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Turf industry mourns passing of true legend

Thomas Mascaro of Pompano Beach died May 6 at the age of 81. He is survived by his wife Dorothy; sons John and Bobby; daughters Tammy Shackelford, Linda Owens and Stella Churchill; nine grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Tom had been active in the golf course industry for the past 65 years. He also was an inventor with eight patents and over 70 turf-related products to his name. His greatest claims to fame are the 1946 development of the aerifier for cultivating turfgrass and the verticut mower in 1952 for removing thatch. These inventions revolutionized golf course management.

He also won the prestigious USGA Green Section award, the GCSAA Distinguished Service Award and hundreds of other turf-related awards. He even has a museum, named the Mascaro-Steiniger Turfgrass Museum, on the campus of Penn State University.

He was former president of West Point

Products in West Point, Pa., and also former president of Turf-Tec International in Oakland Park, which is now being run by his son, John.

A private service was held on May 17. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be sent to the Golf Course Superintendents Association Foundation's Historical Preservation Fund, (913) 832-3607.

♦♦♦♦

Every member of the turf industry has been affected by Tom Mascaro. Our very thinking of modern cultural practices originated from his vision and inventions. He was the truest of turf professionals in our time, and we will miss his envelope-pushing creativity.



Tom Mascaro with UF pathologist Dr. Monica Elliott. Janlark photo.

We could fill pages with anecdotes, stories and tributes from those who have known and worked with Tom over the years, but instead we offer a poem submitted by David Bailey that was written by Tom and was read at his funeral. It comes from the hand, the heart and soul of one of turf's greatest stewards.

Joel D. Jackson, CGCS

26-year Disney vet Larry Kamphaus passes away

Larry Kamphaus, CGCS, of Disney's Magnolia G.C. in Orlando died Monday, June 9, 1997 at the age of 54.

Larry had been with the Walt Disney World company for 26 years.

He started with Disney by working in landscape helping to plant the now majestic oaks on Hotel Plaza Blvd when Disney World was just a one building Preview Center off Interstate 4.

He moved into golf course maintenance to grow in the Magnolia and Palm courses and had been involved in the development of all the remaining 99 holes



of golf at Disney World, including the Lake Buena Vista, Oak Trail, Eagle Pines and Osprey Ridge courses. He became a Certified Golf Course Superintendent in 1985.

From 1980 to 1996 he had served as the head superintendent of Disney's Golf

Course Maintenance, hosting two GCSAA Golf Championships and had been involved in all 26 of the Disney-Oldsmobile Golf Classic PGA Tour events and the three LPGA Healthsouth events.

Larry was a member of the GCSAA, FTGA and Florida GCSA. He served on GCSAA Conference and Show Committees; was a Director of the FTGA; and held all offices in the Central Florida Chapter.

He and his wife Vilma had co-chaired the Central Florida Crowfoot Open Committee for over a decade. He also served many years on the Turf Advisory Council for the Orange County Extension Service. In 1992 Larry was awarded the President's Award for Lifetime Service by the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association.

He is survived by his wife Vilma; daughter Nicole; sons Larry, Jr. and Lance; and grandson Austin.



Grass is indeed the benediction of Mankind

*Into Life we come, mysteriously arrived,
Great are our wants, so little we know
We see only mountains, the Sea and the
sand.*

*But we take for granted the plants, that
grow upon the land.*

*Nor do we see the blanket of Green that
covers the earth.*

*Nor do we realize how much the blanket of
Green is worth.*

*For the Family of Grass feeds and sustains
our body and soul!*

*Bread from corn, and wheat, and rye, and
oats are man's goal.*

*And Grass sustains creatures who change it
into meat and eggs and milk*

That Feed Our Body

*We walk upon this green carpet of Grass.
We play upon it while children run
and roll.*

*It is our playground of recreation and sports
and games that feed our minds and
souls*

*And Grass prevents our land from washing
into the Sea*

*And stops dust from blinding and choking
us, and provides clean air for you and
me.*

*But the needs of humanity would never
have been,*

*Were it not for the Thinkers, the Dreamers
and Scientists*

*Who created Machines and Tools and
Methods to make it possible.*

*To feed the body and Soul of People of the
World.*

*Finally, we bow down our heads to enter
the Earth and we,*

*Have a blanket of green Grass to cover our
body and Soul.*

For our long sleep into Eternity

— by Tom Mascaro

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A Course Worth Its

A day at Sailfish Point is just another day in paradise.

The 14th green and the St. Lucie Inlet.



Salt

Paradise

BY JOEL D. JACKSON, CGCS

It is a sunny May morning in the town of Stuart on Florida's Treasure Coast. There is a light southeasterly sea breeze blowing in off the Atlantic Ocean. I'm standing on the southern tip of Hutchinson Island with Craig Baker, superintendent of the Sailfish Point Golf Club, watching the incoming tide in the St. Lucie inlet surge through large culvert pipes that connect the inlet and the golf course.

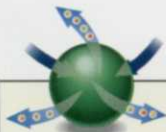
The sparkling sea water in shades of turquoise and green fills the waterway in front of the 14th green and pushes on to the other lakes and ponds on the course. A school of silver mullet scatters in panic in the gin-clear shallows of a sand bar as a large snook prowls the edge of the channel.

At that moment I want to put down the camera and tape recorder and go fishing instead of doing a golf story.

I wonder how Craig and his staff can possibly carry out their duties without



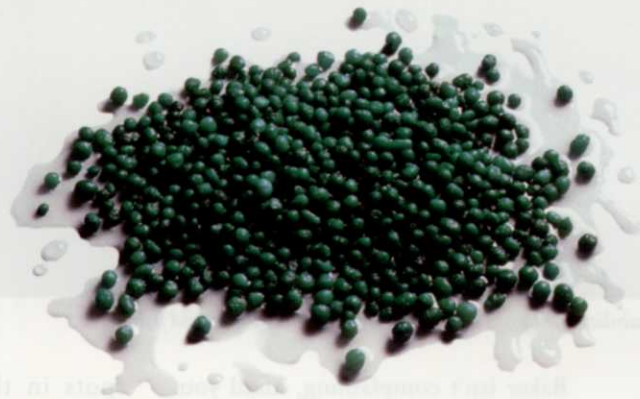
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"No mow" zones like this one on hole #3 help stabilize the banks and provide habitat for birds and fish.

daydreaming of wetting a line or getting distracted by striking fish and the constant stream of fishing boats and yachts slipping past the course leaving trails of white foam in the blue waters. It is truly a paradise setting. But paradise comes with a price, and I don't mean just land values.

Surrounded by salt water and under a constant breeze, Sailfish Point is a challenge to maintain to the high standards expected by both members and superintendent Craig Baker.

"The weather we experience here has had the most influence on my maintenance programs than at any other course I have managed," said Baker. "I have seen salt crystals as thick as frost on the course when the winds are really blowing. I have even had salt burn on the riverside part of the course once from a northerly wind during a severe cold front.

"Sometimes the wind can blow for a month at a time when a high pressure area settles in. That makes it impossible to spray for weeds and pests and it also affects the irrigation coverage."

Baker isn't complaining, mind you. He has had to adjust his turf management practices to work with what Mother Nature gives him.

"Our irrigation water tends to have a high salt index as you might expect since we're on a coastal barrier island. During the winter when more people are here, we can dilute our irrigation water with effluent, but in the summer we have to rely solely on the deep well."

Salinity of the soils is also a challenge for Baker.

"A lot of the soil here is dredged up river bottom and it has a very fine texture so not much leaches through, including the brackish irrigation water. So from time to time we apply gypsum, but I haven't seen much response. We do use it annually on the greens because they have a sandier profile. We also use an acid injection system called Phairway to help balance the pH of the soil."

Because several of the fairways had high saline and sodic areas, Baker brought in a few pieces of Adelaide paspalum grass and started plugging it in to the bare

spots in the fairways and roughs. Paspalum is a fine-textured grass with the ability to thrive in poor soils. It can be very aggressive and get thatchy, but it can be managed and provide a turf that can live in areas where bermudagrass doesn't do well.

Baker says there is no real competition between the grasses.

"The Adelaide does well where the 419 can't and vice versa. The paspalum will go off color during intense drought conditions, but at least I've got something I can grow in the salty areas. We just keep adding plugs to thin spots. One fairway was over one-third bare when I first came here now we only have a few difficult spots left to contend with."

Baker and his staff do get to do "normal" turf maintenance besides dealing with salty air, water and land. The condition of the gently rolling Nicklaus-designed course reflects the dedication and teamwork of the maintenance department.

There have been modifications to the course since it opened in 1981, and Baker



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Early morning view from behind #4 green. The #3 green and the Indian River are in the background. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

has been there from the rebuilding of the greens in 1988 to the ongoing drainage work in some of the fairways and bunkers.

Baker said, "Last month we had a week of rain totaling 14.65 inches with the last 7.25 inches all falling on a Wednesday. We were open by Friday. We can take spring and summer rains, but when we have the fall flood tides and a wet cold front we stay wetter. There have been sometime periods in the fall when I won't water fairways for 30 to 40 days."

Another modification Baker introduced was the taller cut along the banks of the water hazards.

"The banks used to be kept mowed down to the shortest possible Flymow height. We started having erosion problems from heavy rains and the rising and falling tides. We even had to install some bulkheads to keep from losing a green.

"We raised the height of cut and just go in and trim it when needed. A side benefit is that we now basically have a (no

mow) zone along our waterways that helps to capture and filter any possible runoff."

Baker and his staff are charged with keeping the Tifdwarf greens medium fast to fast all year long so the greens are kept rolling from 8.5 to 10.5 on the Stimpmeter. Baker "interseeds" with light rates of *Poa trivialis* in the fall. This year he put out only 5 to 6 pounds per thousand square feet and he rarely exceeds 8 pounds in a typical year.

One of the benefits of the oceanfront location is that the temperatures do stay quite a bit warmer than the inland courses. It takes a really hard freeze to affect the turf here.

Baker also rolls his greens on Mens Day and Ladies Day, sometimes expanding that to three to four rollings per week. The height of cut in season is at 1/8th of an inch.

Since play is seasonal at Sailfish Point, Baker and his staff carry out most of the project work from May to October while

still preparing the course for the 20 to 30 players that might tee it up during the summer months.

In the fall and winter, play can average anywhere from 175 to 240 players a day giving little time except for course grooming. This summer work is under way preparing a short-game practice area near the clubhouse just left of the eighteenth fairway.

Later the bridges on holes #2 and #7 will be reworked to replace the planking and cross beams. Then there are over 200 landscape beds to be reshaped and refurbished. Without a dedicated landscape crew, this work falls to the golf maintenance staff to take care of as part of their routine.

Baker recalled one of the more difficult landscape jobs they had to perform.

"We lost a huge sea grape in the cart path turnaround on the Number 2 and 7 double tee island during the 1989 freeze. We wanted a specimen plant to replace it so we bought a large phoenix *robellini*