

BENHAM'S BEAT Envirotron Hero Must Have Died a Happy Man

By Don Benham

Jeff Hayden passed away on Friday evening Dec. 6. I was fortunate to be able to attend the funeral on Friday, Dec. 13. The reason I said I was fortunate was because Jeff and I were not close



Don Benham

friends. I would only see him and talk each year at the Envirotron Classic. We also always managed to have a conversation at several meetings we both attended during the year.

Jeff always wanted to know what was new with the FTGA as he was a strong supporter. On the other hand I would question him about the Envirotron Classic, and thank him for the support of the FTGA and the Envirotron. That was our common thread. I did not know the Jeff Hayden that his



Jeff Hayden, left, loved the Gators. He's seen here with at a pre-Gator game gathering in 2001 with (from left) UF/IFAS Vice President Mike Martin, Gainesville CC's Buddy Keene, CGCS, Palm Beach National's Mark Jarrell, CGCS and Brian Schaeffer, superintendent of the Meadowbrook GC in Gainesville.

friends talked about. But from what they said, I came to know how much Jeff meant to his friends, the university and the industry.

David Cheesman and Don Delaney from Golf Ventures, his employer, both had special relationships with him. David worked for Jeff at Turkey Creek C.C. in Gainesville. He described Jeff as a tough and fair boss who influenced him for 23 years. Don Delaney, also a former Lake City classmate, said he never knew if he worked for Jeff or if Jeff worked for him. Don said, most of the time when they had a work disagreement, they compromised and did it the way Jeff wanted it.

Joe Conoly from Bayer talked about how excited Jeff would get about a new chemical and take Joe to different clubs so they all could try it to solve a particular problem.

Glen Oberlander, (Plantation Inn & Golf Resort) described how dedicated Jeff was to the Envirotron Classic, and as soon as it was over he was planning how to improve the next event. Glen also talked about how close they had become and that whenever Jeff wanted to go someplace he would call and talk Glen into going with him. Maybe it was fish-

ing, or golf or driving for hours to look at a boat.

I can relate to that as I have a close friend who lives down the street that I am always talking into going someplace with me even if its only for an ice cream cone at a special store five miles away. We have Christmas-shopped together for 40 years.

Buddy Keene from Gainesville Country Club described how close he had become to Jeff and his family. Buddy felt Jeff was his mentor and he would constantly come to see the condition of the club, where Jeff had also been a superintendent. Buddy said he was always anxious to hear what Jeff had to say and when he had the course really good, Jeff would tell him if anything needed improvement. Through his tears he told how much he loved Jeff.

David Hoggard of Citrus Hills did a lot of fishing with Jeff on his boat and Jeff would always let him bring his son and sometimes his son's friends also. John Piersol of Lake City Community College described Jeff as a student and as a mentor to Lake City students over the years.

Buddy was not the only one speaking through tears and it had a great impact watching these speakers talk about a man they loved. They loved being with him and stated how he had influenced their lives. He was a strong Gator fan and many of the University of Florida administrators were in attendance at the service.

Jeff was a passionate believer in getting involved with the Envirotron, the Seven Rivers Chapter of the FGCSA, the FTGA and the University of Florida. From what I heard at the funeral he must have died a happy man because he had spread happiness every day. Jeff was only 52 years old. We will miss him.

USGA GREEN SECTION REGIONAL UPDATE

Snowbird Season Poses Challenges to Proper Maintenance

By Todd Lowe

The weather has been great for most of Florida over the past month. Daytime temperatures have begun to drop into the mid-80s and most of the rain has subsided. The milder temperatures and increased sunlight have improved bermudagrass growth, which has been important for some courses that did not "weather" well with summer stress.

Bermudagrass growth slows as the temperature continues to drop, and now is the time to decrease mowing frequency, particularly on putting green perimeters and to utilize less aggressive (smooth) rollers on the mowers. A common occurrence on many of our visits during winter months is "triplex ring" syndrome on putting green perimeters caused by routine mowing. The wear patterns become obvious as the temperature drops, but recovery is more difficult at that time. Grooved rollers are excellent tools for actively growing bermudagrass, but are too aggressive for putting green perimeters as temperature decreases. Switching to smooth rollers and decreasing mowing frequency to two or three times weekly will decrease the development of these rings and improve playing conditions for the peak season.

The annual migration of snowbirds has

become apparent on our TAS visits. Conducting visits during summer months in Florida is no problem, especially during mid-afternoon, as the sweltering heat and humidity drives away most golfers and we can usually view the course hole-by-hole without disturbing too many golfers. At this time of the year, getting around the entire course with minimal disturbance is a challenge. The golf course superintendent faces this dilemma each day during the peak season with shotgun starts two to three times weekly and/or 7:30 a.m. tee times. It is important to keep in mind that every maintenance practice requires a specific amount of time, and conditions suffer if the time or



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labor is not allowed to conduct these practices.

Many Florida golf courses are busy overseeding at this time of year. The weather has a major impact on overseeding success and, while it is important to be mindful of scheduling overseeding with fall tournaments in mind, there are several agronomic factors to consider for optimum establishment. These include:

- Nighttime temperatures consistently in the 50's,
- Average midday air temperatures remain in the low 70's,
- Soil temperatures at a 4-inch depth are in the mid-70's,
- At least 20 to 30 days before the first expected killing frost.

Hopefully, with a little help from Mother Nature, the overseeding will establish uniformly and with minimal impact on the golfers. If the weather trend continues as it has, most clubs should be in good condition for the remainder of the peak season.

For information about the author, see the inside cover.

Editor's note: Early December rains have impacted some overseeding operations and cloudy days have created poor growing conditions causing varying degrees of turf stress. Best remedy is to raise the height of cut until conditions improve. So you want "slow" greens or "no" greens?

IGM/Meadowbrook's \$1 Million Shootout Nets \$10G for Foundation

International Golf Maintenance, a Meadowbrook Company, held its inaugural \$1 Million Shootout at ChampionsGate Golf Resort Nov. 16. At the event, IGM presented the GCSAA Foundation a check for \$10,000, representing proceeds raised during IGM's qualifying rounds held at every IGM-affiliated property nationwide. Fourteen finalists participated in the shootout at ChampionsGate.

Despite severe storm predictions and