

# DeBra Announces Greens King IV \$100 Rebate Program



Left to right: Dan Jones, V.P., F.T.G.A.; Dave DeBra, V.P., DeBra Turf, Hollywood; Max Brown, chairman, F.T.G.A. Scholarship and Research Fund, and Jud DeBra, V.P., DeBra Turf, Tampa, examine the Jacobsen Greens King IV which we hope will raise a lot of money for scholarship and research.

DeBra Equipment Company recently announced the Greens King IV rebate program to benefit the F.T.G.A. Scholarship and Research Foundation. "The program will be simple" said Mike McLaughlin, executive sales administrator for DeBra. "The rebate will be tied to the number of Greens King IV units sold in the months of July, August and September. One hundred dollars per unit sold will be rebated to the S. & R. Foundation to help fund their programs through the regional superintendents associations at the F.T.G.A. annual business meeting."

Support and participation is nothing new from the DeBra organization. The company's principals, Jud DeBra, Tampa, and Dave DeBra, Hollywood, have worked on several committees for the F.T.G.A. David DeBra served as president of the association in 1978 and received the "Wreath of Grass Award" in 1980. In addition, DeBra has

actively supported the annual conference and show since its beginning.

"There has never been a better time for such a program," said McLaughlin. "The Greens King IV has been redesigned this year to include features our customers wanted like infinite speed control, internal back lapping, and individual three reel control. We're confident, based on response we've seen already, this will be a very successful program."

Max Brown, chairman of the F.T.G.A. Scholarship and Research Fund has set a goal of \$250,000 for the coming year. This is a tall order but well within the reach of our fine organization. We would encourage all commercial turf companies to participate in this worthwhile endeavor. If you have any ideas for generating funds please contact Max Brown at 305-971-0025. ■



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# Palm Beach Trade Winds



By MICHEAL BAILEY  
Boca Greens Country Club

The ability of a golf course to be recognized as the best maintained tract of land in town, boils down to one very simple item. It is not necessarily mankind, money, chemicals or water, but the sophistication of the golf course maintenance equipment. This is what separates the pros from the armchair agronomist.

We are not living in the days of bush hogs and rotary push mowers, but, yes, the age of multi-hydraulically driven, hydrostatic reel mowers. Within a maintenance building, one can easily view a quarter of a million dollars worth of equipment. Just the fairway mowing unit alone can cost more than a Cadillac limosine.

Because of the extravagant expense, not just anyone is simply placed on a machine. Proper, thorough training is a must to keep the machinery in excellent operating condition. Jack Cunningham, CGCS, of Eastpointe explains that an operator does not just start mowing greens. "They are taught to operate machinery from areas of lesser perfection, and then upgraded to areas of higher perfection. An operator learns the feel of a triplex greens mower by first mowing tees and collars. Once familiar with the principles, mowing of a green is not so difficult, resulting in fewer scalps and straighter lines."

Mike Perham of Boca Del Mar believes the way to insure safe care of a machine is by educating the operator with a written job description. "This way you know you told the operator everything to do, which proves to be an invaluable tool."

The key to proper operation of machinery is proper management. Many courses are finding themselves developing a dual phase management. Golf course superintendents usually operate with a key right-hand person: the golf course assistant superintendent. The other phase is the mechanic and his machinery. The mechanic maintains service records, places orders, is involved in purchasing, receiving, inventory records and must still keep equipment operating at all times. The mechanic is also becoming a key right-hand person. Country clubs are finding they need two full time mechanics per course, i.e. Boca Del Mar where Phil Bourque and Ed Aris work with seven-year-old greensmowers and produce greens that rank with the finest in the country.

J.D.M. Country Club with its multi-courses employes five full time mechanics under the supervision of head mechanic Sammy Lanier. In such a large complex, a secretary usually places many of his calls and orders to free Sammy to oversee equipment maintenance and repair.

Boca West, another multi-course complex, has a parts man who maintains important service records and places orders to help keep head mechanic Augustine Montes where he is needed most.

A groomed golf course is founded on good machinery backed by an adequate supply of parts. Augustine believes in stocking clutches, head gaskets and even complete sets of reels to eliminate down time. When parts are used, he restocks immediately, just to be ready.

Lanier uses local parts houses on high volume items such as tires, bearings or belts. If the item is more difficult to obtain or the local quality sub-standard, he uses distributors with factory replacements. Lanier believes nothing is more important than quality. "Inferior products result in more labor time for repairs and more occurrences of down time."

Heavily used equipment requires an abundance of parts; however, high wear on the machinery caused by summer growth and the avoidance of down time more than justify inventory expenses. Boca West owns 23 triplex greensmowers. To keep all functioning, Augustine believes the equipment must be worked on correctly. "Most any piece of equipment will get the job done, if you get it right."

Augustine finds cost is not the deciding factor in new equipment purchases. The best way to cut maintenance expense is to find the most durable piece of equipment. The initial cost is meaningless when measured against years of usage. One could almost say a good piece of equipment never dies; it's just parted out until it disappears.

Courses replace fixed assets based on life expectancy and depreciation; however, older equipment remains an asset. A greensmower may be downgraded to a tee mower with age and then even to a summer renovating clean-up machine. Once it's finally pronounced "deceased", it may be worth more as an out-back parts supply than as a trade-in.

*(Continued on Page 34)*

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## PALM BEACH (Continued from Page 33)

Golf course maintenance equipment has most certainly become more complicated in the last few years; and labor costs for repair dictate close scrutiny of design at the time of initial purchase. Ray Strausberger, head mechanic for Eastpointe and a former government test mechanic, explains that accessibility of key parts demands careful engineering. "A high wear maintenance part, such as a pump, should be designed to be taken right off without disassembling the entire machine. This can mean the difference between minutes and hours."

Other design features, such as back lapping of the hydraulic units, can save precious down time. Mechanics have also been enthusiastic about hydrostatic transmissions. They point to longer durability and improved operator capability. Throttle speeds maintain precise cut, while ground speed can be reduced to prevent marcelling and help reduce abusive tire wear patterns.

Palm Beach County has been blessed with more golf courses than some states and golfers who continually flock to the south are finding a superlative product. Without the technology of refined equipment, we definitely would not be looked upon as the "Golf Capital of the World". ■

## Club Management

In our Spring 1981 issue we ran an article, "Down the Golf Cart Path," reprinted from *Club Management* magazine. We failed to give credit to *Club Management* and we sincerely apologize. ■



## Magazine Distribution Policy

Three copies of each issue are sent free of charge to every club in the state: one copy to the superintendent, one copy to the greens committee chairman or manager, and one copy to the pro shop. It is the responsibility of each local chapter to supply the editor with a mailing list. Any problems should be directed to the local chapter secretary.

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# Treasure Coast "Tide"ings

By JAMES P. CALLAGHAN  
Riomar Country Club

## First Anniversary Approaching

July 15, 1981, will mark the first anniversary of the founding of the Treasure Coast Chapter Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association. Just 12 short months ago, our association was just an idea floating around in a few superintendents' minds. Today, the Treasure Coast Chapter is a well-organized group with over 50 members in an area with only 32 golf courses.

All members are extremely proud of and pleased with the success of and interest shown in their association. Special thanks and appreciation goes to Adam Yurigan, Jr. who has served as the association's first president. Adam's leadership and guidance was a most important factor in the Treasure Coast Chapter's outstanding growth and development.

## Excellent Education Sessions Highlight Meetings

The last three meetings of the Treasure Coast Chapter have all been very successful with over 60 per cent attendance. Adam Yurigan, Jr. hosted the March meeting at the John's Island Club in Indian River Shores. Robert Williams, past president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, was guest speaker. His talk — entitled "Today's Golf Course Superintendent" — centered on ways the superintendent can improve his image, profession and goals.

Lonnie Stubbs, vice president for Internal Affairs and superintendent of the Sandpiper Bay Resort in Port St. Lucie, hosted the May meeting which drew 44 members and guests. Tom Burrows chaired the educational session, a round table discussion of ways of coping with the recent drought conditions. Many superintendents commented on their volume of water use, cutbacks in water consumption

and measures to grow turf with less water. Discussions of mole crickets and weed control followed.

Riomar Country Club in Vero Beach was the site of the June meeting hosted by Jim Callaghan. Bruce J. Augustin, Research Turf Specialist, University of Florida, and Bruce Adams of the South Florida Water Management District presented information on growing healthy turf under drought conditions and current guidelines established by the S.F.W.M.D. for water use. An afternoon golf outing was played on Riomar's seaside links, which was enjoyed by all who participated.

## Turtle Creek To Host Annual Meeting

Tom Burrows, superintendent of the Turtle Creek Club in Tequesta, will host the Treasure Coast Chapter's first annual meeting on Monday, July 6. A shotgun golf outing will start at 1 p.m. followed by an evening business meeting including election of officers. Tom promises a fun-filled day to celebrate our first anniversary and all Florida superintendents are invited.

## Nominations Presented

Joe Snook, nominating committee chairman, announced the nominations for a slate of officers to be elected at the annual meeting in July. The nominations are: President: Lonnie Stubbs, Sandpiper Bay Resort; Vice President -Internal Affairs: Jim Callaghan, Riomar Country Club; Secretary: Bill Mangold, Crane Creek Golf and Racquet Club; Treasurer: Joe Snook, Riverbend Country Club; Director: Craig Baker, Indian River Plantation; Director: Tom Ross, Miles Grant Country Club; Director: Robert Hurst, Jupiter Island Club. Tom Burrows, vice president -external affairs, has two more years to serve and Adam Yurigan Jr. will serve as a director as immediate past president. ■



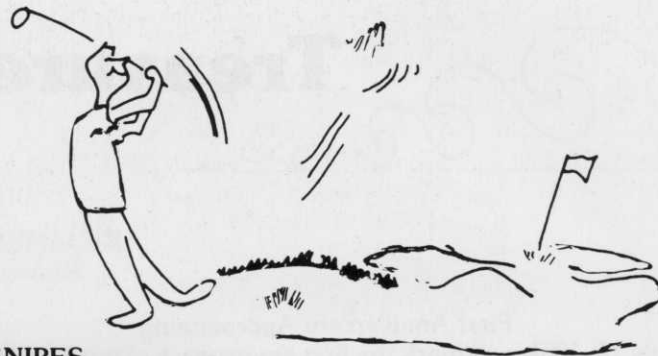
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## NORTH FLORIDA

# DIVOTS

By EDDIE SNIPES  
Assistant Superintendent  
San Jose Country Club



With the constant rise in the cost and maintenance of new turf equipment, North Florida Chapter members are searching for viable ways to keep costs down.

Members eager to volunteer their thoughts and suggestions were Chip Powell, Deerwood Country Club; Bob Willis, Ponte Vedra Country Club; John Hayden, San Jose Country Club, and Jim Shine, Sawgrass. These superintendents agree there are some definite ways to reduce equipment and maintenance cost, but unfortunately there are some things they will have to live with.

Fuel and lubricant prices are very predictable of late; they are constantly on the rise. North Florida superintendents realize they cannot directly affect these cost increases. However, close monitoring of consumption in individual turf equipment units gives them not only an inventory check but also a preventative maintenance aid. Excessive use of gas or oil may be a symptom of a problem about to surface. Early corrective measures could avoid considerable downtime in the future.

All four superintendents feel it is unnecessary to rely solely on the distributorship for parts. Parts such as bearings, seals, belts and bedknives can be bought from local suppliers at a great savings. "I found a belt that I needed at a local supplier for \$2.80. Contacting my distributor, I found the same belt for an exorbitant \$24.60," said Chip Powell.

The next cost cutting area was stocking of parts. Bob Willis said, "Do not skimp on parts (high use items) because nothing is more costly than downtime." It's plain common-sense to keep high use items on hand. However, one should not go to the extreme and overstock. Keeping an extra hydrostat (hopefully not a high use item) would be carrying things a bit too far. If you trade in or sell the machine, you are like a quarterback with no one to pass or handoff to. He eats the football; you absorb unnecessary cost.

The recent cry of superintendents is do not trade in old equipment. Used equipment can become valuable for stripping of needed parts or for rebuilding to use as back up units. "Sawgrass is a resort course and it has to constantly be in first class shape," said Jim Shine. "Sawgrass does not have the flexibility that a private course might have if equipment problems develop." That's why Shine has back-up units for each piece of equipment.

How far one goes in rebuilding equipment depends largely on the maintenance shop set up and the mechanic. A line must be drawn between which repairs can be done in the shop and those that should be done outside. Tying up your shop mechanic with unfamiliar, specialized repairs costs you time and money. Close scrutiny of any equipment that might be rebuilt is necessary in comparing rebuilding cost to a new equipment purchase. Will you actually be saving? Be careful your desire to cut cost does not backfire!

John Hayden has said, "The most cost and attention received on a golf course is that of its employees." No matter what system of preventive maintenance one has, it is not worth a plug nickel without good mechanics and operators. The superintendents interviewed kept coming back to a humanistic approach to keep maintenance cost down. Operator education is important to the life expectancy of turf equipment. Your best operator in most situations is your best teacher. By taking notice of an individual's abilities and placing that person with the right piece of equipment, you will have completed a highly productive bond of man and machine. As your new operator begins to learn his equipment, respect for that equipment and pride in his work will grow. Irony dictates this to be true the majority of the time though the worth of the man at \$3.35 an hour is not equally equated with the cost of a \$30,000 fairway unit.

High turnover of employees on a golf course can be a real equipment killer. Experimenting with a constant flow of new operators can cost money and increase the accumulation of gray hairs. Stopping to take a small interest in the way of a "thank you" or just asking how one is getting along may keep that fairway unit out of a lake or that greens-mower off a tree.

Superintendents hate to see their mechanics go on vacation. A good mechanic is the heart of a shop, bringing life to all the units in the maintenance facility and keeping track of the vital signs with up-to-date maintenance records. If you think this is over-dramatized, try May through September without a good mechanic and watch your maintenance costs soar like an eagle.

The knowledge and thoughts shared in this article represent the best means of controlling equipment and maintenance cost. ■

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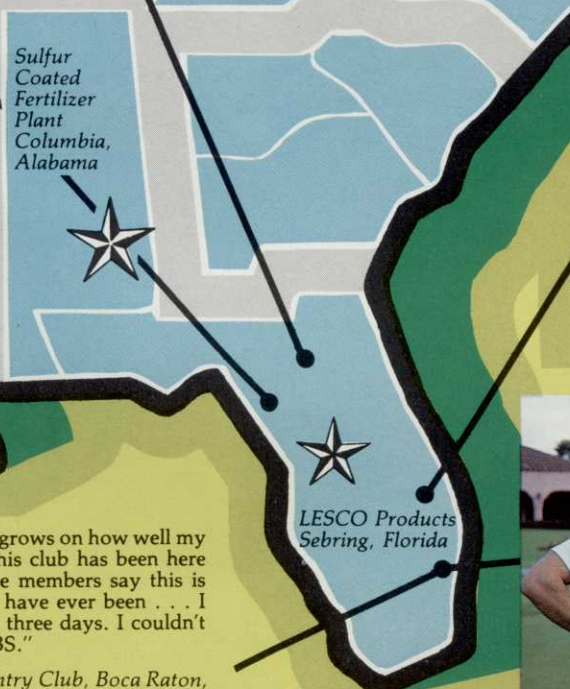
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