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SPOTLIGHT

... continued from page 8

Turf Expo for making it another big success. See Jim Walker's report elsewhere in this section.

Suncoast

President Bob Gwodz hosted our 2004 Annual Meeting at the Sara Bay C.C. in May, and we are looking forward to our annual Pro-Superintendent Tournament at the Mission Valley C.C., and the always well-attended Grounds Management Seminar at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens.

Treasure Coast

The Johns Island Club hosted a USGA Green Section Program in April that discussed golf course maintenance issues including aerification and shade. Jim Snow, John Foy and Todd Lowe gave the audience of general managers, green chairmen, and other club officials along with superintendents the whys and wherefores of turf maintenance. Most dramatic were the slides showing the effects of shade on turfgrass and how much the turf improved when sunlight was allowed to shine on the grass.

External Vice President Ralph Dain presented the FGCSA with \$5,000 Research Fund donation at the spring board meeting in Naples. Cody Butte, superintendent of the Loblolly Pines Golf Club, had the course in beautiful shape for the 11th Annual Blue Pearl Tournament, which raised around \$20,000. This annual charity event benefits our area schools and their commitment to environmental awareness.

Nobody scored an ace in the hole-in-one contest on the No. 2 hole to take home the \$10,000 cash prize, but the team of Hal Hicks, Chris Deariso, John Katterheinrich and Chris Miller took first place in the four-man scramble. Thanks to Joel Jackson, FGCSA director of communications, for coming down and being our spotter on the contest hole. Contestants got a look at the

Florida Golf Environmental and Economic Impact display board that we use to educate legislators, regulators and the media about the golf industry in Florida. Brian MacCurrach from Bayer Environmental Sciences auctioned off a Bayer Power Pack for \$2,000 to Paul Crawford who picked up nice savings on Chipco Choice, Revolver, Signature, Delta Guard and Finale. Proceeds of the auction are donated back to the chapter.

West Coast

External Vice President Chris Ansley proudly presented a \$7,000 Research Donation check to FGCSA President Greg Pheneager at the spring board meeting in Naples. The funds were the result of our annual Bud Quandt Tournament held this year at the Tampa Palms G.C.

Florida GCSA

Joel Jackson, FGCSA DOC, participated in National Minority Golf Foundation's Career Expo, which was held in conjunction with its annual Minority College National Golf Championship May 6-9. It is the 18th year for this event and the seventh year it has been held at the PGA Club in St. Lucie. One hundred twenty-five players from 21 Division I & II colleges and universities participated. In a follow-up event, Andy MacGuire, president of the North Florida GCSA, participated in a panel discussion for an NMGF Interns Orientation program held at TPC Headquarters in Ponte Vedra Beach. This weekend event was to familiarize minority college interns who would be working in various aspects of the golf industry during the upcoming summer.

Joel joined golf course architect Ron Garl on a cable TV show hosted by Ron Heller. The show was taped on June 7 and aired the following Tuesday and Friday on the BrightHouse Network at 9 p.m. The topic was the positive benefits of golf courses to the community and environment.

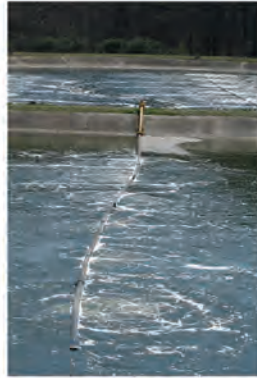
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12th Hole Royal Golf Course Photo by Daniel Zelazek



Heritage Palms Golf Club

A Tale of Two Palms

By Joel Jackson

The name Heritage Palms intrigued me from the very first time I set foot on the property in November of 1998, but I didn't do any investigative reporting at the time to inquire what the name signified. It wasn't until I became immersed in doing this cover story that it finally dawned on me, and only because of the names of the two 18-hole golf courses, Royal and Sabal.

If you know anything about Ft. Myers at all, you know that the road from downtown to Thomas Edison's home and museum is lined with royal palms. I even remember that from trips we took down from our home in Tampa. That was back when you took a ferry to Sanibel

Island. And the sabal palm is the state tree of Florida. I'd say there's a lot of heritage in those two palms. Six years later the courses are maturing and this golf community is building its own heritage for the history books.

Conveniently located just a few miles west of Interstate 75 and only 5-6 miles northwest of the Ft. Myers Southwest International Airport, the U.S. Homes and Lennar Homes single-family home and condominium golf community is rapidly approaching sellout. A testament to its prime location and amenities is that most of the developer's corporate executives have homes there.

Superintendent Greg Kriesch has been at Heritage Palms since February 1998,

eight months before it opened. It was his first grow-in experience and one that he enjoyed for the full satisfaction of helping to create a fully functioning and attractive golf course from out of the wilderness southeast of downtown Ft. Myers.

Says Kriesch, "I give S&S Management a lot of credit for the ability we have to manage the course conditions and keep the course open even during our rainy season. They believe in drainage. Lots of well-designed courses have catch basins to collect surface runoff, but S&S had us installing extra fingers leading to all the basins to get the water into the basins and off the course as quickly as possible. I can honestly say we have never been closed due to a heavy rainstorm. Sure, we may be on cart

Heritage Palms Golf & Country Club



Location: Fort Myers

Ownership: U.S. Homes/Lennar

Playing policy: Semi-Private

Number of holes: 36 holes. Royal Course: 6,756 yards. Par 72. Course Rating 72.8/Slope 134; Sabal Course: 6837 yards. Par 72. Course rating 73.4/139.
Designed by: Gordon Lewis. Opened 18 holes October 1998, 27 holes by December 1998, 36 holes as of October 2000.

Management: Club Manager Davis Negip; Project Manager Steve Benson; Head Golf Professional Bob Kelly; Food & Beverage Director Don Martin; Director of Tennis Mike Lawver; Fitness and Activities Director Venus Beck; Ladies Golf Association President Gloria Collins; Men's Golf Association President Frank Gilbert and Golf Course Superintendent Greg Kriesch.

Major renovations: None. On-going program of adding additional drainage to enhance playability and modification to original course landscaping beds.

Total acreage under maintenance: 207 acres for 36 holes and common grounds areas.

Greens: TifDwarf. Avg. Size, 6,878 sq.ft. Total 6

acres. HOC .150 in. summer; .10 in. winter.

Overseeding: Winterplay Poa Trivialis @ 10 lbs/1,000 sq.ft. Green speed goals: 8.0 summer, 9.0 winter.

Tees: Tifway 419 bermudagrass, 8.0 acres (GN1 on Royal No. 3, Sabal No. 14 and driving range tee). HOC .435 in. Overseeding: Champion GQ perennial ryegrass @ 650 lbs/A.

Fairways: Turf, Tifway 419 bermudagrass; Royal 27 acres, Sabal 32 acres. HOC .500 in. No overseeding.

Roughs: Turf Tifway 419 bermudagrass; Royal 63 acres, Sabal 60 acres. No overseeding.

Bunkers: Royal 88, Sabal 76. Machine raked with Cushman Groom Master.

Native/waste areas: 10 acres of coquina waste areas/cart paths). 181 acres of wetlands and preserve areas.

Waterways/Lakes: 43 lakes/ponds, 143 acres. Aquatic weed control done by Aquatic Systems, Inc.

Irrigation: Source: Surface water with 3 recharge wells. Soon to connect to reclaimed water. Flotronex PSI pump station. 8-75hp vertical turbines @ 6,000 gpm. We also supply irrigation water to residential

areas. Controls: Toro Network LTC Site Pro. Toro 750/780 heads on 70-ft triangular spacing.

Fertigation: Neptune two-head pump @ 160 gph. Two 1,500-gallon tanks. One 500-gallon wetting-agent tank.

Watering restrictions/Conservation: Percentage reduction using computer control system. We also do lots of hand watering, monitor head adjustments closely, use soil probes to check soil moisture levels. Increased use of wetting agents and amendments. We can only recharge lakes from wells on a 1:1 ratio to our use, so we conserve.

Total staff including superintendent: 53 full time which includes landscape crew. No budgeted overtime.

Leadership: Assistant Superintendent Royal Course Brandon Parker; Assistant Superintendent Kevin Bush; Landscape Manager Jeff Kinsey; Equipment Manager Robert Finch; pest control technicians Jared Shanks, Zeb Hall and Israel Chavez. irrigation technicians Colin Foster, Evan Touchette and Andrew Snyder.

Communications: Weekly staff meetings of all department heads, general manager and project manager. Monthly meetings with Men's Golf Association. Assistants hold biweekly safety/operational meetings with respective crews.

Cultural Programs: Aggressive aerification, top dressing, verticutting, grooming program. See cover story.

Management Challenges: Traffic control and compaction – 95,000 rounds per year not including walkers. Common bermudagrass contamination.

Wildlife Inventory: Bald eagles (2 adults, 2 fledglings), turkey, osprey, hawks, wood storks, herons, ibis, anhinga, woodpeckers, alligators, snakes, turtles, and other small song and perching birds.



This crushed coquina waste area serves as a connector that must cross the fairway between the paved sections of concrete path at the green and tee. Photo by Joel Jackson.

paths only, but the only time we have any significant standing water is when we have so much rain that all the retention ponds are so full that the water just can't move anywhere."

Besides the teamwork during the construction and grow-in Kriesch couldn't say enough about the entire management team that oversees the development and golf operations. Key players in this team approach are General Manager David Negip and Head Golf Professional Bobby Kelly. Kriesch said, "David has helped me become a better manager by setting a good example as a leader who is considerate, listens, asks questions, remains calm and is fair and consistent."

"Besides being a fellow department head and colleague, Bobby is a good friend. He understands my need for time to get maintenance done on the course and I understand his need to get people out on the golf course. We work together on schedules and timing to make it happen for the ultimate satisfaction of our members and customers."

The 36-hole complex hosted 95,000 rounds of golf last year and Kriesch says continuous additional drainage projects and traffic control are two ongoing projects to keep the effects of all that traffic from detracting from the playing conditions.

He said, "It takes two guys over an hour a day to go through the course and set up and move our temporary ropes and stakes to divert traffic from wearing-out areas around the course. It is a constant job because they get knocked down or moved by the golfers in the course of the day."

Another tool in the arsenal for combating compaction from all that traffic is Kriesch's aeration program. It is an almost nonstop assault to provide the best root zone possible all year long to give the greens a fighting chance and a good playing surface, but Kriesch is also a realist:

"We don't punish the golfers, but we try to take care of the turf too. We concentrate our more

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Cordgrass beds like this one on Royal No. 4 offers a visual contrast to the expanse of bermudagrass, offers wildlife cover and is a wise alternative to trying to grow healthy turf in the shade of a tree. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

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Fun Facts



Greg had a little fun with a member who wanted to know how hard it was to maintain the turf on all those floating greens. He later confessed they were artificial turf. Photo by Joel Jackson

Here are some things you may not know about our cover story superintendent

1. **Car:** 2002 Honda Odyssey
2. **The last good movie I saw:** Seabiscuit
3. **I stay home to watch:** Hockey, NASCAR racing,

Golf

4. **The book I've been reading:** Trade magazines
5. **Favorite meal:** Any seafood
6. **Favorite performer:** Tom Hanks
7. **Prized possessions:** Photo of me with Michael

Jordan and his NBA rookie card

8. **Personal Heroes:** My dad. He is always remains calm no how bad the situation. The emergency personnel involved in 9/11.

9. **Nobody knows that I:** Am a great cook

10. **I'm better than anyone else when it comes to:** Shoring

11. **If I could do it over:** I would have never started smoking

12. **I'd give anything to meet:** Selma Hayek

13. **My fantasy is:** Own my own golf course and restaurant with Selma tending bar.

14. **The one thing I can't stand:** People who think they are better than anyone else. Stuck up, snobby people.

15. **If I could change one thing about myself:** I would have more hair

16. **My most irrational act:** Ducking for a sprinkler while riding a bike and busting my two front teeth on the handlebars.

17. **My most humbling experience:** Cutting the umbilical cord at the birth of my first son.

18. **The words that best describe me:** Laid back



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aggressive coring during the hotter times of the year when there are fewer players. We have a new machine and we keep it rotating back and forth between the courses. As soon as we're done on one it's time to do the other.

"We religiously core-aerify the greens four times during the summer, twice with 1/2-inch tines and twice with 5/8-inch tines. We will add another six to eight solid-tine aerifications with 5/16-inch by 12-inch tines going 6 to 10 inches deep. I'd love to get a Hydroject (a high pressure water-jet aerifier) that we could use in play during the winter since it doesn't disrupt the surface very much at all."

As a companion procedure to the aerifying and providing smoothness and thatch control on the greens, Kriesch topdresses lightly every other week from November to April. Verticutting is done six to eight times during the warm season.

Fairways and roughs are aerified four times with a pull-behind unit with 3/4-inch closed spoons. Known high-traffic areas are aerified six to eight more times during the summer to give them a chance to get healthy and ready for the increased traffic in the fall and winter.

Just as high-traffic areas are identified



Long morning shadows highlight the par-4, 12th hole on the Sable Course. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

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