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year of reduced revenues and maintenance budgets and the funds running out of our emergency Hurricane account created a perfect storm for course-conditioning challenges.

“For example, we had discontinued our pre-emergent weed control applications in response to budget cuts and attempted to get by with post-emergent applications when and where needed. The long, wet cold winter weather thinned out our bermuda turf and weeds managed to fill in the gaps. We had to do something to demonstrate how we couldn’t continue this way without expecting disappointing conditions.

“I created a spreadsheet depicting the expenditures for labor, chemicals, fertilizers and services that covered the last 10 years. The board was able to see the direct relationship between the gradual decline in certain aspects of the course conditioning relative to the reduced spending for the resources needed to maintain a desired level of maintenance. As a result of that presentation, a posi-

tive budget adjustment for chemicals and fertilizers was approved.”

COMPUTING THE VALUE OF COMMUNICATING

Meanwhile over in Naples, Bill Davidson at the County Club of Naples, is capitalizing on the advent of online blogging to keep his members informed about course projects and conditions especially during the summer when so many of them are away. I logged on to Bill’s two blogs and could immediately see the educational value as he explained maintenance procedures and was able to insert photos and videos to illustrate his points.

Davidson explained, “Last year during our course reconstruction project, I blogged almost weekly and it became almost a cult following among the members as they could track the progress of the changes to the course via the photos and comments. Previously I had chronicled our summer aerification and verticutting programs to show

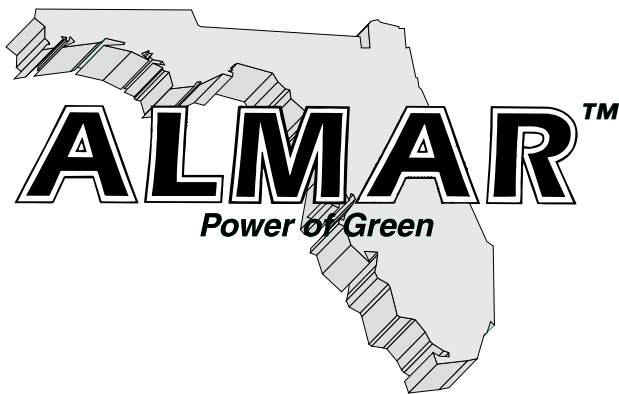
the members the build up and removal of the thatch material and why it was important.”

Davidson also does a monthly full-page newsletter article except in the summers when he blogs. Yet he says that despite all the success he’s had online and in newsletters, the best way he communicates is face to face.

“I make it a point to go into the golf shop at least three to four times a day. I like to see when our avid golfers and active members are playing and make it point to swing by the practice tee, putting green or golf shop so I can be sure to share with them on a one-on-one basis. My club appreciates the face time.

“It also helps that my green chairmen is a bit of a ‘techie’ also. We are able to communicate via text message to stay on top of things easily and rapidly.”

To see how Davidson used online blogging to keep his members informed, you can visit his blog sites at <http://ccnsummer2010.blogspot.com> and <http://ccnrebuild.blogspot.com>



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SUPER TIP

Drainage, Drainage, Drainage

By Darren J. Davis

On a recent ride around my golf course, I had my ever-present paint gun locked and loaded and within easy reach. That day as I negotiated the 16th hole with my assistant Andy riding shotgun, a wet area caught my attention out of the side of my eye. With my right hand still grasping the steering wheel and my eyes trained forward, I reached for the floor, grasped the handle of my paint gun with my left hand, and within seconds my index finger hit the trigger—painting another drainage project.

Not that I am proud of it, but I am fairly skilled at having a paint gun in my hand and in use in seconds, all without impeding my forward progress. As I hit my mark, my assistant remarked, “You know Darren, I am worried about you.”

I stopped the cart and asked, “What do you mean? What’s up?”

He looked me in the eye and said, “I think you may need to attend ... meetings.”

With a quizzical look on my face I



Use a 12-inch wide sod cutter blade to make the initial cut on the painted drain lines. Photo by Darren Davis.

said, “Huh?! What meetings?”

He said, “You know ... drain-aholic meetings” Without missing a beat he added with a smile on his face, “Hi, my name is Darren Davis, and I am a drain-aholic.” Not necessarily known for his humor, I had to laugh out loud

and compliment his wit.

Truth be told, Andy is not far off on his assessment. As I wondered whether I was indeed addicted, and thought about the more than 14 miles of subsurface drain tile that I have installed on my 18-hole golf course, it dawned on me. I realized that the blame, or more appropriately, the credit belongs to one of my mentors, Dr. Joe Duich, professor emeritus of turfgrass science at The Pennsylvania State University.

Dr. Duich developed the two-year turfgrass management technical program in 1957. He was known for his wit and challenging teaching method, and he was also one of my professors in 1990 and 1991. I can vividly recall many examples—one of which involved drainage.

During a class in the fall of 1991, after my classmates and I couldn’t provide Dr. Duich with a suitable answer to his question, “What is one of the most fundamental aspects of successful turfgrass management,” Dr. Duich informed us that the correct response was, “Drainage, drainage, drainage.”

My classmates and I, who could rarely provide the famed turfgrass scientist



Excavate the drain line to a depth of 16 inches and 12 inches wide. Photo by Darren Davis.



Install a strip of stucco mesh lath over the gravel layer. Photo by Darren Davis.

with an acceptable answer to one of his oral pop quizzes, sat quietly, somewhat confused and definitely speechless. After what seemed like minutes, but in hindsight was probably seconds, Dr. Duich continued, “It’s not rocket science. If you want to be successful at growing turfgrass, you need air drainage, surface drainage and subsurface drainage.”

As was often the case with Dr. Duich, it took me a while to really get to the take-home message of this “Super Tip,” which is subsurface drainage and our use of stucco mesh lath as part of the process. In case you are curious, the aforementioned 14 miles of subsurface drainage installed during my 18-year tenure at Olde Florida Golf Club is not an exaggeration.

Our method of installing drainage is not unique; however, based on the comments I have received from others, what is unique is our use of stucco mesh lath as a cover. The steps in our drainage installation and use of stucco mesh lath are as follows:

Step one of our drainage installation is to figure out the best method to get water from “point A to point B”. After my trusty paint gun and I paint out a

drainage project, which is, of course, the easy part, my assistants consult our irrigation as-built, a wire tracer, etc., to determine if there are any subsurface items that the staff will need to avoid.

Next, a sod cutter with a 12-inch blade is used to remove the turfgrass (Note: the use of the narrow sod cutter blade will become evident at the end).

The soil is then excavated to a depth of 16 inches and a width of 12 inches.

Flexible, perforated drainage pipe is laid in the bottom center of the trench and pea gravel is carefully installed and compacted so the gravel is level with existing grade.



The mesh will hold the gravel in place and help turf coverage. Photo by Darren Davis.

Now—DRUMROLL—for the “Super Tip” part of this drainage procedure... We purchase sheets of stucco mesh lath (without paper backing) from our local Lowes that measures 27 by 96 inches. After marking the center of the sheets’ width with a tape measure and a Sharpie, an employee cuts the sheet with a pair of tin snips to produce two 13½-inch sheets. In the field, the sod on both sides of the new drain line is lifted with a shovel, and the mesh lath is tucked under the turf on both sides of the trench.

And that’s why we used the 12 inch sod cutter blade width.

Using stucco mesh lath as a cover provides several benefits. First, the drainage will be more effective in quickly removing water from the surface if the water does not have to penetrate a layer of thatch and/or soil. Second, the mesh lath holds the gravel beneath the surface so machinery does not dislodge the gravel and damage the reels on our mowing equipment. Finally, the mesh lath also provides a fixed surface for bermudagrass stolons to attach as they grow laterally across the trench. It really isn’t rocket science, but the stucco mesh lath has worked well for us.

Meet the President

By Joel Jackson

Thirty-four years after getting into golf course maintenance, Gary Myers, CGCS is the Manager of Golf Course Maintenance Operations of Walt Disney World Company and the President of the Florida GCSA. Neither role is new to Myers as he also served as Regional Director of Golf Course Maintenance Operations for the Tournament Players Clubs and is a past president of the Southern Nevada GCSA.

Originally from Anderson, Ind., Myers attended Purdue University majoring in mechanical engineering, but ended up getting his Turf Management certificate from the University of Massachusetts. He began his golf maintenance career in 1976 on the crew at Arthur Pack Regional Park & Golf Course in Tucson, Ariz. He loved the work and the superintendent and assistant at the course both had graduated from UMass and they talked Myers into getting his golf management education there.

From 1978 to 1996 Gary progressed from an assistant superintendent position at Tucson National GC, to a series of

superintendent positions at CC of Green Valley, AZ (79-82); Desert Inn Hotel & CC, Las Vegas (82-89); TPC Summerlin, Las Vegas (89-94) and the Tournament Players Club in Scottsdale, AZ (94-96) before coming to Disney World.

Disney Golf Operations covers 81 holes: The Magnolia, Palm, Lake Buena Vista and Osprey Ridge 18-hole courses and the nine-hole Oak Trail walking course adjacent to the Magnolia.

Since December 1971 – barely two months after the opening of Walt Disney World Resort – the PGA Tour has been making an annual visit to the popular vacation destination. But for the Tour and some of the world’s greatest golfers, the visit has had a serious side: a late-season tournament that has sometimes decided money titles, scoring championships and the makeup of the following year’s all-exempt Tour.

It started out as a typical individual event, but after a few years it changed to a two-man team event, and eventually reverted to an important season-ending event for those Tour exemptions. Currently known as the Children’s Miracle



Gary Myers, CGCS, President

Network Classic, the tournament has a list of champions that includes Jack Nicklaus (three times) and Tiger Woods (twice).

Myers mentions a couple of mentors who were instrumental in helping him develop his career.

“Steve Talkington, a former Scott’s salesman, encouraged me to apply for the Desert Inn job,” he said. “I thought I might be too young and lack the necessary experience to move up to such a higher-profile facility. Without his advice and help I’m not sure where I would be today.

“George Jaramillo, former owner of Las



Third hole, Disney’s Palm Course, one of the courses involved in PGA tournament play since 1971. Photo courtesy of Walt Disney World.

Vegas Fertilizer, was another individual for whom I have so much respect. He gave me advice on how to handle myself personally and professionally, which I have never forgotten.”

Myers advises prospective or young superintendents to “be professional in the way you approach your job and that also includes the way you dress. In this often challenging profession, Change is another opportunity to succeed! Keep your emotion with regard to work steady. Try not to get too high when conditions are good and don’t get too low when conditions aren’t so great.”

His personal goal is “to be a good father, husband and friend. Also to be a good son, but like many of us we don’t see that as a priority until we get older.

“Other than family moments, the



Allied association representatives met in Orlando in July. Panelists, from left: John Reger, Jr, PGA of America; Martha Mazzitelli, Hospitality Financial & Technology Professionals; Art Kinkle, Florida CMAA president; Susan Wegrzyn, National Club Association, Pete Snyder, executive director FTGA and Gary Myers, CGCS, president FGCSA. Photo courtesy of CMAA.

perhaps the most memorable for me was when my Pop Warner football team was playing a team from Jacksonville for the North Florida Championship. The game was tied in regulation 0-0. We scored in what is called a Kansas City Tie Breaker and, when we kept them from scoring, we won the game. It was the most exhilarating moment of my life other than close family moments. We went on to lose to Miami the following week.

“The second most memorable moment came the following year when we beat that same Miami team to advance to the Pop Warner Super Bowl. I enjoy spending time with my family more than anything, and I have been coaching Pop Warner Football for 12 years.”

Myers served on the boards and in all offices of the Southern

Nevada GCSA, the Central Florida GCSA and the FGCSA. He has served on local advisory boards and GCSAA committees to volunteer his time to the associations representing our profession. His most recent service came as he represented the FGCSA at the CMAA Golf Summit in Orlando in July. He summarizes the summit topics in his President’s Message in this issue.

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58th FTGA Annual Conference & Show

By Joel Jackson

Attendance numbers were up and all the trade-show booth space was sold out for the 58th edition of the FTGA Conference & Show Sept. 15-17 at the Caribe Royale Hotel in Orlando. By all accounts it was a successful event at a venue everyone had positive comments about.

The hotel rooms were all suites, the conference center layout was superb with the registration area immediately adjacent to the three meeting-room wings, the breakfast and lunch rooms and the trade-show ballroom. You never had to walk far to take care of business. The parking lot between the conference center and the hotel provided ample room for equipment displays and educational emergency spill response demonstrations.

Wednesday morning began bright and



FTGA Past President Jan Beljan presented Matt Taylor, CGCS with the 2010 Wreath of Grass award at the FTGA Conference in Orlando. Photo by Joel Jackson.

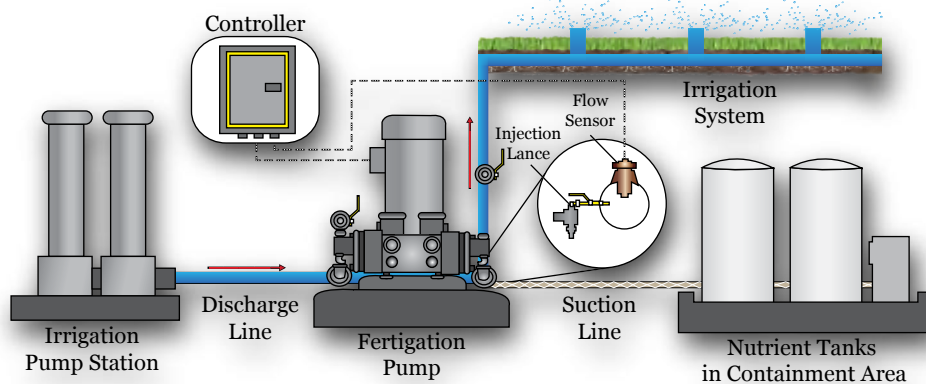
early with a free continental breakfast and educational sessions. The afternoon offered up the annual golf tournament with individual stroke and team scramble formats.

Mark Henderson won the individual event. He had already qualified for the FGCSA Golf Team, so the fourth member of the team will be the person with the low average score from the other qualifying events.

On Thursday morning, the traditional prayer breakfast was merged with the annual business meeting to free up the afternoon for a trade-show-only format, which definitely boosted the number of people browsing, dealing and networking on the show floor. Following the trade show, the Corn Boil and Live Auction were held on the Boca Patio at the hotel pool area.

On Friday morning, those needing core Pesticide CEUs to maintain their

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restricted pesticide licenses attended special classroom and outdoor hands-on demonstration training. There was also a class dedicated solely to academic and professional education of the turf students in attendance.

Highlights of the Conference included the presentation of the FTGA's prestigious Wreath of Grass Award in recognition of an individual's personal and professional dedication to Florida's Turf Industry. This year Matt Taylor CGCS, director of golf maintenance operations at the Royal Poinciana Club in Naples was the recipient. Golf Course Architect Jan Beljan presented the award and did a masterful job of keeping the audience guessing the winner's identity as long as possible until the record of service began to point undeniably to Matt's service to his peers and profession. The best part was when Matt's family was ushered into the rear of ballroom and got to share in the honor and totally surprise Matt.

Then it was back to business as the new officers and board members were sworn and significant changes to the bylaws were passed to create new membership categories to help get more people involved in the association to strengthen the industry. The new officers: President Mac Carroway, SMR Sod Farms; Vice President Armando Campos, Bayer Environmental Science; and Mac Briley, City of Ocoee Parks & Recreation Department.

Next former NFL player, and leading punter in his day, Herman "Thunderfoot" Weaver, gave an inspirational presentation about his personal journey of faith and mastering life's challenges. With humor and humility he recounted his trials and tribulations in his search for the life he was meant to lead. It was a message about never giving up or being afraid to ask for help.



Star NFL punter Herman "Thunderfoot" Weaver gave a humorous and inspirational message at the combined FTGA Annual Meeting and Prayer Breakfast. Photo by Joel Jackson.



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Aerify using smaller diameter tines in the fall to speed up turf recovery. Photo by Joel Jackson.

GREEN SECTION UPDATE

Prepping for Winter

By John H. Foy

It has been a long and hot summer, and for courses throughout the eastern two-thirds of the country, the extreme high temperatures that have been experienced have taken a toll on cool-season turfgrasses.

Growing up and going to school in Georgia, Labor Day weekend was always an important and anticipated time. Along with marking the beginning of Southeastern Conference football, cooler nighttime temperatures inevitably began to occur and bentgrass putting greens began to recover from summer stress. After 25 years in South Florida, the arrival of Labor Day is still anticipated because of the return of college football, but it has a different

meaning with respect to golf course management.

For Florida golf courses, the arrival of Labor Day means that it is time to wrap up summertime cultural management programs and projects, and prepping for the upcoming winter season becomes the priority.

At courses in Central to South Florida, a final core aeration of putting greens is typically conducted in early to mid-September, and while sustained bermudagrass growth is occurring, the rate of recovery is slowing down. Thus, care needs to be exercised not to cause excessive mechanical damage, and the use of smaller-diameter tines (3/8 to 1/2-inch) is advised.

It is important to continue to verticut bermudagrass putting greens during

the late summer and early fall to control grain and aid in controlling surface organic matter accumulation. However, because intense environmental stress conditions are typically prevailing, it is important not to exert significant additional mechanical stress on the turf and cause a further setback in its health and coverage.

At all of the courses recently visited, the verticutting units have been adjusted so that they are only operating at a depth of 1/10- to 1/8-inch below the effective height of cut. In late September to October, verticutting will be completely discontinued and increased use of mower-mounted brush or groomer attachments will occur.

For at least another six to eight weeks, hot and humid summertime weather