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THE FAVORITE SOUTHERN RECIPE FOR COOKING GOOSEGRASS.



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to be careful because that damages the plant.

"The biggest thing is limiting the amount of water. You can never get them really dry, but we regulate the amount of water they get at night so we can syringe during the day and not get them too wet. Regulating the water is the real challenge of managing bentgrass greens."

Rising to challenges has been a way of life for Cann.

In high school at Wallingford, he worked at a nine-hole public course leased by a professional golfer and his brother. The pro's wife helped out in the golf shop and Cann did most of the "outside work," becoming the de facto superintendent.

He brought his six handicap to his brother's alma mater, St. Leo College in Wesley Chapel northeast of Tampa, to play on the golf team and scope out the Florida scene. He hoped to follow in his brother's footsteps and play for pay.

"I quickly learned that I didn't have the game you need to be a top-flight professional so I decided to look into

maintenance," Cann says. He got a job at the St. Leo course and, after completing one year at the small college, transferred to the University of Florida at Gainesville to begin his education in agronomy.

"After I enrolled, I started looking around for a part-time job and I ran into Jeff Hayden."

Cann pauses long enough to let anyone familiar with golf course maintenance in Florida fill in the rest of the story for himself. Cann became part of Hayden's Lake City Farm Club.

"I finished the semester at Gainesville and then worked for Jeff fulltime at Turkey Creek until classes started at Lake City in the fall." Cann and the rest of Hayden's special crew continued to work part-time at Turkey Creek, commuting from the School of Golf Course Operations at Lake City Community College on weekends and sometimes once or twice during the week.

He was graduated from LCCC with an A.S. in golf course operations in 1984 and landed at River Wilderness CC in Parrish

as assistant to Mike Miles. River Wilderness developer Lloyd Sheehan started work a year later on Imperial Lakes down the road in Palmetto and gave Cann the top job.

"I was able to bring that course to opening day from groundbreaking through grow-in and I stayed there until 1988," Cann recalls. He also became friends with golfers Andy Bean and Paul Azinger, who represented Sheehan's developments on the PGA Tour.

In 1988, Cann succeeded David Cheesman at The Reserve, at Cheesman's suggestion.

The Reserve sits lightly on an environmentally sensitive piece of property about 15 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean. The golf course is cut out of natural wetlands — vast areas of which have been left intact — and a thick, long-needle-pine forest which shelters abundant wildlife, including bobcats, eagles, deer, fox squirrels and lots of 8-pound bass.

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**The Reserve
Golf and Tennis Club,
Fort Pierce**

Built in 1984 by George and Jim Fazio; currently owned by Pittsburgh businessman Jack Piatt.

Private, 18 holes (plus short 9-hole, par-three), 6,980 yards from back tees, 5,256 from front; 30,000 rounds annually.

Greens: Penncross bentgrass (2 in Tifdwarf, overseeded in winter with bent); average 6,500 square feet; hand-mown to .125 in season, .187 in summer.

Tees: Tifway 2, not overseeded; 60 boxes averaging 2,000 square feet; cut to .450.

Fairways: Tifway 2, not overseeded; lightweight mown to .500.

Roughs: Tifway 2 cut to 1.5 inches by ground-driven five-gang unit; some rough is pine bed cleared of palmettos.

Irrigation: double row where necessary fed by existing natural lakes.

Staff: 13 including assistant superintendent, spray technician, irrigation technician, two mechanics and crew.

Superintendent: Tim Cann, 31, single. Born Wallingford, Conn. Lake City Community College A.S. in golf course operations, 1984. Certified in 1991. **Affiliations:** Treasure Coast GCSA, Florida GCSA, FTGA, GCSAA and USGA. **Previous Employment:** Assistant superintendent River Wilderness CC (Parrish); superintendent at Imperial Lakes (Palmetto).

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THROW A KILLER LAWN PARTY.



to take them; hunting is prohibited.

Even though the crew maintains 130 acres of fairways (including the par-three), the course is tight with small landing areas.

Irrigation comes from the connected lakes — “half the property is lakes and the other half is wetlands and forest... mostly wetlands,” says Cann — that are fed by rain and runoff. The lakes empty into the Atlantic through one of the canals dug by the Army Corps of Engineers.

“We’re not allowed to pump any water from the ground, but they do let us transfer water between lakes so we move a lot of water from one side of the property to the other,” Cann says.

“It’s a very good golf course,” says Cann, who plays to a 10 handicap these days and is grateful to be able to play often enough to keep it there. “It’s well-laid out, challenging with carefully placed bunkers (60) and lots of water (comes

*half the property
is lakes and the
other half is wet-
lands and forest...
mostly wetlands*

into play on 15 holes). Most holes have a tunnel effect off the tee.”

Cann has enjoyed his tenure at tending the course George Fazio intended to be his personal track. Fazio’s best-known layouts include Jupiter Hills 45 minutes

down the road and Butler National outside of Chicago. The Reserve turned out to be his next-to-last project and the last one he finished. Hawk’s Nest in Vero Beach opened after he died.

“An office job doesn’t turn me on at all,” Caan said. “Being around people and nature gives me a good feeling. If you can find a beautiful golf course that you’re happy at, it’s nice to be able to spend your day more relaxed.”

NOTE: As this story went to press, Tim Cann realized one of his career goals of managing a 36-hole course by accepting the position as superintendent at Harbour Ridge GC in Stuart, a 36-hole private facility by Joe Lee and Pete/P.B. Dye with bermudagrass greens. Tim will be succeeded at The Reserve by his assistant, Mike Strahowski. Mike has been at The Reserve for four and one-half years learning his craft from both Tim and previous superintendent, David Cheesman. ➔

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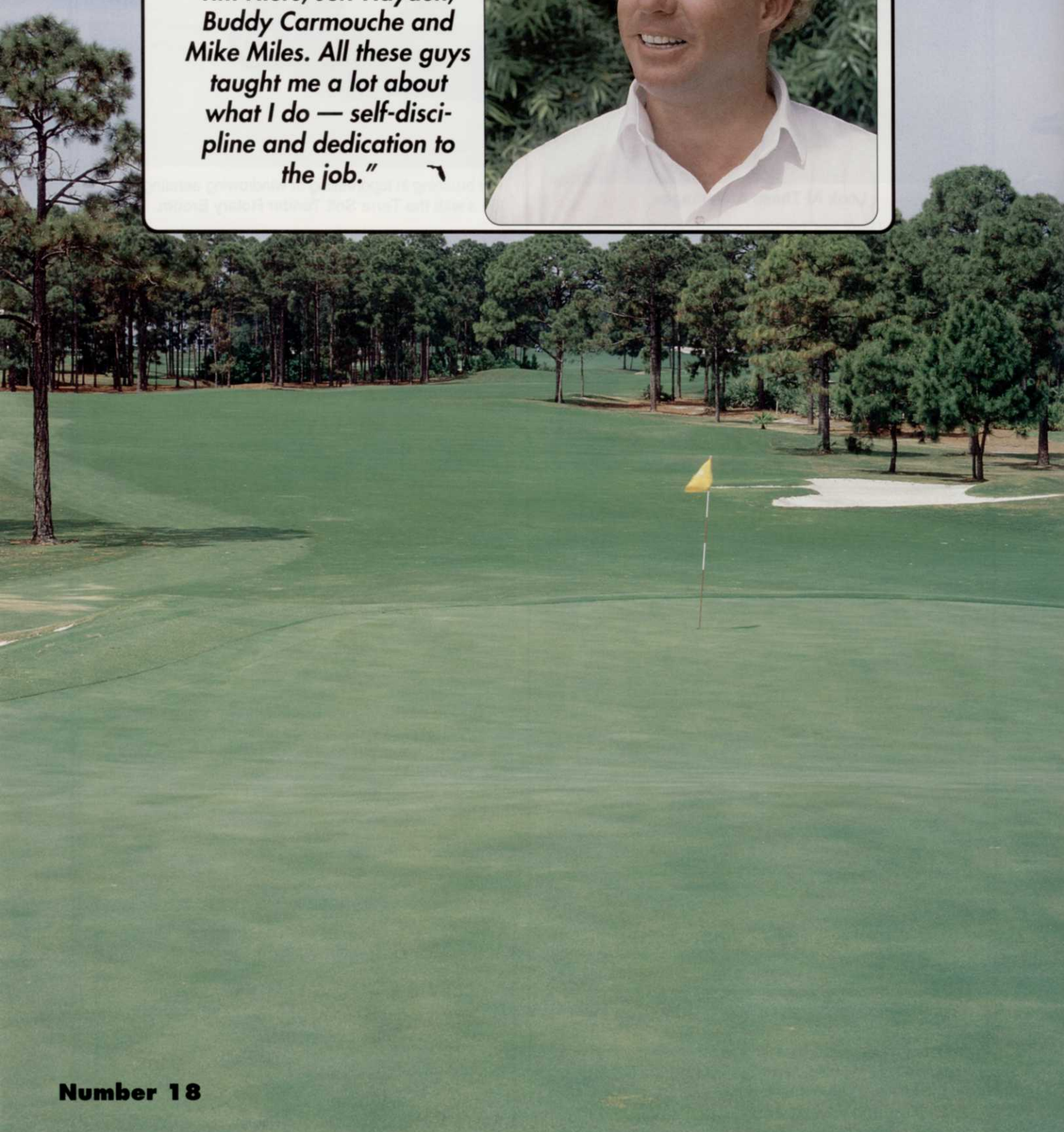
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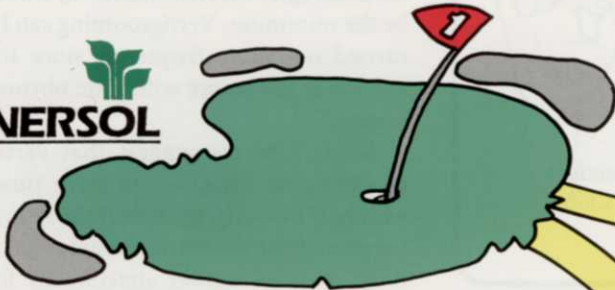
MO Tim Caan, CGCS

"My knowledge is the direct result of four people in particular — Tim Hiers, Jeff Hayden, Buddy Carmouche and Mike Miles. All these guys taught me a lot about what I do — self-discipline and dedication to the job."



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Verticutting & Vertigrooming:

Verticutting (vertical mowing) is a cultivation practice involving the use of vertically oriented knives mounted on a rapidly rotating, horizontal shaft. (A. J. Turgeon. *Turfgrass Management*, third edition).

Verticutting and vertigrooming are not the same and should not be considered equal as turf management tools. Verticutting is a necessary cultural practice probably equal to aerifying in its importance to quality turfgrass and putting surfaces. Vertigrooming is a fine-tuning of the playing surface that will enhance the ball roll and appearance of the turf.

Verticutting

The objectives and benefits of verticutting varies, depending on the depth and spacing of the knives and the turf manager doing the job.

Major objectives of verticutting are thatch removal, reduction of grain, and compaction relief. Most turf managers agree that controlling thatch and reducing grain are the primary reasons for verticutting. Others contend that stimulation produces new leaf growth, making the putting surface more manageable.

Other problems that can be solved with verticutting: breaking up algae on putting surfaces; accelerating spring transition by injuring ryegrass and promoting bermudagrass; aiding overseeding to reach the soil during fall overseeding projects and, to some extent, removal of *poa annua* seedheads, thus improving the appearance of the putting surface.

Consideration should be given to the condition of the putting surface prior to the initiation of a verticutting operation. Shallow rooted turf can be seriously damaged by verticutting. The turf should be healthy and vigorously growing at the time of the operation to speed recovery.

Another factor is the disruption of the putting surface and the negative reception from the members and golfers. Be sure to properly notify everyone concerned of the scheduled operation and its effects.

What is Vertigrooming?

A new equipment option from major manufacturers, a vertigroomer is part of a cutting unit designed to simultaneously vertigroom while the mower is cutting.

HANDS ON



By Prentis C. Knotts
Golf Course Superintendent
Eagle Creek Country Club
Naples, Florida

Generally, the depth of the knives is limited and the vertigroomer is incapable of deep verticutting. The “brush” or “comb” traditionally found on the cutting unit is replaced by the vertigroomer. It is debatable whether the same objective applies to these attachments. Brushing stands the grass blades up allowing for a smoother cut. The vertigroomer may accomplish this as well, but many feel this is a side effect of vertigrooming with the main objective being a minor reduction of leaf surface. Some believe this reduction reduces friction allowing additional speed and more consistent ball roll. In addition, the stimulation of the turf increases microbial activity at the soil surface resulting in better gas exchange and increased turf vigor.

Comparing Verticutting and Vertigrooming Operations

Verticutting usually has more visual impact to the golfer, while vertigrooming can be accomplished without the visual effect. Since vertigrooming can be done more often with less visual impact, it is not always necessary to notify anyone of the procedure.

Most turf managers prefer to lightly topdress following verticutting. This also helps decompose thatch and smooth the surface. The addition of topdressing increases the negative visual effect to the golfer. Many perceive the green speed to be reduced on topdressed greens. The opposite is generally true.

The topdressing fills irregularities in the putting surface, i. e., unrepaired ball marks, scuff marks, and minor tire depressions. This contributes to speed and “trueness” in the putting surface.

Scheduling of verticutting should be

based on the need to verticut and the turf’s ability to recover. Most superintendents agree that twice annually would be the minimum. Vertigrooming can be carried out more frequently since the process is less severe with little obvious impact.

Manufacturers suggest that vertigrooming be done two to three times weekly. Obviously, the lighter the setting the more often the vertigrooming can be done. Vertical mower attachments for triplex greensmowers are the most popular equipment because they are fast and usually trouble free. Other types include walk-behind units and tractor mounted, PTO (power take-off) versions.

Each equipment selection should be based on the suitability of that unit for the particular golf course and the function it is to perform. Vertigrooming equipment is an extra cost option on greensmower reels, walk-behind and triplex. Triplex mowers can be equipped with vertigroomers and have interchangeable verticutting units. Again, these choices should be made with consideration of the intended use and suitability for the site.

Most turf managers agree that double verticutting (two directions per operation) is more beneficial and keeps the putting surface consistent. Because vertigrooming can be accomplished several times over a one week period it only requires one direction for its effect.

The depth of cut varies from one turf manager to another, but have common criteria. For example, the major verticutting operations conducted each year should be deep enough to remove thatch and allow top dressing to be incorporated into the thatch layer, enhancing decomposition. If reducing grain is the objective, a lighter touch is recommended. Usually setting the knives at or fractionally above the bottom of the roller is sufficient to accomplish this.

When verticutting greens, a crossing pattern at 90 degrees produces a pattern that members and golfers will find tolerable.

Vertigrooming on the other hand can be done in any direction for consecutive days. Emphasis should be placed on