

# 1993 FTGA Show

Tampa, Sept. 25-27





# FGCSA welcomes turf world to Palm Beach



*The Breakers Hotel and Golf Course was the site of the week-long conference.*

## ***400 attend International Turfgrass Research Conference; two Floridians named to leadership positions***

BY DR. GEORGE SNYDER

*IFAS*

*Fort Lauderdale Research Center*

For the first time ever, Florida hosted the International Turfgrass Research Conference, which was held at the Breakers Resort in Palm Beach, July 18-24. This seventh international conference, sponsored by the International Turfgrass Society, had been held in the USA only once before. Other conference sites have been in England, Germany, France, Canada, and Japan.

Four hundred turfgrass scientists and practitioners representing 24 countries were in attendance for this week-long event. Over 150 papers dealing with all phases of turfgrass production and maintenance were presented. Of particular interest were discussions of pesticide and nutrient fate, quantification of surface characteristics of sports fields, and a critical review of xeriscaping.

In addition to the presentation of scientific papers, a mid-week tour was held to acquaint the participants with turfgrass in south Florida. Visits were made to golf courses, athletic fields, equestrian

facilities, and to the Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center. A pre-conference tour visited the research facilities in Gainesville. Fifty-eight spouses participated in a week-long program of activities ranging from a croquet tournament to a tour of south Florida tropical gardens. Social events, which provided time for the participants to get to know each other on an informal basis, included a welcoming dinner, a beach party, and a banquet.

The Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association provided a lot of support for the conference. To help promote the event, the FGCSA assisted with a booth at the last two Golf Course Superintendents Association of America expositions. The FGCSA took the lead in soliciting golf superintendents in Palm Beach, Broward, and Dade counties who provided gratis rounds of golf for ITRC participants. FGCSA Executive Secretary Marie Roberts assisted with the ITRC registration. And several Palm Beach county courses hosted visits as part of two of the conference mid-week tours.

Although the ITRC moves on to an-

other country, and probably won't be back in the USA for many years, several Floridians will continue to play key roles in the International Turfgrass Society. At the 1993 conference, Dr. John Cisar, turfgrass water specialist at the Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center, was elected to the ITS board of directors. Dr. George Snyder, professor of soil and water science at the Everglades Research and Education Center, was appointed ITS treasurer for the next four years. Anyone interested in ITS membership should contact Dr. Snyder. The next ITRC is being hosted in 1997 by Australia and New Zealand. It's not too early to be making plans to attend!

**NOTE:** *All of the papers presented at the conference are included in the 1021-page International Turfgrass Society Research Journal, Volume 7, which is available for \$65.00 from Dr. R.E. Schmidt, VPI & SU, Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0404 (Tel. 703-231-9796). Dr. George H. Snyder has some copies available locally (Tel. 407-996-3062).*

**Florida GCSA  
Distinguished  
Service Award**

- 1985 *William Wagner*
- 1986 *Tim Hiers*
- 1987 *Dan Jones, CGCS*
- 1988 *Mark Jarrell, CGCS*
- 1989 *Tom Burrows, CGCS*
- 1990 *Kevin Downing, CGCS*
- 1991 *Cecil Johnston, CGCS*
- 1992 *Joel Jackson, CGCS*
- 1993 *Fred Klauk*

# Fred Klauk honored for distinguished service to profession

BY SCOTT BELL, CGCS

**T**his past August at the 1993 Crowfoot, Fred Klauk received the Florida Golf Course Superintendent's Association Distinguished Service Award.

The receipt of that award topped a 20-year career that started in the sand bunkers at Palm Beach's Lost Tree and that is presently at the famous Tournament Players' Club at Sawgrass. Fred received this award not so much for the time that he has spent working directly with the Association but rather for the time that he has spent "behind the scenes," enhancing the view and the role of the golf course manager in major golf events, within his own



*Fred Klauk, superintendent of the TPC at Sawgrass, posed for this 1990 Florida Green photo by high school buddy Daniel Zelazek.*

PGA Tour and with the media that covers the golf world.

Fred has also given back to the business ten golf course managers, nine assistants, one PGA Tour agronomist and one tournament director. Some of these men started working for Fred as bunker rakers during the Honda Classic or the Player's Championship. Some were 15 year-old kids that played on local golf teams and worked the tournament not so much for the pay but for the experience of witnessing first hand the operation of a professional golf tournament. Through Fred's guidance these kids have worked part-time, summers, on the job training and after college until they have been hired as golf course managers or assistants.

Fred grew up in North Palm Beach where he and his brother Glen played golf for Riviera Beach High. One day Fred went by the Lost Tree Club where he met the golf course manager Lou Oxnevad. Fred applied for a laborer job and Lou told him to report the next day.

Fred spent the summer raking sand, digging holes and mowing grass as well as playing golf. Fred realized that he loved working on the golf course and he decided that he wanted to be a golf course manager. Fred applied to the University of Florida where he was accepted into Professor G.C. Horn's golf turf program.

While in college Fred tried to make the Florida Golf Team however, as good a golfer as Fred is, he could not break into

the starting five which happened to include guys named Koch, Bean, and three other All-Americans.

Fred met his wife Peggy while in Gainesville. They were married in 1972 after Fred finished school.

After Fred completed his schooling he took the assistant's job at Johns Island Club in Vero Beach, where he worked with Pete Dye during the construction of the North course. Fred managed the North Course while Charlie Jarrell managed the South.

While working at Johns Island, Fred heard of a job opening in Boynton Beach at a club called Pine Tree. Fred sent off a resume and weeks later he received a call to meet some gentlemen from Pine Tree. Fred Klauk was a kid in his early 20s when he walked into the interview.

The man doing much of the interviewing was a guy named Sam Snead.

In spite of the intimidating presence of the golfing legend interviewing him, Fred got the job. He inherited a golf course overrun with goosegrass and crowfoot. To make matters worse, the course was not the hardy Tifway 419 that so many of us are used to, but mostly Or-

mond bermudagrass.

The golf course irrigation system was an old manual system that Fred had to replace with an automatic system. He did all of this work "in House." Fred developed a plan to get rid of the tremendous weed population while at the same time keeping the turf healthy.

While at Pine Tree, Fred developed a technique for overseeding with bentgrass that he still uses today, that has produced beautiful greens that won him praise at Pine Tree and on the PGA Tour. Pine Tree was voted into the *Golf Digest* top 100 courses. While at Pine Tree, Fred served on the Palm Beach GCSA Board as director and as secretary/treasurer.

Fred also established his reputation as one of our association's best golfers. In 1981 and 1982, the Florida team won the GCSAA Golf Tournament with Fred on the team. Since then Fred has represented Florida at the GCSAA many times.

After eight years at Pine Tree, Fred moved to The Tournament Players Club at Eagle Trace. When Fred joined the staff, he came in just as the course was grown in. Lee Bladen, who at the time worked for Westinghouse Development,

had grown in the course and was leaving for Naples to build Pelican's Nest.

Fred took over and prepared the course for the 1984 Honda Classic. Eagle Trace became the first course to go from dirt to a televised tournament in one year. Many people's hard work paid off and the tournament was a success.

During his first year at Eagle Trace, Fred spent a lot of time educating his staff and encouraging them to seek high goals. He stressed that hard work and education were the keys to success in the golf business. He challenged staff members to go to night school for turf classes and he stressed the importance of the superintendent's associations.

The TPC Network was in its infancy at that time and Fred stressed the importance of the golf course manager's role in a company that was run by golf professionals.

During Fred's first televised tournament, I can remember him climbing the tower at the 18th green to talk to the NBC announcers at the time, Lee Trevino and Vin Scully. He wanted to make sure that they understood how much work was involved in putting a course together and



*Working with Fred Klauk, right, is the equivalent of a college education, say many of the golf course managers and assistant managers who have trained under him in one capacity or another.*

he wanted them to understand how important the golf maintenance staff is in the operation of the club or the tournament.

Fred made himself available to any media person who would listen, not to blow his own horn but to stress the importance of the golf course manager. Fred is probably responsible for getting the golf course manager's name announced during most televised tournaments. Eagle Trace was voted into Golf Digest's top 100 courses.

Fred felt that the business had been good to him and he loved the game so he tried to "give back" by helping others. Fred had a problem during the Honda Classic.

Although Eagle Trace has only 36 bunkers, many of them are quite large, sometimes running the length of a fairway. The waste areas were acres in size.

Fred made a call to the golf coach at Coral Springs High School and he recruited many of the members of the golf team to rake traps during the tournament. This pool of labor became a source of weekend helpers, summer workers, and part timers.

At least four kids worked the Honda Classic as teens only to keep coming back during the summers or on weekends. These guys then went on to college for turf management and now they are assistants working throughout the country.

Out of the original part-time staff that worked the first Honda Classic at Eagle Trace, three are now assistants and one — Tom Vlach — is the golf course manager at Ekana Golf and Country Club in Oviedo. Out of the original full-time staff from the first Honda Classic, four are now golf course managers and two others are assistants. Two others had been Fred's assistants at Eagle Trace but they changed careers.

In 1986 Fred was transferred to Ponte Vedra, the home of the PGA Tour.

For the first couple of years Fred battled bentgrass greens all summer long until the Commissioner and the Policy Board allowed him to convert the greens back to Tifdwarf in 1988. Because of Fred's involvement in the "Player's Course" and the fact that the "Fifth Major" is held on it, Fred has gotten to know many of the

## THE FRED CONNECTION

*Superintendents who have worked for Fred Klauk*

**Steve Ciardullo**

*Mountain Lake, Lake Wales*

**Ron Moore**

*Hunter's Ridge, Naples*

**James Leiseberg**

*Pelican's Nest, Naples*

**Scott Bell**

*Bent Pine, Vero Beach*

**Ron Wright**

*LaGorce, Miami Beach*

**Gene Baldwin**

*Hidden Hills, Jacksonville*

**Tom Vlach**

*Ekana Golf & CC, Oviedo*

**Tim Webb**

*Fountainbleau CC, Miami Beach*

**Scott Jamros**

*Turtle Creek, Rockledge*

**Bob Clarkson**

*LaCosta Golf & CC, Carlsbad, Calif.*

**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS**

**Bill Tully**

*LaGorce, Miami Beach*

**Dan Tully**

*Hinsdale CC, Chicago, IL*

**Tom Tully**

*Stonebridge CC, Aurora, IL*

**Roger Moore**

*Hunter's Ridge, Naples*

**Ed Fagnan**

*Kelly Green, Fort Myers*

**Greg Williams**

*Canterwood CC, Gig Harbor, Wash.*

**Jay Reister**

*Oak Bridge, Sawgrass*

**Brian Moore**

*Ravines, Jacksonville*

**Rip Phillips**

*Hidden Hills, Jacksonville*

**OTHERS**

**Jeff Haley**

*PGA Tour Agronomist, Ponte Vedra*

**Brett Shelton**

*Tournament Director, Birmingham, AL*

players. He speaks to them when they are playing the course.

As with any job, he fields ideas and suggestions from the golfers. The difference with Fred's job is that the golfers are some of the world's best or the golfer's name might be Beman or Dye. Fred's ability to provide such fine tournament conditions year after year, and his relations with the Tour Players has won him respect from the PGA Tour Staff, the players, and the Commissioner.

Our association is very fortunate to have one of our best in that position. The more that the players on tour know about the golf course manager's role the better. When they are playing our courses, or designing new courses, if the Tour player knows the importance of a good superintendent, the more likely that he will acknowledge us. Commissioner Beman certainly respects Fred. When the Commissioner has an idea about the course,

he calls Fred for his input. When Fred has an idea, he calls the Commissioner.

In 1990, Florida was recovering from the record cold temperatures during Christmas week. The stadium course was still getting its usual heavy play and Fred had expressed to me during the GCSAA conference that he was uncomfortable with the condition of his course.

More cool, rainy weather followed and by late March when the tournament rolled around, a couple of the greens were not perfect as the players expect and a number of them complained to the press.

As it usually happens, the press and the players overreacted and reports were coming out that the course was not in good shape. Greg Norman and Curtis Strange were highly critical and they voiced their complaints to the press who broadcast the story all over the world.

All of us have had complaints about our courses from time to time. How many

of us have had Greg and Curtis and the national golf media criticize our courses? Fred endured it.

During Saturday of the event the course had sustained 2 inches of rain and the tournament was halted with many groups still on the course. Fred was asked by NBC to appear on the air with Bob Costas to discuss the course conditions. Costas's questioning was not the sugar-coated variety reserved for presidential briefings in the Rose Garden.

Costas asked hard questions about the condition of the course and the policies of the Tour. Nothing like answering policy questions about your bosses on national television.

Fred represented the PGA Tour and golf course superintendents very well presenting a professional image and maintaining his cool under fire.

As if the interview were not enough, Fred had his course to deal with as well. He had 60 staff members to motivate to do their jobs in spite of all of the negative

comments. What's more, he had to get the staff working at 4 a.m. Sunday.

The staff had to prepare the course for the rained-out Saturday players and then turn around, with a one-and-a-half-hour head start, prepare and mow the course for the Sunday golfers. Just to make the job even more challenging, many of the sand and waste bunkers needed to be pumped out and raked.

The PGA Tour, the Commissioner and Fred had some damage control to do. The "bad greens" that the players had complained about were really two or three greens. Any poor conditions were related to the weather and the heavy traffic during overseeding and leading up to the tournament.

Fred recommended that the amount of play needed to be restricted during the overseeding period and during the two-week period before the tournament. The Commissioner agreed to restrict the amount of play. The course reacted and looked great during the tournament. In

1991 the players voted the TPC at Sawgrass the best-conditioned resort course on the Tour.

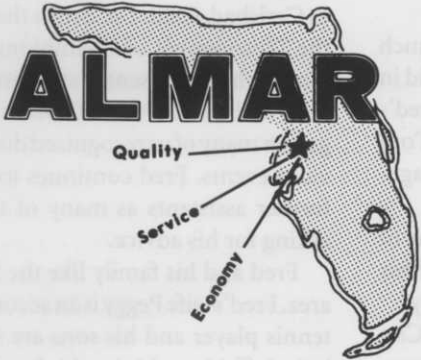
Some of the best testimonial about the influence of Fred on the golf business is the number of superintendents and assistants that Fred has guided into the business. At present there are approximately 10 golf course managers and nine assistants who have worked for Fred.

Many started as high schoolers, others worked for Fred during OJT. Everyone who has worked for Fred has benefited professionally and personally.

Deane Beman once told Steve Ciardullo of Mountain Lake in Lake Wales, "that working for Fred was the equivalent of four years at a major university."

Steve agreed with Deane Beman in that he valued his education from Fred as his college degree. He said that Fred not only taught him when to do things but also why you do it. He credits Fred with influencing him to strive to become a golf

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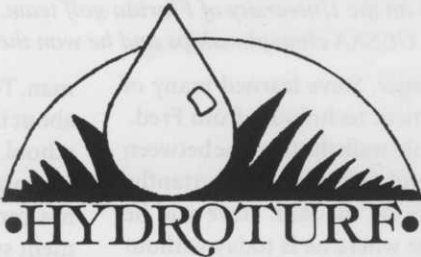
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*Fred Klauk may not have been able to beat out Andy Bean or Gary Koch for a starting slot on the University of Florida golf team, but he did lead the FGCSA team to two GCSAA championships and he won the 1990 Crowfoot.*

course manager. Steve learned many of his management techniques from Fred.

"Fred could walk the fine line between being a friend but more importantly, being your boss," he said. Steve said he would not be where he is today without Fred's influence.

The most persistent of Fred's past employees would have to be Ekana Golf & Country Club's Tom Vlach.

Tom started to work for Fred in 1985 at the ripe age of 14. Tom was on the local high school golf team and he was raking bunkers and filling divots for the Honda Classic. After the tournament, Tom felt a void because he was not working at the club. He convinced Fred to give him a job on weekends and during the summer.

Fred influenced Tom to go to college to get a turf management degree. Tom continued to work for Fred during the summers after Fred had moved to Sawgrass.

When Tom graduated from college, he turned down higher-paying assistant jobs in order to work for Fred as a fore-

man. Tom claims that he learned as much about the business from Fred as he did in school. Tom was impressed with Fred's organizational skills and that's what Tom has carried over into his own management system.

Tom calls Fred the Bobby Knight of golf course management because of his determination to do the job perfectly.

Scott Jamros graduated from Lake City CC and has worked for Fred for six years. Scott went to work for Fred in 1987. He was a college student but he was unsure of what career path to take. He liked to play golf and he thought that he might like to work in the golf business but he had no direction. Fred encouraged him to work hard and to go to Lake City Community College.

Scott worked OJT for Fred where he and many others learned about construction, drainage and management. Scott said that one summer Fred had four OJTers working at the TPC doing projects. Scott said that when you OJT'd for Fred, you did not just mow grass, you

did projects. Scott was also impressed with the way that Fred would "go the extra mile for his staff."

I too had the pleasure and the good fortune to work for Fred at Eagle Trace. After I was transferred to the TPC at Monte Carlo in Fort Pierce, I still had the luxury of falling back on Fred for help or information. Fred taught me to be proud to be a golf course manager and to work hard at it. He encouraged me to be active with the superintendent's associations.

He taught me not to go home until the job is complete.

At the time that I worked for Fred, the golf course manager was not as well respected as we are today and Fred taught me to work well with other people in the business such as golf professionals or club managers.

Fred Klauk's service to the golf course management business has been tremendous. He has influenced many lives and many careers and he still continues to do so.

Recently, while Fred was receiving his Distinguished Service Award at the Crowfoot, his assistant at TPC was accepting the golf course manager's job at LaCosta in Carlsbad, Calif. LaCosta is the home of the Tournament of Champions.

Fred has represented superintendents very well in the PGA TOUR and he has gotten many of us recognized during televised events. Fred continues to help his former assistants as many of them call asking for his advice.

Fred and his family like the Sawgrass area. Fred's wife Peggy is an accomplished tennis player and his sons are very athletic. Jeff, 15, and John, 14, have become very good junior golfers. Both boys have shot career lows of 67 this summer and John had his first hole in one. Fred, can you shoot a 67? Jason, who is 8, likes tennis and soccer and he is just now starting to play golf.

Fred Klauk has served the industry well. He has given unselfishly to the industry, to his employer, to his employees and to his assistants. Fred continues to maintain one of the Tour's best conditioned golf courses and if he keeps practicing he might beat Jeff and John at golf.



**1993 FGCSA  
President's Awards**

Hugh Bebout  
Dick Blake  
Don Delaney  
Karl Jacobs  
Ed Ramey

***'I was the first  
GCSAA Director to  
be nominated and  
elected from the  
floor of the  
annual meeting. I  
was president of  
the GCSAA in  
1971-72.'***

***The FGCSA President's Award  
for Lifetime Service was  
established in 1990 to honor  
those superintendent pioneers  
who were instrumental in  
state and local affairs but who  
may no longer be actively  
involved in the FGCSA.  
Qualifications include 20  
years or more of service to the  
turfgrass industry, 10 of which  
were as a superintendent .***

# Thank you, Mr. President!

***Dick Blake has led three statewide  
superintendents' associations, and the  
national organization, the GCSAA***

BY JOEL JACKSON, CGCS

When the President of the United States steps down, he historically retains that title and, as a measure of respect, is addressed as "Mr. President" for the rest of his life. I think Dick Blake has earned that courtesy after serving his peers as president of three different state or regional associations and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

That record of service is but a reflection of the sense of duty, loyalty, and hard work that a young lad from Wilmington, Mass. learned from the Marine Corps after graduating from high school. Those values have led Dick through a long, rewarding career in golf turf management and into his current semi-retirement work as a sales representative with Growing Technologies, Inc.

"After I mustered out of the Marines, I was interested in pursuing a career in wildlife management at the Stockbridge School of Agriculture," said Dick in a recent interview. "There were no openings in the class I needed, so I took a course in turf management. The program was under the tutelage of pioneering turf professor Lawrence S. Dickinson, and he got me so interested in this field that I switched majors.

"It was a good time to be getting into the business. We had instructors like Geoffrey Cornish teaching classes. We

were the first generation of the new breed of superintendents that got a strong educational background in turf management principles as well as practical experience in the field.

"Upon graduation from Stockbridge, I started my career working for the Mitchell Brothers Corporation, which was a family of superintendents and architects. I spent one year with them building and renovating golf courses in New England.

"I then worked in succession at Whittinsville C.C., Concord C.C., and Salem C.C. All three were designed by Donald Ross. I was at Whittinsville for eight years. We then moved to Boylston, Mass. for 13 years at Mt. Pleasant C.C. After that, I did an eight-year tour of duty at Woodstock (Vermont) Golf and Tennis Club which was part of the Rockefeller Rock Resort chain.

"In 1965, I joined the Rhode Island Superintendents Association, eventually serving as president. After that, I joined the New England Superintendents Association and worked my way from newsletter editor to president in 1970.

"I began my service on the GCSAA Board of Directors in 1967. I was the first GCSAA Director to be nominated and elected from the floor of the annual meeting. I was president of the GCSAA in 1971-72.

"Those New England winters began

to get a little hard to take, so we moved to Florida in 1982. I started the Florida portion of my career at Card Sound G. C. and worked my way up the coast to Quail Ridge and eventually to my last duty station, Bocaire Country Club.

“Sometime around 1984 or 1985 I attended an FGCSA Board meeting and started asking questions. The first thing I knew, Tom Burrows said the best way to get the answers to those questions was for me to be secretary/treasurer of the association.

“A few short years later I assumed my fourth association presidency in 1987.”

“I have made a lot of friends in Florida and I really appreciate the honor the association has bestowed on me with the President’s Award. My service to the Florida Association has been an enjoyable experience buoyed by the support of fellow board members and our executive secretary, Marie Roberts.

“In the early days of my association work in New England — and even with GCSAA — we didn’t have any staff support. We did all the paperwork ourselves. Elaine, my lovely wife of 40 years, helped me tremendously with those efforts. She also managed to raise our six children and they, in turn, have blessed us with eight grandchildren.”

Asked to reflect over the past, present and future of golf, Dick had these observations:

“I always enjoyed being involved in the construction or rebuilding on golf courses. It gave me a lot of personal job satisfaction to add something to a course. I especially liked to plant trees.

“Now when we visit New England and I visit some of the courses where I worked, it is very satisfying to see the mature trees and the effect they have on the courses. I also have enjoyed watching the growth and development of over 30 superintendents that worked with me over the years. It’s nice to see them progress and take their place in the service of our industry.”

“I’ve always been an environmentalist at heart, stemming from my early interest in wildlife. I have always tried to influence people in the safe and proper use of pesticides. One of the things I’m proud of was the legislation we developed while I served on the Conservation Committee

## ***‘It is necessary to remember that humans are part of the environment too. Their needs and survival are just as important as the snail darter and the spotted owl.’***

and Planning Board in New England.

“It is necessary to remember that humans are part of the environment too. Their needs and survival are just as important as the snail darter and the spotted owl. Facts and common sense need to be at the heart of the regulations that are formulated for the protection of the environment.”

“One of the most pressing issues I see facing superintendents today is job security. There is far too much turnover in superintendent positions. Clubs need more continuity so they can develop some good programs and make positive progress.

“This merry-go-round approach to changing club presidents, greens chairman, and greens committees annually just creates turmoil and usually results in turning over the superintendent’s position rather than establishing good working relationships.”

“For people entering this profession, I

must say they cannot be thin-skinned. They should expect to work long, hard hours and pay their dues before becoming a head superintendent. While they are paying their dues, they should develop business management and people-handling skills.

“I strongly urge they also take public speaking and business writing courses. Communications is a key part of the profession today. I also recommend they read a book called *Developing Your Executive Abilities*. It really helped me see the big picture a little better.”

Dick enjoys his work with Growing Technologies, Inc. It keeps him active and involved with an industry he has helped lead and shape. When he isn’t working he enjoys photography, historical reading, and traveling. A trip out west and to Alaska is in the planning stages right now. Enjoy the trip, Dick, and from all of us, thank you, Mr. President!



*Dick Blake, right, with GCSAA President Gerald Faubel, CGCS, left, and FGCSA President Joel Jackson, CGCS, at the 1990 Poa Annuia Classic in Naples. Blake is a past president of both organizations.*

1993 FGCSA  
President's Awards

Hugh Bebout

Dick Blake

Don Delaney

Karl Jacobs

Ed Ramey

# Native son shines in Sunshine State

BY JOEL JACKSON, CGCS

Golf course superintendents come to their profession by many paths. Don Delaney's path was short and direct. It ran from the back door of his home in Avon Park, where he was born, right into the second tee of the Rivergreens Golf Club.

The golf course was his playground when he was a kid, and it became his weekend and summer workplace as a high school student.

Don was very involved in junior golf and dreamed of someday becoming a professional on the PGA Tour. Dreams are sometimes tempered by reality. When the necessary level of golf skills didn't develop, Don found himself in the school's guidance counselor's office making other plans for college.

Don told the counselor he liked working outdoors and he loved golf. The counselor looked through his stacks of literature and came up with a course catalog from Lake City Community College, home of an outstanding Golf Course Operations program.

Don's first OJT summer assignment was working for Arlin Grant at the Innisbrook Golf Club and Resort near Clearwater.

"It was my first exposure to a large, first-class golf operation," Don recollected, "It really opened my eyes to the possibilities in this business, and that helped motivate me through the rest of my schooling."

In 1973, Don graduated with an Associate of Science degree in golf and landscape operations, and began his career with a two-year stay at Sea Pines Plantation on Hilton Head Island, S.C.

He returned to Florida and was the superintendent at Seven Springs Golf Club in New Port Richey for four years.

He moved south to St. Petersburg where he served for nine years as the manager of golf and landscape operations for the Isla del Sol Golf Club and the Ventura Golf Club in Orlando.

Don's service to the FGCSA began as he served on the board of directors of the West Coast Chapter.

That involvement led to six years on the FGCSA board serving several terms as a director and rotating through the chairs of the executive committee. He was president of the association in 1983-84.

Don also served for four years on committees of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. His work on the longrange certification plan helped lay the groundwork for the successful Certified Golf Course Superintendent program.

One of Don's greatest accomplishments for the FGCSA was organizing the voting delegate concept. It took many long hours to secure the participation and proxy votes of the many GCSAA members scattered over the nine or ten chapters throughout the state. With this bloc vote, Florida became a stronger voice in the future of the GCSAA.

In 1988, Don made a career change within the industry. He left Isla del Sol to become the Turf Division sales manager for Zaun Equipment Company in Longwood.

From this vantage point Don offers some valuable but unfortunately troubling observations about the superintendent profession.

"When I was active in the FGCSA and GCSAA, I was surrounded by people who were motivated professionals in this business. It is easy to get comfortable and think this is the way everybody is con-

***'I was honored that my contributions were remembered and appreciated. The award also told me that my former peers were telling me that I still had credibility with them and that is very special and important to me.'***



Don Delaney

ducting business: professional... dedicated... complying with regulations... attending seminars... continually getting educated.

"I have to tell you that I'm getting a different picture when I visit some golf courses. I see careless and unprofessional operations that are downright scary from equipment maintenance to chemical handling. The image of the professional superintendent that has made such great strides recently may be getting set up for a fall if some of these people don't clean up their acts."

"I also see the growing trend of club owners and members trying to shift all the responsibility of running their clubs onto a management company. This is of course weakening the superintendent's position. They become less powerful and less responsible in the decision making process.

"Purchasing decisions are placed in the hands of a regional manager and bottom-line profit for the management company is placed above quality of product and service. This results ultimately in a decline of the condition of the course.

"Unless the management company is dedicated to quality, and there are precious few who are, they will not attract a strong, versatile, well-trained superintendent. That kind of situation will tarnish the image of the superintendent profession.

"This trend does not bode well for a profession becoming saturated with more turf graduates. Twenty years ago, I left school and took a job as an assistant superintendent. The superintendent left for another job and I was promoted to head superintendent at the tender age of 19!

"I had no business being a superintendent at that age, but I managed to make it because there weren't that many trained people out there beating the streets.

"These turf schools have been turning out students for 20 years. Everybody's educated now. It's going to take a longer time to reach that goal of becoming a head superintendent.

"A new graduate who really loves this profession will take a job as a spray tech, an irrigation tech, a crew foreman, or whatever. Then they need to get involved

into their local superintendent associations and start learning the ropes from the top superintendents in their area.

"The superstars will rise and be recognized, and the others will be weeded out."

"I want to thank the Central Florida Chapter and the FGCSA for my President's Award. I got pretty choked up when Chuck handed me that plaque.

"I had to give Chuck some information for the presentation so it wasn't a surprise. But when the time came to give

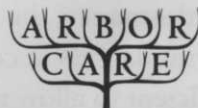
my prepared acceptance speech, I couldn't get much out of my mouth except, "Thank you."

"What made it special to me was that I had left the superintendent side of the business, and I was honored that my contributions were remembered and appreciated. The award also told me that my former peers were telling me that I still had credibility with them and that is very special and important to me."



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