

• **Safety Meetings**

- Are monthly safety meetings conducted?
- Is attendance of each meeting taken and topics of meeting documented?
- Are emergency phone numbers posted and updated?

• **Vacation and Leave of Absence**

- Do employees complete a request in writing for vacation and leave of absence?
- Is there a policy in effect concerning leave of absence and return to work? Do employees understand and sign this request?
- Are forms kept in employee's file?

• **Attendance and Tardiness**

- Is attendance and tardiness documented and kept in employee's file?
- Is there a monthly sheet kept for all employees?

• **Procedures of Termination**

- Is proper procedure followed prior to and when terminating an employee?
- Is appropriate paperwork completed?
- Are exit interviews conducted?

• **Invoices/Accounts Payable**

- Are copies made and kept in vendor files before submitting for payment?

- Are orders complete and prices correct before submitting for payment?

• **MSDS**

- Is the MSDS book current with sheets for chemicals, herbicides, insecticides, etc.?
- Is there an inventory of all chemicals, herbicides, insecticides and cleaning compounds and solvents in mechanic's shop and maintenance area?

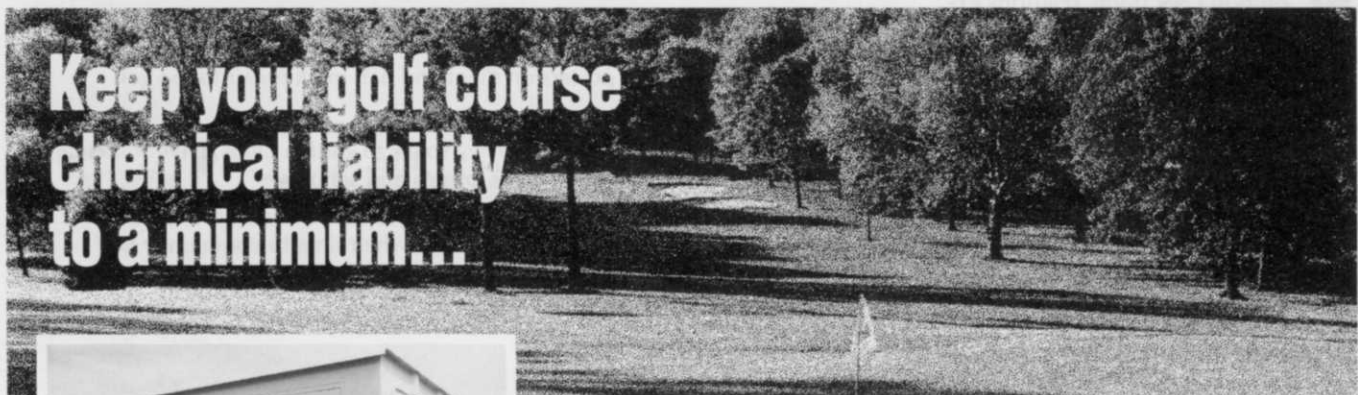
• **Insurance**

- Are materials readily available for employee's pertaining to insurance coverage?

• **Miscellaneous**

- Are copies of pesticide license(s) in one main file, as well as in employee's file?
- Are job descriptions written and given to employee pertaining to position and job expectations on the golf course?
- Is a Hazcom Policy in effect?
- Is a Hurricane Preparedness policy written, if applicable? Is it reviewed before each season?
- If applicable, are forms available in Spanish?

Thorough record-keeping at golf courses is required by law. Some superintendents may not be familiar with current laws and record requirements. There may be penalties involved if found negligent from non-enforcement. How many of the above items do you have completed?



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# Public relations is part of the job!



**Y**ou don't see public relations experience high on any list of qualifications for a golf course superintendent. Yet in the long run, the successful superintendents are the ones who recognize and practice good public relations within their clubs. There are several initiatives you should be aware of:

- A series of three syndicated news articles released by the GCSAA focusing on:

- 1) superintendents as community assets,

## 10 Ways Superintendents Promote

Usually, the superintendent isn't thought of as the marketer for the golf course. But, superintendents *can and do* have a big impact in promoting the golf course beyond providing premiere playing conditions. Here are a few of their public relations efforts:

1. Publish bulletins to local residents about chemical use on the golf course, explain IPM programs and pesticide methodologies and other aspects of golf course management.
2. Post GCSAA's Greentips in the pro shop or club house. This series of fact sheets provides important information to golfers such as golf car use, frost delays, recycling and pesticide use.
3. Provide regular lawn-care tips to the local news paper.
4. Write articles for publication in professional journals, such as Golf Course Management magazine.
5. Give reporters legitimate news, such as information about an upcoming tournament.
6. Invite reporters and other key contacts to play golf at the course.
7. Inform golfers in advance of construction or maintenance practices. Then golfers can schedule guests when the course is in top condition.
8. Invite school children to see what golf courses do for the environment.
9. Provide instructional posters on divot and ball mark repair to the golf professional.
10. Contribute to the community. They speak to garden clubs, environmental organizations, civic and business groups and schools.

**Statistics:** Fifty per cent of GCSAA members volunteer their time in nongolf community activities and 72 percent donate their time to community golf events.

*Reprinted from GCSAA's July August 1997 Leaderboard*

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2) superintendents and the Audubon School Program and

3) superintendents and their importance in the game of golf.

We will be running these articles here so you can clip or copy and use them at your club or in your community.

• FTGA launches pro-turf campaign. Pro golfer, Lee Janzen is featured in several public service announcements. Five huge billboards touting the merits of turfgrass sprouted up in five locations in Florida early this past spring as part of an ambitious public-relations campaign by the Florida Turfgrass Association. The campaign is an effort by the association to create awareness of one of the state's most precious natural resources..

Besides turf's obvious positive benefits for the general livelihood of the populace, the FTGA advertisements and promotional pieces point out that the turfgrass industry in Florida generates nearly \$15 million in expenditures annually. Almost 4.5 million acres of turfgrass exist in Florida, employing 185,000 people.

• FGCSA Video. A recently completed

*A recently completed video is being made available to all superintendents for employees, members, owners and the general public.*

project by the FGCSA, this video is being made available to all superintendents in Florida to use as an informational tool for employees, members, owners and the general public. It promotes the role of the superintendent in managing golf courses as a community asset and the positive influence a golf course can have on the environment.

Our industry has made public relations a key mandate this year. Use the sidebar on 10 ways superintendents promote and the following "Field of Dreams" syndicated article to do a little public relations on your own.

## Superintendents are creating real fields of dreams

Whether you live in a well-developed urban setting, a sprawling suburban tract or a small rural community, it's likely that many of the people you interact with are golf enthusiasts.

Those who enjoy the sport are aware of the key person at the golf course when it comes to providing maximum enjoyment of the game.

A recent survey by *Golf Digest* revealed that nearly 50 percent of its readers indicated the golf course superintendent as the most important individual at their facility. That figure surpassed combined selections of the golf professional, course champion, club house manager and beverage facility personnel.

The golf course superintendent is the professional entrusted with the management and maintenance of the course. It's a responsibility that has grown in impor-

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tance during the past three decades as golfers have come to demand optimal conditions for playing the game.

Those heightened expectations have been largely fueled by expanding television coverage of professional golf events that highlight the nation's top courses. Also, budget limitations, unpredictable weather patterns, governmental regulations and increased participation all have an impact on the superintendents' operations.

"You won't find one member of the profession who doesn't say their career is a challenge," says Paul McGinnis, certified golf course superintendent and president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

There was a time when a person could climb the career ladder from a maintenance crew member to staff assistant to superintendent through on-the-job training.

But the level of knowledge necessary

*The golf course superintendent is the professional entrusted with the management and maintenance of the course. It's a responsibility that has grown in importance during the past three decades.*

to manage and maintain healthy turfgrass, administer large budgets and comply with environmental, safety and employee regulations has made education paramount.

The vast majority of superintendents have two- or four-year degrees in turfgrass science, agronomy or biology. This professional background is often supplemented with continuing education courses provided by organizations such as the GCSAA.

"I think most people get into this profession for two reasons," McGinnis says. "No. 1, many of us grew up on a golf course either as a worker or playing the

game. And No. 2, superintendents have a love for the outdoors and environmental stewardship. We understand what it takes to manage a facility so that it is a benefit to the community."

Golf courses also are becoming outdoor classrooms for schools, civic groups and junior golf programs. It's not unusual for people to take to the course, not in search of birdies, but of animals, aquatic life, various plant species, composting projects and nature trails.

"The facilities not only offer recreation, but provide an environmental sanctuary to numerous plant and animal species," McGinnis says.

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## Florida's Davis and Grigg serve on EPIC's first advisory board

EPIC of Wisconsin, producer of the videomagazine "Golf & Environment," has created its first professional advisory board. Also, G&E's focus will expand to educational topics while still maintaining an environmental angle.

The new board includes several superintendents — Darren Davis of Olde Florida GC in Naples, Fla.; Gary Grigg, CGCS at Royal Poinciana GC in Naples; Ted Horton, CGCS at the Pebble Beach Co., on California's Monterey Peninsula; Paul Latshaw of Congressional CC in Bethesda, Md.; Ken Mangum, CGCS at Atlanta Athletic Club in Duluth, Ga., and a GCSAA director; and Don Tolson, CGCS at Fox Hollow at Lakewood in Lakewood, Colo.

Association members of the board are Joe O'Brien, chief operating officer at GCSAA; Jim Moore of the USGA; and Ron Dodson, president of Audubon International.

Industry members are golf course architect Rees Jones; Tim Young of Rain Bird Sales Inc.; Bill Rose of Tee-2-Green Corp.; Clair Peterson of John Deere & Co.; Jim Biehl of Excel Communications Inc.; and Jim Becker, Sandy Schmieder and Jeff Litrenta of EPIC of Wisconsin.

-GCSAA Online

### Lights, Camera, Action

## Peter Jacobsen, Ken Venturi, Dan Quayle top GCSAA Show cast

Casting is complete and the show is almost ready for viewing. Get your tickets now! GCSAA has announced another

star-studded lineup for the 69th International Golf Course Conference and Show.

Leading off will be keynote speaker Peter Jacobsen, a veteran PGA Tour golfer widely known for his humor and family commitment. Later in the week, former Vice President Dan Quayle will be the featured speaker at the Environmental General Session.

Wrapping up the conference will be the presentation of the 1998 Old Tom Morris Award to legendary golfer and television personality Ken Venturi. For a musical climax to the conference, singing star, Trisha Yearwood will serenade the audience.

Between all the superstars above, a cast of thousands will be involved in presenting and attending the greatest show in turf for you the superintending public. Come one, come all, and register and be educated and entertained in Anaheim, Cal., Feb. 2-8, 1998.

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## FGCSA joins associations seeking to unite state's golf industry through Florida Golf Alliance

Ten prominent golf associations in the state are attempting to do what the Florida Golf Council couldn't do a few years ago: unite and focus the golf industry in Florida.

The golf industry in Florida is big business, employs lots of people, pays lots of taxes, but gets very little representation in matters of commerce, tourism and government regulation.

Those of us in the turf management side of the business have been looking for years for a way to marshal the golfers and golf course owners in the fight to protect the industry from unfair regulation and taxation. Perhaps this new initiative will bear fruit in the search for a voice for all of golf in Florida.

Jack Brennan of the Golf Association of Florida has been the point man in handling the preliminary paperwork and organizing meetings.

Founding members who have pledged seed money to form the alliance are: Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association, Florida Turfgrass Association, PGA Tour, LPGA Tour, Tommy Armour Golf Tour, Florida Club Managers Association, Sprint Titleholders Championship, GTE Classic, North Florida Section PGA, and South Florida Section PGA.



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## (Re)build it and they will come

**T**here are several reasons to rebuild or remodel a golf course or portions of it.

Probably the number-one reason is to restore the integrity and playability of the golf course.

Wear and tear by man, machine and the elements take a toll on the turf and the infrastructure like drainage, irrigation and cart paths. All of these processes disfigure the course from its original design.

Advancements in the game itself of-

ten challenge the owners or members of a course to reroute holes, add or eliminate bunkers, add tees, plant trees or just make overall improvements to the facility to make it attractive to new members and remain competitive in the marketplace.

If your club is thinking of rebuilding or remodeling your course, the American Society of Golf Course Architects has several free brochures that may be of some help in your planning: *Selecting Your Golf Course Architect*; *Remodeling Your Golf Course* and *Golf Course Devel-*

*opment Planning Guide*. These brochures may be obtained by writing or calling the ASGCA at 221 LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 6061; (312) 372-7090.

The Golf Course Builders Association of America also has valuable information in its cost and estimating guide. Contact the GCBAA at 920 Airport Rd. #230, Chapel Hill, NC 27514; (919) 942-8922.

Finally, the National Golf Foundation has several useful publications. Contact the NGF at 1150 S. U.S. One, Jupiter, FL 34477; (561) 744-6006.

### The Forest Country Club: Starting over from scratch

BY BILL KILPATRICK

*Freelance Writer*

It isn't often a decision is made to tear up an existing golf course and start over again more or less from scratch.

But that's what the board of directors of Fort Myers' The Forest Country Club decided to do with the 36-hole golf course community's Bobcat course, the result being that as of May 5 of this year it was shut down for what was billed as "an extensive \$1.5 million renovation."

The line between completely rebuilding a golf course and renovating it can be pretty thin, and in the case of The Forest, the Bobcat project is right on the razor's edge. Just about everywhere you look you see and hear the roar of bulldozers and graders, see and hear the ponderous clanking of massive mechanical shovels, see and hear the crunch of ditch-digging backhoes.

"This is the first major overhaul the course has received since it was built over 10 years ago," said The Forest superintendent Rick Tatum, the man ramrodding the project. "We're leaving Nos. 10 through 13 pretty much as is except for enlarging the greens, but the rest of the course is being extensively worked over."

When completed, the revised Bobcat



*Going up* — When completed, rebuilding project at The Forest will have used 42,000 cubic yards of fill to raise the level of 10 of the Bobcat course fairways, some by as much as 2 feet as shown here on No. 2. Photo by Bill Kilpatrick.



*Big noise* — The roar, thump and clank of heavy construction equipment has been a summer-long constant on The Forest's rebuilt Bobcat course. Looking back toward the tee, the fairway on No. 16 has been recontoured, its drainage improved. Photo by Bill Kilpatrick.



will feature bigger greens, some of which have been enlarged as much as 50 percent. In addition to being bigger, they'll be somewhat unique.

"USGA specs for a green call for a four-inch layer of gravel," said Tatum, "but we've eliminated the gravel to facilitate percolation of water down through the soil.

"The purpose of the gravel is to enable a green to hold water, but when you're in a geographic area that gets 100 inches of rain a year, holding water isn't exactly something you have to worry about. If you allow the water to be held you risk algae problems, especially in shady areas. Besides, with our sprinkler setup any of our greens can get all the water they need."

Tatum added that doing away with gavel and thus facilitating percolation of water also helps get rid of salt in a soil profile.

Also certain to be noticed on the revised Bobcat will be enlarged and leveled tees.

"The tees will be pointing down the fairways, too," said Tatum, adding that with the Bobcat course such wasn't always the case.

Although some fairways and greens are being recontoured, the changes implemented by Sarasota golf course designer Chip Powell and Clearwater contractor MGI, Inc. are subtle as opposed to dramatic. For example, golfers familiar with the Bobcat of the past will notice that on some greens putts that once curved right will instead curve left. Otherwise, the course will play pretty much as it always has.

But if it's drama you crave, consider that the levels of 10 fairways are being raised to improve drainage, an undertaking that required moving 42,000 cubic yards of fill. The fill was extracted from what will — when the project is completed — be seven acres of lakes, some of them new, some extensions of existing lakes.

One of the most dramatic features of the project overall is raising the level of No. 2 fairway by two feet.

"That fairway's always been a problem," said Tatum. "During the rainy season it often was under water, or if not under water then too soggy for a golf cart to drive over. It was a pain to mow, too."

He said that when all the new drainage

is in place and all grading is completed, the fairways and tees would be planted in GN-1, so-called Norman grass. The greens will be planted in Floradwarf.

"We've given the Floradwarf a thorough test and like the way it performs," said Tatum. "It's resilient, has a high density, and can be mowed to a lower height, as low as 1/10th-of-an-inch. In fact, mowed to that height it has greater density than Tifdwarf mowed to 1/4-inch. They claim it has density comparable to bentgrass, and in every test we've conducted here at The Forest, the claim seems to be right on the money."

Tatum is more than enthusiastic about the potential of the new ultradwarf grasses, and says it's only a matter of time until all South Florida greens are planted in one of the new varieties.

"They grow in faster and they mature faster," he said. "In fact, they could be the best thing that has happened to courses down here in 30 years."

Southwest Florida being where and what it is, Tatum's admittedly overriding concern throughout has been the weather; considering the extent of the work being done, the region's rainy season isn't exactly conducive to the rebuilding of an entire golf course.

"Our target date to open is November 1," said Tatum. "Right now we're about halfway. But if we get a few breaks from the weather, we should be right on schedule."

## Rebuilding projects done in-house

BY JOE ONDO, CGCS

*Winter Pines Golf Club*

### Greens

The decision to rebuild our worst greens was based on several factors:

(1) Some of the greens with Tifgreen 328 surfaces were acceptable when

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overseeded, but not in the spring and summer months.

(2) Our play in the summer months was increasing and we wanted to give our players better greens all year round.

(3) The drainage was poor due to the underlying muck soil and low spots developed as the muck settled.

(4) We could not keep consistent ball roll between the Tifgreen 328 and Tifdwarf greens.

We felt that we had nine greens that needed to be improved. Six had "328" surfaces and three were already Tifdwarf, but needed help.

Since we are a public golf course, we decided we would only do one green a year to minimize the impact to our players. We have completed eight greens so far with only one of the "328" greens to go.

After deciding which green we would do first, a temporary green was cut-in and trained on a high and dry spot in the fairway. We made it about 2,500 square feet because we figured we would be using it about three months. The players didn't seem to mind playing one temporary green when they saw the changes we were making to improve the hole.

The only additional equipment we needed for the project was a trencher for the drain lines. We did rent a small dump truck to use on a couple of greens, but our bridges wouldn't handle the weight so we did the bulk of our hauling of greens mix and gravel with our two trucksters, a Jacobsen T-2000 and a EZ-Go GXT 1500 with dump beds. They could haul about 1/3 of a yard at a time. We were able to place some of the materials on nearby empty lots, but it still was a lot of hauling.

The old putting surface sod was cut, stripped and hauled away. Then we trenched in a herringbone pattern drain field with a "smile" drain along the front edge of the putting surface. On the muck-based greens we used choker sand to help drainage and stabilize low areas in the profile. Most greens were already too low so none were cored out. Rather, we built them up and added fill to tie into the slope contour and sodded the banks.

Some of the greens were kept about the same size, but if we felt it too small, we

added mix to make more pin locations. The shaping was done by myself and the crew with a tractor and box blade attachment. Then we went over it with a sand pro till we were satisfied with the look.

Sprinklers were moved if necessary and the soil was watered and packed. Fumigation was done by an outside contractor and the plastic tarp removed a few days later. Then each green was sprigged with Tifdwarf at the rate of 30 bushels per thousand square feet. We grew them in for at least eight weeks unless weather or timing pushed back our opening date.

The problem with doing one green a year was there was no guarantee we would get the same Tifdwarf the next year, but it was an improvement over what we had. Some mutation and contamination has occurred and we have tried to plug some of it out and stay ahead of it as best we can.

For the most part, the crew enjoyed the challenge of the project while still maintaining the golf course for play. Some of the flymow and edging work got put on hold for a little longer than we would have liked, but overall the golf course was kept maintained pretty well.

### Tees

The rebuilding of our tee tops has been another continuing project. Some of the tees built in 1968 had become "crowned" from top dressing over the years. They were also too small to handle the wear from our steadily increasing play.

The areas around the tees to be improved were shot with a transit to see how large we could make them. The sod was stripped and stacked nearby to be replaced after we finished the alterations. We used the tractor with box blade to level, widen and extend each tee as needed. We packed the soil and shot it again with the transit to make sure it was level. Then we replaced the sod, rolled it, top dressed it and opened it for play.

### Drainage

During the wet summer we had two or three years ago, some of other pushed-up greens that had no drainage began to have problems. We decided to solve the

problem by installing a drain field without rebuilding the entire green. Again, we cut a temporary green but this time only for a day. We cut a herringbone pattern on the green with a sod cutter and saved the sod. Then we brought in plywood to lay along the sod cuts for the rented trencher to ride on.

The plywood made cleaning up the dirt easier and protected the green from being rutted. The pipe and gravel were installed in the trenches and the top of the drain field was kept at least 8 inches below the surface so they wouldn't interfere with future cup setting. An air vent was installed in the drainpipe where it extended into the collar to aid in better drainage flow. Greensmix was used to fill top 8 inches of the trenches and watered and packed. The sod was laid back down as it had come out and then packed.

The green was back open as soon as we were done that day. Some settling did occur, and those areas were hand topdressed as needed. We have done five greens this way so far.

Whether rebuilding greens, tees or adding drainage, everything we do helps make Winter Pines a little better golf course for everyone to play and enjoy.

## *Pine Tree Golf Club* **The Restoration of a Dick Wilson Classic**

In 1961 Dick Wilson created a great masterpiece, the Pine Tree Golf Club, in Boynton Beach. The course quickly gained a national reputation by being honored in the Top Ten of Golf Digest's top 100 courses in the country. The course, virtually untouched since 1961, has consistently held that honor.

This summer, architect Ron Forse, who recently successfully restored Indian Creek in Miami, will bring back Wilson's design at Pine Tree. Working from photos commissioned by Ben Hogan, greens that have risen two feet from 36 years of top dressing will be lowered and enlarged to the original specifications.

The goal is to have a rebirth of the superb layout crafted by Wilson in 1961.