

**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

This 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.

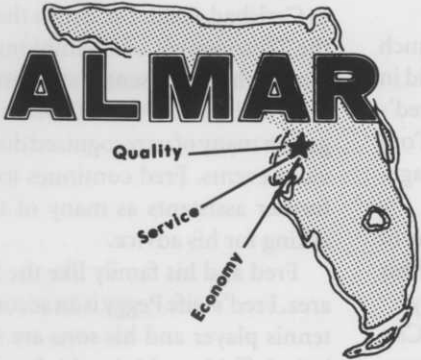
Some of the best testimonial about the influence of Fred on the golf business is the number of superintendents and assistants that Fred has guided into the business. At present there are approximately 10 golf course managers and nine assistants who have worked for Fred.

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

•TURF TRACER • FOAM GARD • RUST BUSTER • BEAUTY
 GREEN • PENETROL • KICK IN THE GRASS • TURF IRON • SUPER WET • EV R GREEN



ALMAR
 Quality
 Service
 Economy

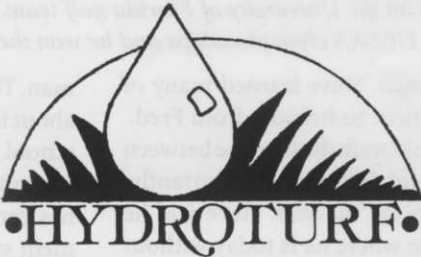
CHEMICAL CO. INC.
 P.O. BOX 18101
 TAMPA, FL 33679

**CALL COLLECT:
 813-839-3363**

STUART COHEN
 EAST FLA.

RUSS VARNEY
 WEST FLA.

KNOCK M' DED • GRIME OFF • GREEN LAPPING SOAP • RUST BAN • GREEN MAG/C
 TURF KOTE • WATER PENN • GREEN MASTER • SCRAM //



HYDROTURF

The Hydroject Aerification Service

Winter Aerification Options for overseeded Bermuda

1) HYDROJECT

- Relieve compaction throughout winter without disturbing the putting surface.
- Reduce potential for bermuda winterkill.
- Increase percolation during wet months.

Hydroturf looks forward to serving superintendents in Central and North Florida with a professional, turn-key service.

Contact Chris McIntyre at 404-406-1494 for scheduling information.



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.