

Scenes from the 1995 Crowfoot Open



Bay Hill hosts 19th Crowfoot Open

BY JOE ONDO, CGCS

The 19th annual Crowfoot Open took place at Arnold Palmer's Bay Hill Club. The weekend started on Friday with a seminar by Richard Kithil on lightning protection for courses. Mr. Kithil discussed helpful ideas on how to protect golfers, computers, pumps, phones, controllers and other aspects of the maintenance program.

At the FGCSA board meeting on Saturday, GCSAA President Gary Grigg discussed and sought input on the proposed GCSAA Chapter Affiliation requirements. He recommended that all concerned chapters be represented at the GCSAA Chapter Relations meeting in September in Lawrence, KS. (See *Kuehner's Corner, Page 6*)

Kevin Downing and his research committee should be applauded for all the hard work being done on the DNA project and the FGCSA Research Green that will benefit all superintendents and others in the industry for years to come.

President Scott Bell's presidency came to a close as new officers were elected as follows: President, Greg Plotner; Vice President, Dale Kuehner; and Secretary-Treasurer, Joe Ondo.

On Sunday evening Dan Riley, with a little help from closet comedian, Larry Kamphaus, entertained all the banquet attendees. Congratulations to Tom Benefield for receiving the FGCSA Distinguished Service Award for 1995, and to all the President's Award winners: Mike Barger (South Florida), Paul Frank (Ev-

erglades) and Billy Wright (Palm Beach).

Tournament results. The mysterious hex that the Ridge Chapter has on the Crowfoot Open continued as they once again took team honors. Mark Hopkins, Buck Buckner, Alan Puckett and Steve Ciardullo were masterfully "coached" to victory by Roy Wilshire.

Host superintendent Dwight Kummer and staff had the challenging Bay Hill layout in top condition for the tournament.

A special thanks to all Diamond and Gold sponsors and par 3 and putting contest sponsors for their support of this event.

Also, thanks go to Larry and Vilma Kamphaus and the Crowfoot Committee for another successful event.

OPINION -

Equipment companies need parts on the shelf

Most superintendents will agree that you are only as good as your people and equipment. We all know good help is hard to find, and it seems the more superintendents and mechanics I talk to, the more I hear that replacement parts for equipment are also hard to find.

A common question we are all asking our equipment salesmen is, "Why don't you stock at least the most in-demand parts?"

The problem is not just common in Florida — it exists worldwide. In June I met with a panel of golf course superintendents from all over the world for a research and development meeting for an irrigation system manufacturer. In our discussions about parts and service, the topic quickly changed to turf equipment, parts and service.

The general remark was that distributors were not able to get parts to courses fast enough. This comment, however, was secondary to the question of why distributors don't stock the most common parts.

We all agreed that it should be easy to track the most in-demand parts with inventory computers. We also agreed that

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we would be more apt to purchase equipment from a company that had a great reputation of parts availability, because we consider parts availability a key component of service.

One superintendent used this comparison: If a supermarket didn't keep a good stock of its most popular items, it would greatly effect their patronage. The same could be said for this situation.

The theory of the 48-hour parts plan is good on paper, but consider these two points.

First, you must call your order in before a designated time, which raises the question of what to do about equipment

that breaks down at the end of the day.

Second, the companies that deliver the parts work five days a week, and the last time I checked most of us were working seven or eight days a week, so if you order parts on Thursday afternoon you may not get them until Tuesday morning.

The salespeople working for the distributors work hard to earn our \$20,000, \$40,000 or \$100,000 in equipment we buy, and then they listen to our frustration when we don't get the service we expect. It may cost the distributor a little more to stock parts but the risk is minimal when the odds are the part won't be on the shelf more than thirty days.

In our industry, when we encounter problems like this we have to find a way to be heard. Remember, you are giving them your money. The distributors need to earn our business through quality and service. In this situation the best way to be heard may be to quietly change our purchasing habits. A drop in sales gets a lot of people thinking.

*Rob Kloska, GCS
Jupiter Island Club*

Paul Frank: The Wilderness Man

BY MIKE MONGOVEN, CGCS

A short visit to the Wilderness Country Club is all it takes to discover what Paul Frank values. An adjective to describe this most important factor would be "wilderness."

He lived the New York State Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program long before there was such a thing. Starting in Paul's office and continuing across the property of Wilderness Country Club, are many examples of naturally-occurring beauty. These range from deer, alli-

Paul is a quarter-century member of the GCSAA, a former Florida Turfgrass Association Director and was a founding member of the Everglades Chapter.

gators, turkeys, rattlesnakes, eagles, bobcats, woodpeckers and chuckaluske chickens. When a person is in this environment, it is hard to imagine that some people actually believe that golf courses are a detriment to the environment.

Paul has lived his entire life on the property that is now the Wilderness Country Club. When he was born in Naples in 1934, it was a booming metropolis of 768 people, and that was all of Collier County. Mosquito control in those days consisted of holes dug in the swampy woods so that they would retain water through the entire dry season. The minnows that survived would then take care of the mosquito larva.

Paul was the original golf course superintendent of the second golf course in Collier County, the Hole in the Wall Golf Club. When he and his father built Wil-

President's Award Winners : 1995

Mike Barger
Paul Frank
Billy Wright



Paul Frank

derness, there was a standing order with the construction crew that no tree would be removed unless absolutely necessary.

Paul is a quarter-century member of the GCSAA, a former Florida Turfgrass Association Director and was a founding member of the Everglades Chapter. Asked about the early days of the Everglades, Paul remembers how close-knit the mem-

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bers were. "Everyone was always ready to help," he said. "Our code of ethics was one that we all truly cared about and we had respect for one another."

Paul cites two things as his greatest accomplishments. First is his pride in building a beautiful golf course where others can really enjoy nature. Second is his discovery and propagation of PF-11, an off-type bermudagrass he found in one of his Tifgreen putting surfaces. The

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grass has many positive attributes.

His greatest concern about the golf business is the trend of golf course superintendents to get hero complexes. "Guys are too often motivated to put their jobs in jeopardy by trying to satisfy a small percentage of their membership," Frank said. "This process often damages the health of the turf, as well as the job security of the golf course superintendent."

Friends and colleagues praise Frank for his commitment and professionalism. As Clint Smallridge, CGCS, sums up, "Paul is just a terrific guy. He shoots from the hip and talks from the heart."

Paul Frank is a living example of what is good about the golf course business. He has set a high standard we should all strive to emulate.