

comment from superintendents is that they are six weeks to two months behind in their management programs and practices because of the weather. In particular, it has been very difficult to adhere to pesticide treatment programs for weeds and mole crickets. Here, too, it will be difficult to catch up over the next several months.

**I would further point out that while winter overseeding programs will help mask problems, there is an increased potential for difficulties to be experienced in the spring to early summer when the transition back to the bermuda base begins to occur.**

While the degree of the effects of this summer's weather has varied among courses around the state, it must be realized and accepted that prior environmental conditions have an impact of all agricultural endeavors. In addition to some understanding, patience and cooperation by the winter season golfers are needed this year.

If the USGA Green Section can be of assistance in any manner, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Respectfully,

John H. Foy  
Director, USGA Green Section  
State of Florida Region

**Editor's Note: Thanks to John Foy and other Regional Green Section Directors for their support in helping to educate golfers everywhere about the challenges in managing high performance turf. Copy and post this article if you didn't receive and post the original letter that was sent out!**

Dear Editor,

This letter is in regards to the Fall 1995 issue of the Florida Green that focused on bunker maintenance in the Hands On section.

I was working my way through the magazine, looking at the pictures and ignoring the "boring editorial at the back of the magazine", when I opened the section on bunker maintenance. This section was of particular importance to me due to the dramatic features that Arthur Hills added to Deer Creek in 1993. Superintendent Mike Hamilton, CGCS, at Grey Oak Country Club described how his crew was able to raise the mowing height of their Flymo's by adding a PVC frame under the mowing deck to raise the deck off of the ground. My assistant equipment technician called Grey Oaks to discuss these modifications. We mounted the PVC pipe onto our mowers and my bunker slopes are the healthiest they've been since they were grown in.

Thank you for putting together an issue that had a significant impact on our operation and the appearance of my bunker slopes. Thanks to Mike Hamilton, CGCS, and Sam

Arcure, Equipment Technician at Grey Oaks CC for their creativity and for sharing the information with other superintendents.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Klitz, CGCS  
Deer Creek Golf Club

Dear Bob:

"Boring editorials" aside, Mike Hamilton, CGCS reports he received many calls on this idea. He added that he has modified

the PVC pipe installation using 45° fittings instead of 90's at the corners. He also filled any gaps between the pipe and the deck with epoxy to preserve maximum hover capability. Thanks for writing Bob. Your "ho-hum" letter illustrates perfectly what the Hands On Section tries to provide, a forum for sharing ideas!

Sincerely,

Joel D. Jackson, CGCS  
Editor

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## Moving up to the next level

Like most former presidents of the Florida GCSA, I've tried to stay active in our industry's affairs but have narrowed my focus to a couple of key issues. As cochairman of FTGA's UF/IFAS Advisory Committee, I've set my sights on doing all I can to help move the University of Florida's turf program forward until it achieves the distinction of being the premier program in the country.

The fact that I graduated from the University of Florida and have pride in my school has nothing to do with it — I well understand that people in our industry come from all over the country and have no loyalty to UF.

The golf and turf industry, as proven by our recent survey, is the largest agribusiness in the state, and it deserves the support for education and research commensurate with its economic contributions. It makes more sense to direct our efforts toward getting our fair share from the legislature and the University of Florida than it does to reinvent the wheel somewhere else.

If, however, our message falls on deaf ears, I'd be the first to recommend sending our contributions elsewhere.

Walking a daily tightrope of job security, superintendents can't even understand the concept of tenure and

have little patience for what often seems a snail's pace of progress.

There has been much progress in recent years, but it is my contention that the rate must be accelerated considerably for the program to produce what this industry expects and deserves given its size and scope.

This is not a criticism of those currently within UF/IFAS's turf programs but, rather, a call for all of us to readjust our thinking and set our sights on higher goals. We are cheating ourselves, our industry and the people of the great state of Florida if we don't.

We always thought our industry was large and diverse, and since the survey was taken, we now have the statistics to prove it. Let's use this information to secure the proper funding and support of the program that supports Florida's largest agribusiness, and let's all start to think in terms of establishing the best turf program in the United States.

*The golf and turf industry, as proven by our recent survey, is the largest agribusiness in the state, and it deserves the support for education and research commensurate with its economic contributions.*

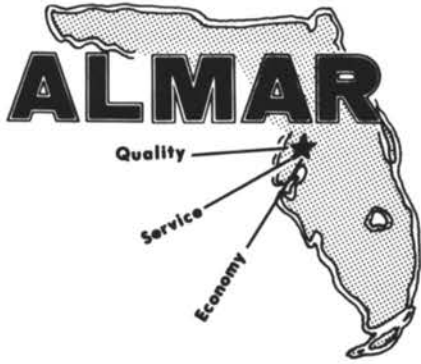
### Mark My Words



*Mark Jarrell*

Mark Jarrell, CGCS  
Assistant Editor

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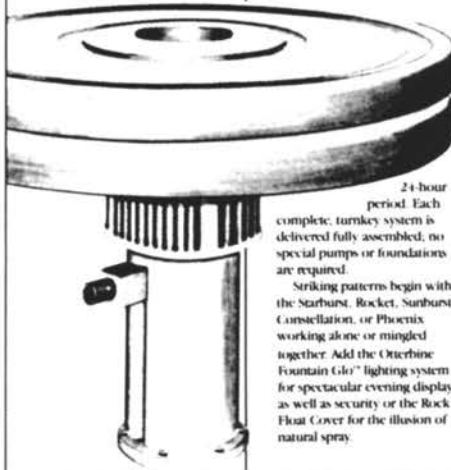
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Perceptions are hard to change. They live like myths and folklore handed down from generation to generation with

embellishments added along the way. Here are two common ones we hear all the time and one from left field.

Perception #1: The golf course is “always” overwatered.

Reality: What people mean is they came across some “wet areas” on the course. Why do people automatically assume the superintendent is blindly watering without regard to conditions or need? Water Use Permits and restrictions make water too valuable to waste. We know that overwatering causes algae, saturated root zones, compaction and complaints. Why would we do that on purpose?

So why are there “wet spots?” Leaking pipes and fittings. Trash in a valve. Diaphragm failure in a valve. Leaking control tubes. Booster pump failure. Human error in setting up run time. Late night/early morning rain after regular cycle ran. Stuck head. Above normal rainfall. Poor soil drainage. High water table. Course in a swamp. You see the irrigation running in the morning to water chemicals and fertilizer and you make assumptions.

Solutions: Perceptions are perpetuated by uninformed comments and assumptions among staff, management and golfers.

Keep the pro shop and other staff who have contact with the players informed about any unusual occurrences with rain or the irrigation. Tell as many people as possible right down to the beverage cart drivers.

Keep the course on the “dry side” by prudent planning and scheduling of irrigation. Use more wetting agents in chronic wet and dry areas. Use more hand watering on dry spots, but be sure and tell your superiors about the impact on labor and other jobs.

Perception #2: The superintendent is “never” around. He’s “always” gone.

Reality: What is meant is that the superintendent wasn’t available when “someone” wanted him that minute! In the most recent GCSAA survey, Florida superintendents averaged 40 to 50 hours Monday to Friday and 5 to 9 hours on the weekend.

That means 5.5 to 7 days of spending time at the course. We start early. Pardon us if we’re not always there when you play golf after work or for every act of God or emergency.

We have families with working wives. Kids in Little League, soccer and Pop Warner football. Some of us even coach them. Kids with music and dance lessons, orthodontist and doctor appointments. Kids in high school and college sports and activities.

Like any other manager in a business that attends conventions, sales meetings or product and service trade shows, we do too! It keeps us up to date and competitive and we use that education and networking to make our (your) courses better.

Solution: Be visible and make contact with key management and staff every day you’re on property. Take a time management course.

Advise those same people when you’re going to be gone and why, so it’s not a surprise if there is an emergency. They will

# Perception vs Reality

## Green Side Up



*Joel D. Jackson*

Joel D. Jackson, CGCS Editor



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happen. There are so many educational opportunities available these days, that you can't possibly attend all of them. Pick and choose wisely based on your course's activity schedule.

Perception #3: A superintendent's job security would be better if they weren't so busy "running for political office."

Reality: Most professionals have associations. People who take a real interest in that profession often give back by serving as officers or directors. Most are volunteers or are asked because not enough people are willing to give of their time.

Officers move up from Director

to President of a local chapter by rotation not by campaigning. All any of them try to do is attend monthly chapter meetings.

The only people who actually "run" for office are the two to four people nominated for one or two spots on the board of the GCSAA.

Since Florida has a 12-month golf season, none of us has really considered "running" for the GCSAA board. Only one did in my 21 years, and his club backed out of supporting him.

The only reason Florida had the past president of the GCSAA was because he moved here while on the Board already and his club agreed to let him finish his service.

Solution: Obviously, you must take care of business at your home club first and foremost. Just make sure your club understands how satisfying and valuable your service on superintendent association boards, water management district committees, turf advisory committees and Audubon-adopt-a-school programs is to you and your profession.

Thank them often and include them as much as possible so they can also make a positive contribution to the golf industry.

Perceptions are a reality of life. They're just not always the facts of life!



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