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*The 11th hole shows its mettle with a formidable bunker on the left side. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*

the look. I call it the “Arizona Look” from the way the courses look on TV at the Phoenix and Tucson Opens.

Steve and his staff have done an outstanding job of seeding. I didn’t see any ragged edges or volunteer seedlings anywhere.

“By judicious contour mowing each season, we have reduced our total fairway acreage. We have kept our seeding rate on the fairways at 480 pounds per acre. This has helped increase our overseed density without raising seed costs. We use a Vicon spreader and apply the seed in two directions,” Steve explained.

“Our pre-emergent program seems to be getting more complex each year. Because we use bentgrass in our greens mix, I don’t use the Kerb-charcoal program for *Poa annua* control. Instead we use the Rubigan program of splitting three applications prior to seeding.

“Around the greens perimeters we use

a drop spreader to apply Ronstar XL and then we spray Barricade the rest of the way. I have tried Kerb around the tee slopes, but two rainy years in a row right after seeding have led me to try Balan around tee, approach and fairway perimeters.

“This year we were very lucky that all the rain we were having quit so we could get the seed out before it started getting too cool for germination.”

“The putting surfaces are seeded with

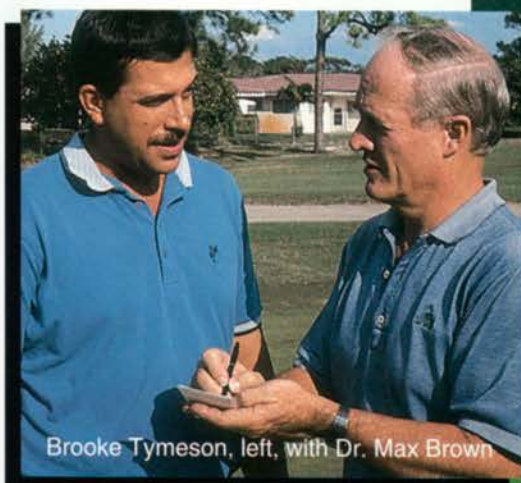
3 pounds of Penneagle bentgrass and 9 pounds of Laser Poa trivialis. With 30,000 to 36,000 rounds of golf a year, the owners and members want the greens on the fast side. We have only made one granular application of fertilizer to the greens since seeding. Instead we apply 1/10 of a pound of nitrogen weekly using Nutriculture’s 28-8-18 Bentgrass Special soluble fertilizer. Right now we’re mowing the greens at .130 inches. In the warm season, we apply 1/2 pound of nitrogen



*One of several freshwater lakes on the back nine highlights the 17th hole. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*

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Brooke Tymeson, left, with Dr. Max Brown

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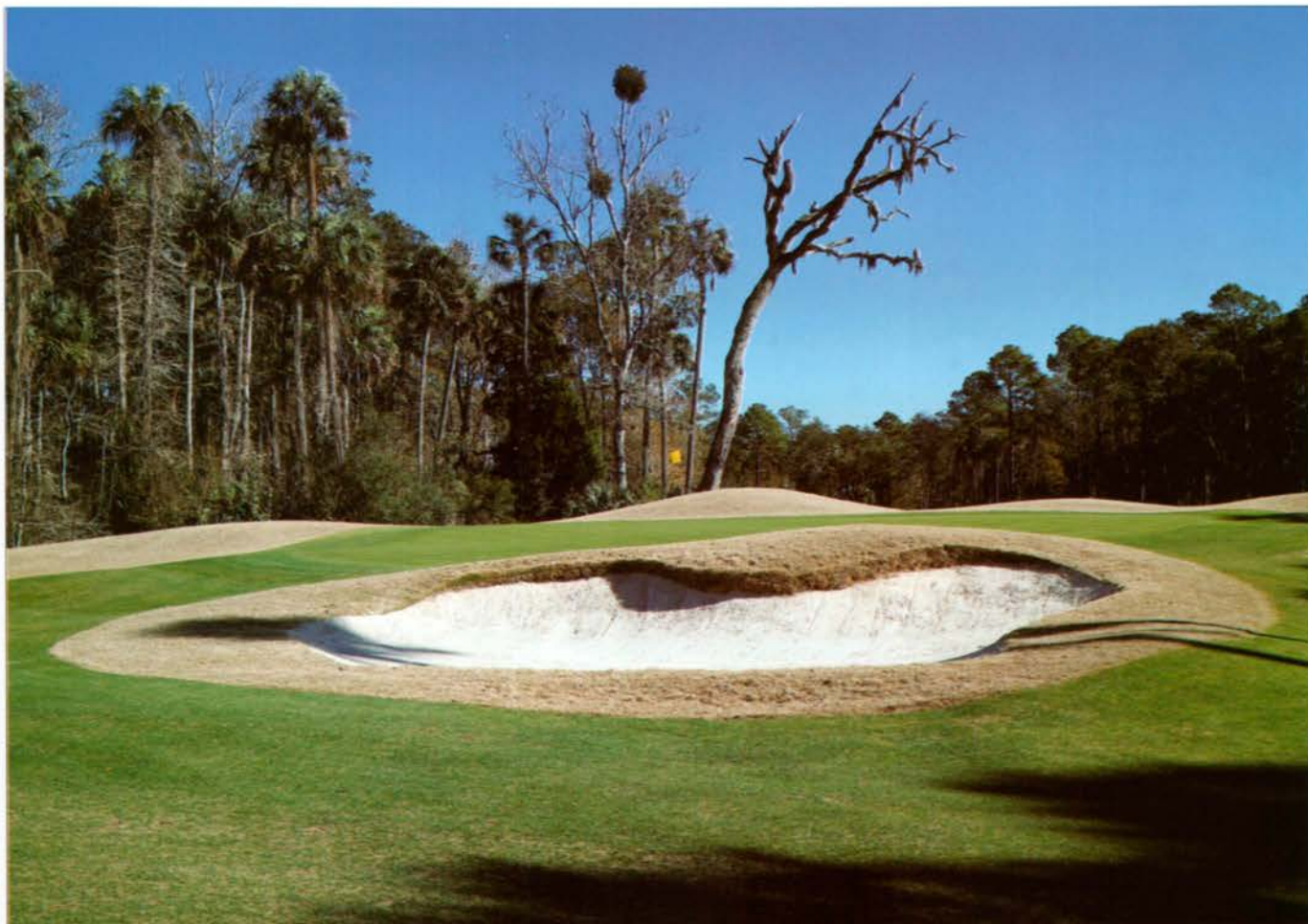


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*The 6th green awaits at the end of a 500 yard par 5 hole. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*

as a granular fertilizer every three weeks and topdress the greens lightly with the Vicon.”

As we continued our tour, Steve pointed out some of the natural high-lights and challenges of the course.

“The front nine is built mostly in a tidal marsh with the brackish creeks providing spectacular tee and approach shots. We have seen snook and red drum in those waters. The back nine has more fresh water lakes and they have a healthy largemouth bass population. We have a nesting pair of ospreys that comes back every year, and as you can see we have mallards, egrets, herons, ibis and wood storks all over the place.”

“Irrigation management is my biggest challenge because of the heavy nature of the soil profile. We grow in our green’s overseeding by hand watering exclusively because many slopes can’t take the automatic irrigation.

“On holes #4 and #5, we have some shading problems in the spring and fall and we selectively clear vegetation to open them up for more air circulation and sunlight.

“We also have ongoing drainage projects to relieve any problem areas that develop during heavy rainy periods like the last two summers. Last year we renovated 20 bunkers. This year we have dedicated the first six months to do 40 more. We should finish all the greens bunkers by the end of this month.”

Steve also showed me some isolated areas along the outer roughs that defied all attempts to grow good turf. These were in deep shade or in low runoff areas that were hard to drain.

“We converted these areas into ‘waste bunkers’ by cleaning out the mucky soil and bringing in some crushed coquina. Now all we have to do is touch it up from time to time when we’re raking bunkers.

“Currently, as the Marsh Landing community matures, the course is being impacted a little by some of the new construction. Typical stuff like an irrigation line getting cut.

“On a larger scale we are realigning several cart paths to set up the holes better as homes are added nearby. That is one of the things I like about the ownership. They are willing make the investment to do things right. Our department used to have landscape responsibilities around the development.

“The owners wanted the course to rise to the next level of excellence, so we added a couple of people to the staff and we work only on the course. Now we can devote more attention to details like more frequent cart path and bunker edging.”

That attention to detail at has not gone unnoticed in the golf world. Besides being a premiere residential county club facility, Marsh Landing annually hosts



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the PGA Commissioner's Cup tournament held during The Players Championship week.

Marsh Landing has also been selected to host regional U. S. Open and U. S. Amateur qualifying tournaments. That is quite a compliment to the efforts of Steve and his staff since Marsh Landing is but one of over a half dozen courses competing for favor in the Ponte Vedra Beach area.

Steve's ability to manage a high profile golf facility is a result of a familiar journey taken by many in similar positions, but also unique like the individual dreams, visions and talents we each bring with us.

Steve grew up working at the St. Joseph's Bay C. C. in Port St. Joe, Florida all through junior and senior high school. This is where golf professional Code House taught Steve to play golf and love the game.

He worked all the jobs associated with

the pro shop and eventually he worked on the course maintenance staff. When Steve was competing on the golf team at Lake City Community College, he recognized the limitations of his skills. House, his mentor, encouraged him to enroll in the Golf Operations Program at LCCC, and Steve has never looked back.

Steve arrived at Marsh Landing by way of South Carolina, Alabama, and Palm Beach County, Florida. Each stop was a lesson in what it takes to be a successful superintendent.

At Palmetto Dunes on Hilton Head Island, Steve, the OJT student, was distinctly impressed by the totally professional demeanor and people skills of Billy Fuller. Billy, you may remember, went on to serve as superintendent at Augusta National in the mid 1980s.

In Alabama, as a young assistant, Steve came under the tutelage of Ken Dillard, CGCS. Active in state and national asso-

ciations, Ken gave Steve insights into being responsible to a profession as well as a position.

At the Boca West complex, Steve got to polish his skills in a highly competitive atmosphere under the guidance of the talented and versatile Billy Wright, CGCS. (1995 FGCSA President's Award winner)

Natives of North Florida and Georgia, Steve and wife Amy are happy to be in the Jacksonville area to be closer to their roots and to begin their family. If you draw a line on a state map due west from Marsh Landing and Ponte Vedra Beach, you will come to Port St. Joe. The little coincidences in life can be very interesting.

Now sporting an 8 handicap, Steve still enjoys playing golf, especially at other courses to get new ideas, but he finds his playing time diminishing and limited to monthly North Florida GCSA chapter



*The approach shot on the 8th hole must carry the marsh fronting the green. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*



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meetings.

Perhaps Steve finds himself learning a new lesson as he lists spending time with the kids as one of his primary interests on this part of his journey. Setting priorities and finding that balance between work and personal life seems like a goal that Steve is mastering at home and at Marsh Landing.



*Ibis, egrets, mallards and a wood stork share the marsh pond behind #3 tee. Photos by Daniel Zelazek and David Bailey.*



*Marsh Landing's 1996 bunker project is under way on #17 green. Photo by Joel Jackson.*