

square feet per year (6-month growing season) to produce a turf quality score of 7.0. this quality rating was equal to that of FloraTeX® bermudagrass with no supplemental nitrogen. At the highest monthly nitrogen rate of 1.0 pound per 1000 square feet, turf quality scores of FloraTeX® and Tifway bermudagrass were equal at 8.0. From this three year study, we concluded that FloraTeX® bermudagrass was superior to Tifway bermudagrass at low nitrogen levels, but both cultivars were equal in turf quality when maintained under a high nitrogen fertility program.

Under high nitrogen fertilization, FloraTeX® bermudagrass had the fastest rate of ground cover establishment when compared to 35 other experimental bermudagrass lines. In two months after planting, FloraTeX® produced 90% ground cover compared to Tifgreen which produced only 9% ground cover under the same conditions (Fig. 4). All grasses were fertilized weekly at a rate on 0.5 pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet/

So what does all of this mean? It simply points out that no turfgrass cultivar is perfect for all uses. Each has its own

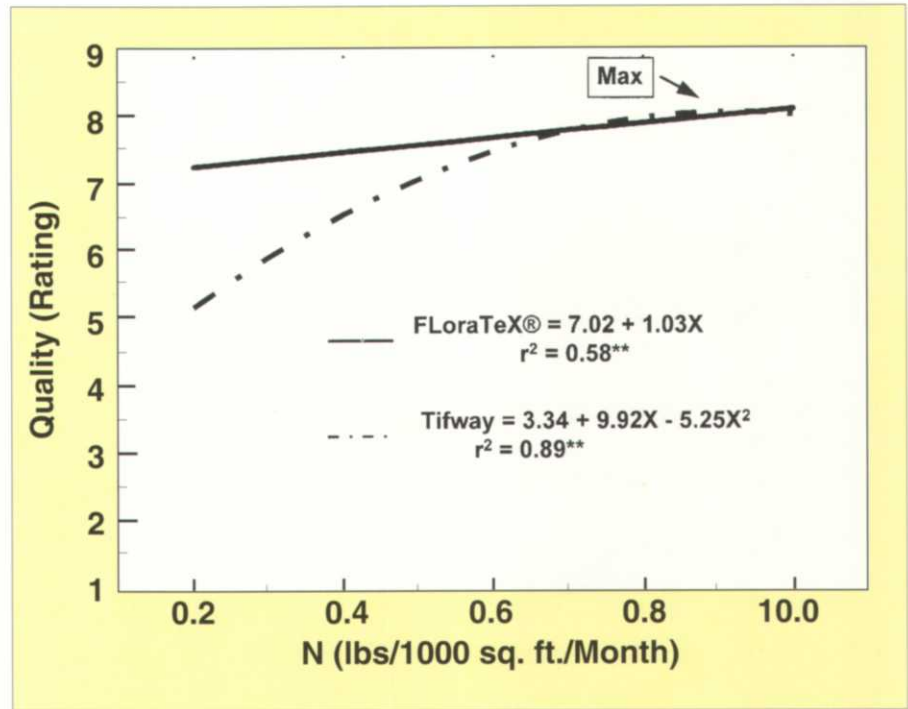


Figure 3. Average turf quality response of FloraTeX and Tifway bermudagrass cultivars to monthly nitrogen fertilization at Gainesville, Fla. from 1978 to 1980.

unique advantages as well as some disadvantages, and so it is with FloraTex® bermudagrass. How do you know if

FloraTeX® is a bermudagrass cultivar for you? You may never know unless you try it.



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The MEAN Season

Record summer rainfall and a nasty hurricane season kept many fairways like this under water too long to survive. Recovery will require time and understanding.

BY JOEL D. JACKSON, CGCS

Well, it's December 1st and the 1995 Hurricane Season is officially over. From Allison to Tanya, 19 named storms caused an estimated \$9.2 billion in damage to the United States. In Florida, we had another record breaking rainfall year and we felt the wrath of hurricanes Allison, Erin and Opal, and tropical storm Jerry.

Across the state, inundated golf courses and clubhouses were just a side bar to the stories of inaccessible neighborhoods and flooded communities. Cleaning up and restoring normal conditions to those areas will take hard work and patience.

The same is true for all the affected golf courses as we dealt with power outages, downed trees, erosion, silt deposits on the turf, continuously saturated root zones and flooded maintenance buildings.

Jeff Babineau, a sportswriter for The Orlando Sentinel, gets an "atta boy" for his article, "Rain puts a damper on local

golf." Several key points were made that the golfing public needed to hear:

- ".....the inclement weather has delayed the normal overseeding process that helps a golf course transition into the winter months..."
- "It wasn't fun to be closed....but the course was so soaked it just made no sense to be open."
- "....a wet golf course is vulnerable to damage by golf cart traffic.....deep tough-to-repair marks left in the soft sod."
- "The ground is so full of water the grass just starts to shut down...."
- "We're making the best of a problem that is really Mother Nature's."
- "The effect of all this rain can be devastating.....what can you do except hope it stops raining. A sentiment that renders a man - and a golf course - rather helpless."

Meanwhile, in a twist of irony, golf courses in the north and east were fighting just the opposite problem as record heat and drought turned their summer upside down.

Our courses were flooding and float-

ing away while there's were drying up and blowing away. Articles written by the USGA appeared in association newsletters, *Golf Journal* magazine and local newspapers to answer the complaints of poor course conditions.

My favorite piece comes from the Greater Cincinnati GCSA It has a lot of common sense that applies to course conditions everywhere. The italics are mine:

On The Road With The USGA

by Bob Brame, North Central Region

The harsh summer weather has left its mark on most operations, Nevertheless, a few courses have come through with minimal scars.

These are the courses golfers sometimes latch onto and say, "Gee, Truegreen C.C. (just down the street) looks good. The subtle question being, "Why doesn't this course?" "What happened here?" Such questions are not always easy to answer. Let's think about it.

First of all, every golf course is different. Golf courses can no more be accurately compared than you and I. Just like people



Flood waters caused erosion like this to greens and fairways bordering usually benign lakes, ponds and canals.

have similarities, so do courses. However, the other side is equally true. You could say (although discretion is important here), "Mr. Chairman, have you noticed Mr. Jones is tall and thin? Why aren't you?" "Ms. Smith has a 2 handicap; why don't you?"

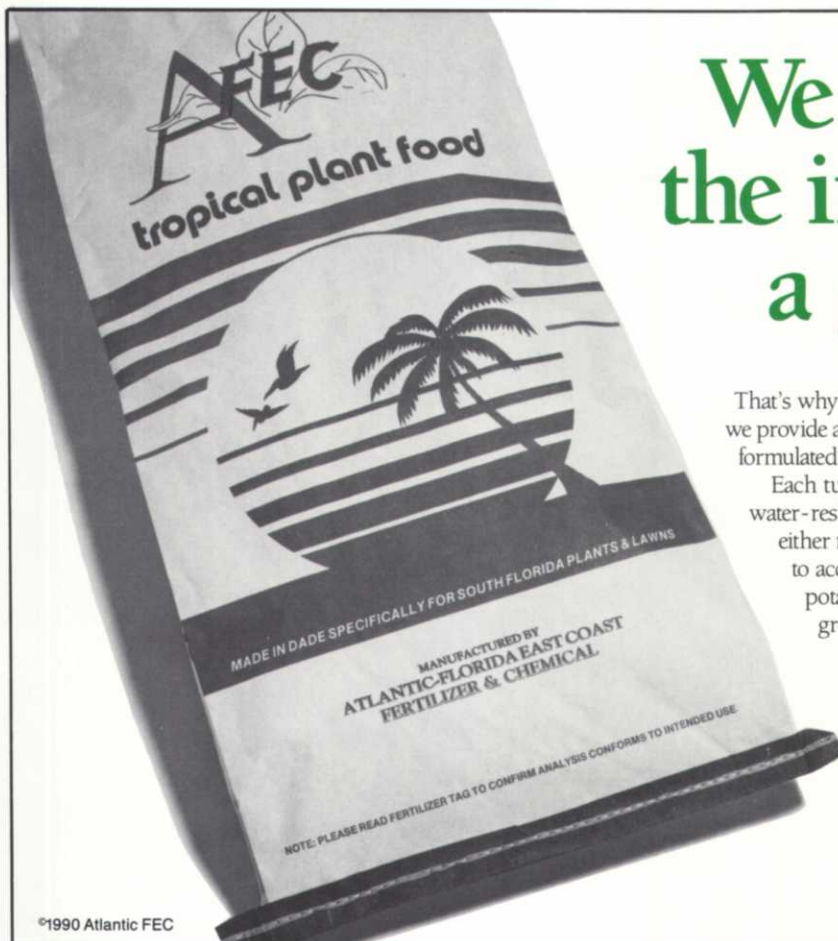
The foundational components that determine how a course will come through difficult weather are normally complex and hidden.

Superficial comparisons almost always over simplify the facts.

Golf turf management is a business/career for the superintendent, but most course officials (private clubs) approach it differently.

Normally, course conditioning for the non-paid official is on an emotional level. Bragging rights and pride are part of the equation

Sometimes this emotional approach from course officials, is subconscious. It is very important to stick with the facts when discussing why turf loss occurred and recognize the fact that you (the superintendent), are coming from



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a different perspective than the chairperson and/or course official. Don't argue. Don't personalize it. Be professional even in the face of emotional comments. *Positive communication always has been tougher than agronomics.* When reviewing the agronomics, of the 1995 summer season, start with the big four:

1. Grass Growing Environment
 - sunlight (especially early morning hours)
 - air movement
2. Mowing Height (bench setting, equipment & blade sharpness)
3. Fertility
4. Water Management
 - drainage (aerification)
 - irrigation capabilities

Limitations with one or more of these building blocks, allowed the harsh weather patterns to be more destructive. Water management looms as the single biggest weakness for many.

Ultra fast green speeds and low mowing heights was a close second. Now is the time to regroup, recover, review weaknesses and plan for 1996.

Golf is a game played *with* (not against) Mother Nature. Sometimes she scores better than others. Isn't that part of the attraction we all have for this game? Remember, grass is a renewable resource.

...

Finally, as an antidote for "The Mean Season" I offer the following piece which I received from the folks at TurfNet Associates, Inc.

It will be my greeting card for the holidays. It expresses sentiments I think we could all stand to live by. Take care one and all until we meet again!

Desiderata

Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly, and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant: they too have their own story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others you may become vain and bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your own achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble. It is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But, let this not blind you to what virtue there is: many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love, for in the face of all aridity it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. but do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline be gentle to yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars. You have a right to be here. And, whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be, and whatever your aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace with your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.

Strive to be happy.

written by Max Ehrmann

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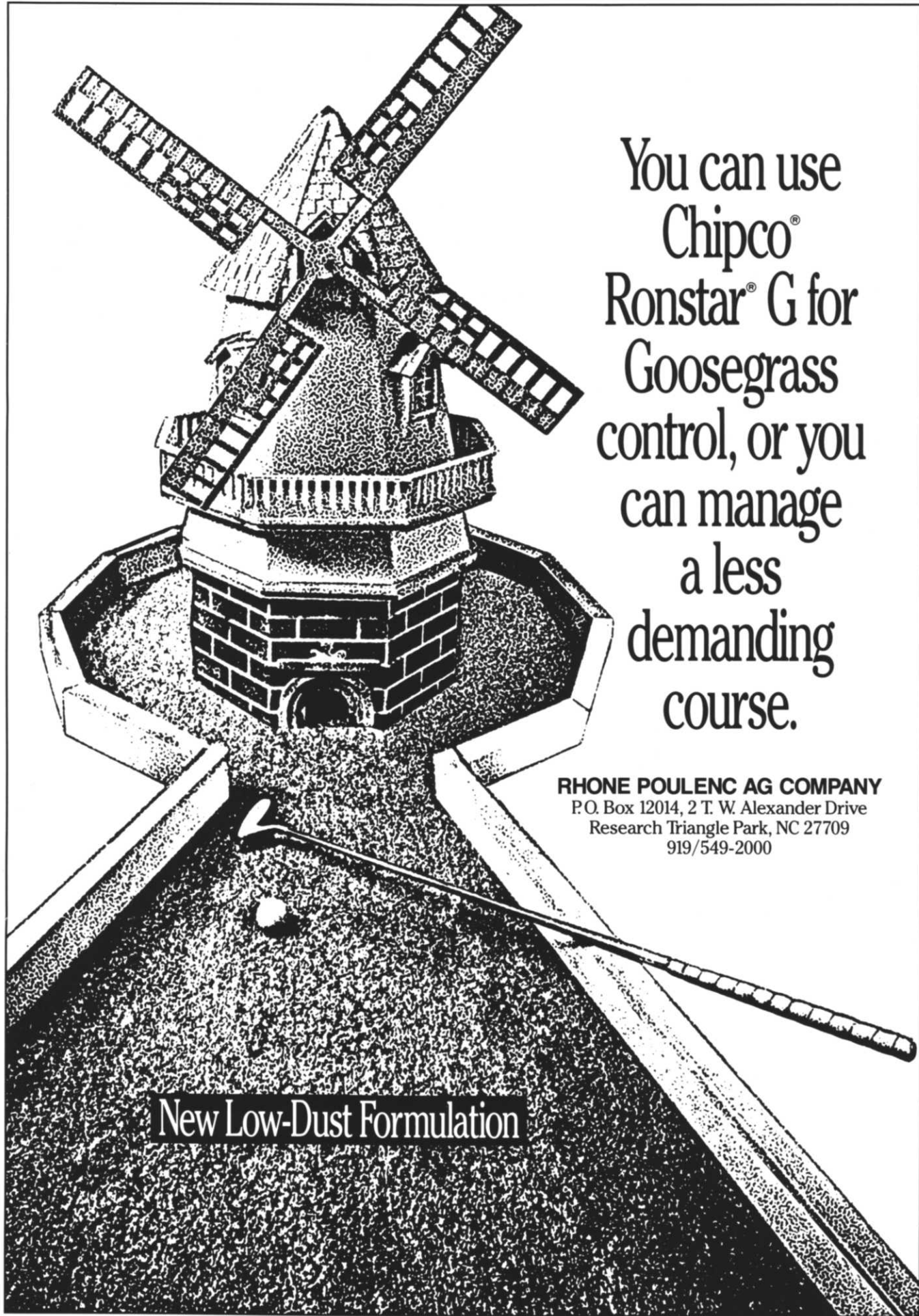
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New Low-Dust Formulation

In February, the greatest show on turf comes to Orlando in the form of the GCSAA's 67th Annual International Conference and Show. Though presented by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, nearly all of golf's allied

associations will be participating, making this event the largest and most comprehensive program staged for those involved in the design, construction, maintenance or operation of a golf facility.

Seizing the opportunity to learn

Mark My Words



Mark Jarrell

Mark Jarrell, CGCS Assistant Editor

There is no better opportunity available for learning the new issues, products, regulations and technology affecting our industry, or for brushing up on agronomic fundamentals. We expect a good turnout among Florida's golf course superintendents, since it's in our own backyard, but what about those who don't attend? What are their reasons for missing this opportunity, or various other seminars and educational programs available to them throughout the year?

If you ask them, various reasons are given — many of them quite legitimate — but it is my feeling that in most cases, the reason stated is a convenient rationalization, that the truth has more to do with their club's attitude about their attendance than with any authentic impediment. If a club discourages a superintendent from taking the time and/or money on educational

opportunities, no matter how subtly, the superintendent is likely to quit asking. Who wants to cause friction or drive a wedge between themselves and management? No one! So superintendents don't go to this or that function because they "had to fertilize tees that afternoon" or "had an irrigation problem" or any number of other excuses that obscure the fact that management at their club has little understanding or respect for what a superintendent does.

How else can it possibly be explained? If a club official does not encourage and support his superintendent's attendance at educational programs, he obviously does not understand what a dynamic industry the golf business is and how much there is to know. The business of being a professional golf course superintendent is a lifelong learning experience, and none of us can claim to know it all. I really believe that many people think that all our problems are spelled out in some golf course maintenance "cookbook," and that all we have to do to provide flawless playing conditions is look it up under the appropriate chapter.

When was the last time your golf pro called to discuss the pros and cons of using growth regulators, or your club manager informed you of new EPA regulations affecting your operation, or your green committee chairman knew what a VFD pump station was before you recommended installing one? Superintendents know that they have the most technical and diverse range of responsibilities in the golf course operation, but other decision makers may not. Maybe you've just been too darn busy to do a good selling job on the benefits of attending seminars and conferences and the absolute necessity

of continuing education, or maybe you're just too tired of fighting for adequate funding of your operation to argue for money to attend a conference and show.


For the budget-conscious official who questions the wisdom of spending the money to send his superintendent to the GCSAA's main event, equipment selection invariably provides the financial justification he is seeking. Where else can you evaluate all the available equipment under one roof? Most golf courses now carry about a \$500,000 equipment inventory and spend over \$40,000 a year to maintain and repair it. Just one trade show-based enlightened decision justifies the superintendent's travel expenses.

Another advantage of the GCSAA conference and show is the expertise of the manufacturer's reps who attend these shows. They can explain things that local distributors cannot. While the information is still fresh in your mind, you can walk over to a competitor's booth and make a valid comparison. And there are always show specials to save you money if you are able to make a purchasing decision.

For some of us, the best part of the annual conference and show is the positive mental effect it has upon us. It is very satisfying to attend an event of this magnitude that is focused upon us as professionals and primary customers. It is stimulating to share ideas with peers and hear how they have developed new ways to solve old problems. You return from the show refreshed

and renewed, better able to handle the demands of your job.

You are cheating yourself and your club by not attending several such educational opportunities each year. A good superintendent knows when he can and can't get away from his golf course and should be the one to make that decision. If you're one of those

superintendents who feels pressure to stay at home, or is outright denied the opportunity, show the schedule and conference agenda to the one giving resistance. Invite him or her to participate with you. Once they see the scope and quality of the GCSAA conference and show, it should be hard to refuse you in years to come. 

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I can recall the memory of thousands of sunrises and far too many sunsets.

I track the morning dew with herds of white tailed deer and flocks of wild turkeys.

I play hide and seek with the Barred owl and the Red-tailed hawk.



"I can recall the memory of thousands of sunrises..."

I watch in fascination the diving osprey and the soaring eagle.

I surprise sunning alligators and turtles as they splash into lakes.

I remove any number of serpents from harm's way or from creating harm.

I yield the pathways to the grey squirrel and brown rabbit making a dash for cover.

I feel frustration and contempt for those misguided souls who still call me "polluter."

I am a constant student of my craft. Learning from my peers and from turf specialists at national conferences, regional seminars and local chapter meetings.

I am a manager of resources. A leader. A planner. A team player.

I am a jack of all trades. From agronomist to zoologist.

I am counselor and disciplinarian to the unmotivated.

I am friend and mentor to those who earn my respect.

I am the receiver of the proverbial

buck. It always stops here!

I try to balance demands and expectations with budgets and reality.

I am challenged to please all golfers from scratch to 36 handicaps on the same day.

I am the expert problem solver unless my practical experience and classroom knowledge differs from the opinion of the purse holders or the nay sayers.

I often have as much job security as the next difference of opinion.

I court Mother Nature and often win her favor.

I have seen her wrath and seemingly capricious destruction beyond comprehension.

I am ironically held accountable for torrential rains and unrelenting drought.

I am expected to somehow turn muck and clay into sandy loam.

I bear red scaly cancerous patches on my skin from an on-going love/hate relationship with the sun. The dirt under my finger nails and the callouses on my hands have been earned in honest toil.

I dodge more lightning bolts and taste more rain drops than I should admit.

I still thrill to the grandeur of the changing seasons from spring buds to fall frost.

I meet some of the finest and most interesting people on earth in my work.

I seem to be driven by myself or others to deliver perfection in an imperfect world. No one seems to understand this paradox except those who walk in my shoes.

I am The Superintendent.

Green Side Up



Joel D. Jackson

Joel D. Jackson, CGCS Editor

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