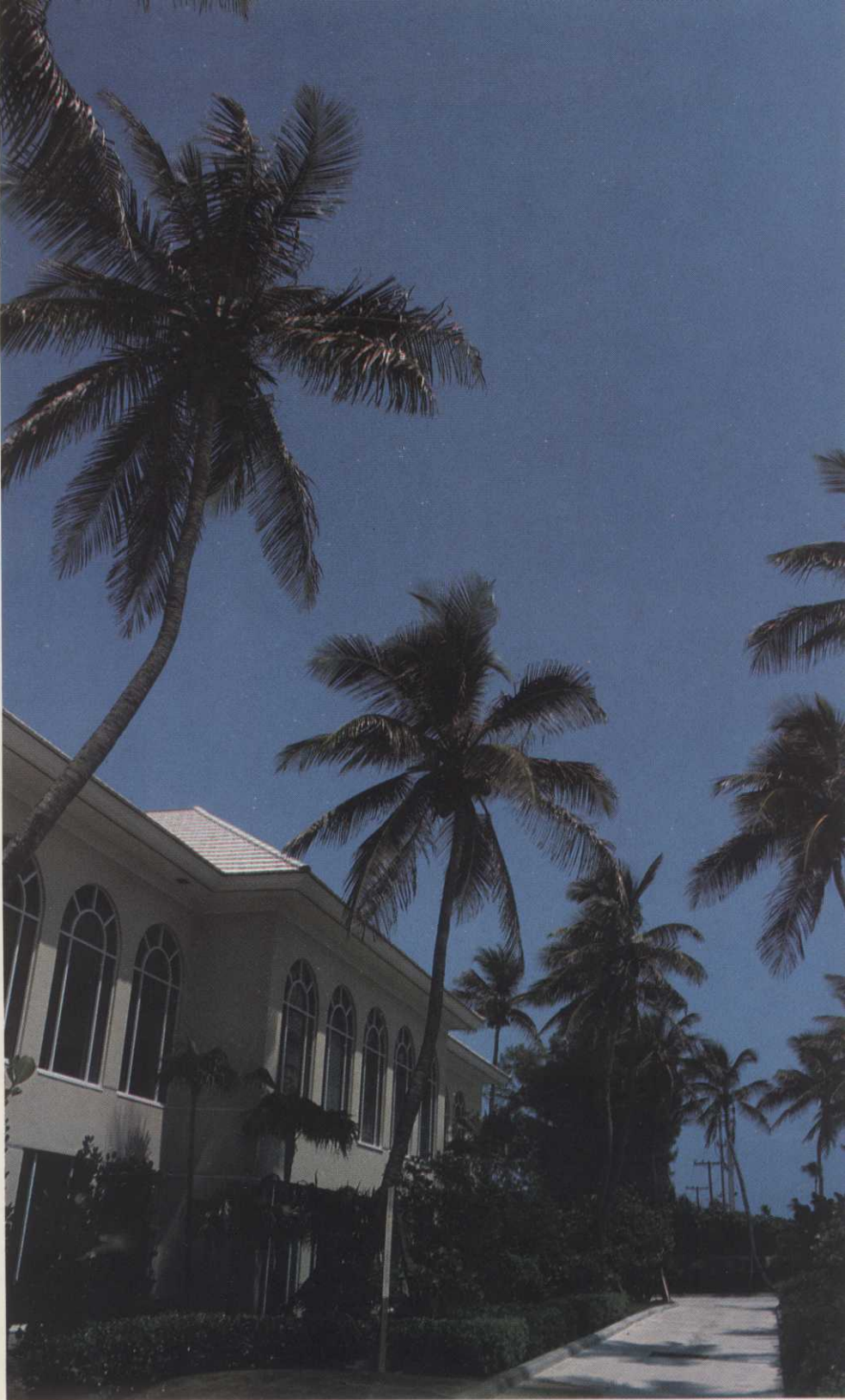
LAKE WORTH — Have you ever been involved with the construction of a clubhouse? It's the type of experience most superintendents try to avoid, particularly if they've been through it once.

But it can be a rewarding experience, as members of the Palm Beach chapter discovered this past June when four panelists discussed their clubhouse-construction experiences as part of the education program for our monthly meeting. The topic

was especially appropriate since we were meeting in the brand-new clubhouse at my club, The Falls CC.

My topic was constructing a new clubhouse at a new site. Joining me on the panel

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**It was relatively easy to build a two-story, 45,000-square-foot building overlooking a par-five which circles around a 15-acre lake with an island green and waterfall in the background and make it look as if it had always been there. All it took was \$7 million**

*(From page 57)*

were Paul Crawford, Palm Beach CC, demolition of old building and construction of new clubhouse; Dave Bailey, CGCS, High Ridge CC, complete renovation of old clubhouse; Dan Jones, CGCS, modification of an existing structure.

### Scope of the projects

**The Falls:** Starting with a clean slate made it relatively easy to build a two-story, 45,000-square-foot structure overlooking a par-five circling around a 15-acre lake with an island par-three and waterfall in the background... and make it look as if it had always belonged there. All it took was \$7 million.

**Palm Beach:** Because they bulldozed a 30-year-old structure and put a new building on the same site, the major concern was to blend the building to its environment. Using a temporary pro shop over the summer created some inconveniences, but no

major problems.

**High Ridge:** The structure has been gutted and is still being renovated. When completed, the members will have a completely new clubhouse for about \$6 million.

**Banyan GC:** Expanding or modifying a clubhouse presents a unique set of problems which can be every bit as vexing as those presented by more ambitious projects.

### Irrigation and Landscape Design

**The Falls:** Art Helm, assistant superintendent, explained how he and I worked with Ken Kedinato, the Toro irrigation architect from the very beginning — two years before construction began. The clubhouse's landscape irrigation system was planned into the golf course system, complete with the proper size stub outs, satellite clocks, tubes and wires.

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## Before and after

*Photos at right were taken from identical spot on the seventh tee at The Falls CC. In the top photo, a surveyor sets the grade stakes with the clubhouse under construction in the background.*

*In the bottom photo, the tee is grown in, the clubhouse is finished and the landscaping is well on its way to being established.*

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FGCSA/MIKE BAILEY

*(From page 59)*

Landscaping remained consistent with golf course architect Joe Lee's tropical palm tree theme from the waterfall up to the "canary islands" at the front door.

**Palm Beach:** Since the clubhouse site was surrounded by majestic, mature landscaping, big stuff had to be brought in. Jamaican tall palms were trucked in from other portions of the golf course and planted by a crane. The keys were using plants that can withstand salt spray and placing them in natural settings so they blended with the rest of the landscape.

**High Ridge:** All too often, big dollars are spent on the construction of buildings,

leaving the landscaping as an afterthought. Too often, the landscaping becomes a rushed job. David is preparing himself for that eventuality.

**Banyan:** Glenda Hall, the full-time horticulturist on Dan's staff (and she has an assistant!) attended a seminar on design and use of materials at Walt Disney World before starting the project. She also obtained swatches of cloth and other materials being used by the interior decorators so she could blend the interior with the exterior view.

The Banyan staff also handled the design and installation of the irrigation sys-

tem.

### Unique Problems

**The Falls:** Our crew was involved with the contractors much more than I had expected. We helped locate lines, grade elevations, get them water, and store materials like marble tile in the center of the maintenance complex. Our task was to serve the members' needs. It's difficult not to get used in the process.

**Palm Beach:** Because of the restriction on working hours within the Town of Palm Beach, the problems were magnified. Contractors were running into each other

— and Paul's crew — asking for help while Paul was in the midst of a major renovation project on the golf course.

The 10th tee had to be relocated because of a change in the clubhouse. Because the construction had fallen three months behind schedule, the landscaping was installed during the winter salt spray.

**High Ridge:** Dave got caught in a jurisdictional dispute between permitting authorities.

City building inspectors shut down renovation of the 10th tee, claiming the work was tied into the clubhouse permit. They also halted dredging of a nearby lake.

It took weeks before officials from the South Florida Water Management District and the Lake Worth Drainage District could convince city officials that they had no jurisdiction over the lakes.

**Banyan:** To help contain trash and control traffic, Dan and Glenda put up a fence around the construction area and enforced the traffic patterns very strictly.

### What would you do differently?

**The Falls:** We took on the responsibility of irrigation installation, earthwork and landscape installation. Many of our workers exceeded 70 hours a week for more than two months and I ended up in the hospital over the holidays. I'm not sure I'd do that again.

I remember the morning we were applying Nematicure to the greens only to find that the electricity for the irrigation pumphouse had been shut off manually the night before because the finish contractor said his cement was getting wet and he couldn't find us.

Yeah. . . we left at a quarter 'til six — earlier than usual — and he couldn't find us during the day!

**Palm Beach:** Paul was in the process of wrapping up the finish cement work with a local paving contractor when an inspector casually asked if he had had a nuclear

density test performed on the cement.

It took some time to convince the inspector that the cement was for cart paths, not walls of the building.

**Banyan:** A few weeks before expansion was to begin, the members voted to delay the project for a year. "Dan, can you put back all those plants you ripped out, replace the irrigation system and throw down some seed that'll get us by until next year?"

**High Ridge:** Last year, Dave installed a practice green what he thought was far enough from the construction. Now the green just skirts the latest expansion and he may be redesigning the redesigned practice green.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Mike Bailey, superintendent of The Falls CC, Lake Worth, is editor of The Green Sheet, the FGCSA bimonthly newsletter, and a member of the FGCSA Publications Committee. He is active in the Palm Beach chapter.

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