

Clem Stewart receives President's Award

BY TERRY WOOD

Royal Wood G & CC

I remember the first time I had any contact with the Everglades Golf Course Superintendents Association. It was the spring of 1980, and I was employed as a salesman for an irrigation wholesale company.

At the second meeting I attended, I was paired with Clem Stewart and two other superintendents for a round of golf at North Port Country Club in Port Charlotte. We had a good time, and the thing I still remember is what a gentleman Clem was. The entire foursome treated me very well and made me feel welcome in the association.

Clem and I recently sat down for a talk and he told me a brief history of his life in the golf course business. Clem was born in Pinehurst, N.C. in 1933. He came from a large family, and two of his sisters were married to golf course workers.

That helped him to start working on a golf course at the age of nine, emptying grass baskets. His first real job was in 1952 at Pinehurst. Then in 1956 he took his first superintendent job at Reynolds Park Municipal in Columbia, S.C.

In those pre-civil rights days, Reynolds Park was for whites only. Four years later Clem was in charge of adding nine more holes to the nine hole Winston Lake Park course in Winston Salem, N.C. This was a course for blacks. Turf knows no color!

After five years Clem decided to seek greener pastures, I mean fairways, in sunny Florida. This landed him at the Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club for eleven years.

Then Clem decided to move to the big city of Fort Myers and maintain the golf course at Seven Lakes for another stint of 11 years. In 1990 he worked at Naples

1996 President's Award Winners

Steve Kuhn

Clem Stewart

Shores and has been at Imperial Wilderness since 1992, in charge of the entire property.

There have been a few changes in this industry in the last 44 years.

Clem recalls the non-motorized push mowers used to mow greens. Then a big improvement came along — the reel-powered mower. This was not that popular because it was just that much heavier to mow with and transport.

At one time Clem was a scratch golfer, and he still gets great enjoyment from the outdoors... He loves to work with the soil.

He also recalled early in his career that he had six holes to maintain at a particular course. He would water, mow the greens and tees, and repair ball marks.

Some of the other improvements besides mowers were irrigation systems and the overall quality of grass varieties. But the one thing that happened that most surprised him was the introduction of the golf cart. Clem never thought he would see the day that something would replace the caddy!



It was in 1968 that Paul Nevers, Bob Sanderson, Dwight Wilson and several others invited Clem to join in the formation of the Everglades Golf Course Superintendents Association.

This was right up his alley, because Clem had also helped to form the Piedmont (N.C.) Chapter in the mid 1950s and was once the vice president of the Carolinas Association.

In 1972-73 Clem was the president of the EGCSA and has been a member of the GCSAA since 1957. Clem and Paul became great friends, like brothers, golfing in the Carolinas and Georgia in the summers and making that annual trip to Augusta for the tournament.

Paul will be deeply missed by Clem and the rest of us as well.

At one time Clem was a scratch golfer, and he still gets great enjoyment from the outdoors and the many nice people he has met over the years in this business. He loves to work with the soil.

His garden includes broccoli, corn, tomatoes, beans, cauliflower, greens, squash, onions, lettuce, cabbage and carrots. Clem and his wife, Barbara have four sons, Wayne, Ronnie, Randy and Chris, and one daughter, Terry.

In closing, Clem's advice to everyone is, "There has got to be an education in anything you do."

*FGCSA's 1996
Distinguished
Service Award
Winner...*

Paul 'Crayfish' Crawford, CGCS

BY JOEL D. JACKSON, CGCS

The man does love his lobster diving! Fishing and lobster diving are hobbies that makes finding Paul a hard task on his days off during Florida's lobster season.

We all kid Paul about his lobstering exploits, but we got serious last August when the FGCSA said "Thank You" for over a decade of service to the association by naming him recipient of the 1996 Distinguished Service Award.

Paul served as president of the FGCSA in 1993-94. He served in the various officer chairs and on many committees prior to that, and has remained very active since.

He served on the GCSAA Chapter

Relations Committee during the crucial and uncertain times when new management was coming on board. The now-annual Chapter Relations meetings in Lawrence are a cornerstone of the operation of the GCSAA, serving to give staff and board members immediate feedback and input on member concerns.

Paul is now serving as business manager of The Florida Green. His common sense and vision coupled with Marie Roberts' handling of the advertising duties helps keep the magazine successful. They almost make being the editor fun!

Paul hangs his hat at the Palm Beach Country Club where he has for the past 14-plus years. He came to the Palm Beach C.C. via Jupiter Hills C.C., Harbour Town Golf Links at Hilton Head, SC and Michigan State University.

Paul shocked his family when he informed them he was going to attend the MSU turf program to become a "greenskeeper." Thank goodness for you, me and the FGCSA that he did.

"I would like to see some new people get involved in state and local affairs," Paul once told me. "Maybe they just need to be nudged or encouraged a little to step forward. I think many are afraid to come forward because they perceive it as a big demand on their time.

"Certainly it does take some time and effort on their part, but with our association manager, Marie Roberts, as their right hand, it isn't as difficult as one might think.

"When I was asked to come on the board, I went to my green chairman and asked him how the club felt about the idea. I told him I wanted to run it by them



After roasting his friend Paul Crawford (right), Butch Gill congratulates him on winning the 1996 President's Award.

before I accepted.

"He was a successful businessman involved with his associations. He knew that being involved meant I would be exposed to the latest information in the business and that would be an asset to the club.

"He also knew that it would be a personal asset to my growth and development. The more you are involved the more you know. The more you know the further you go. It's like fuel. So, ask your members, your committee, your boss! You might be surprised at their answer."

Receiving a plaque isn't such a big deal, but it is symbolic. Best of all it gives us an excuse to stand up, put our hands together in long and loud applause and say, "Thank you for giving us your time and energy!"

**Special
GOLF
COURSE
MIXES**

Sterilization Available

Since 1948

Florida Silica Sand Co., Inc.

Dade County Broward County
949-3521 923-8323

1-800-330-3521

**Complete Line Of
LANDSCAPE
Materials**

**Red Ball
Diamond Clay**