

All I want for Christmas is...

By Peter Blais

Okay. It's the Christmas Eve office party. Caught up in the holiday spirit, the greens committee chairman/city manager/resort general manager walks over, throws his arm around your shoulder and says:

"Bob, you've done such a grand job, we've decided to give you anything you want to maintain the course for a Christmas present. You name it. Price is no object. Take a few seconds to think it over."

Could happen.

Anyway, being a quick-thinking superintendent trained to pounce on every opportunity, you cut him off before he has a chance to begin a conversation with the next group and yell, "I WANT A _____"

"Lake," said Joe Adams, assistant superintendent at Omaha (Neb.) Country Club. "We don't have water anywhere on the course. And there's supposedly more ground water in Nebraska than anywhere in the country. If they ever start talking about water rationing here, the country is in real trouble."

"We've discussed creating a lake. It would be pretty easy to do. But our membership is made up largely of senior citizens. They want to hear about things to make the course easier to play, not harder."

Water, delivering it at any rate, also topped Gerald Faubel's and Tim Hiers' wish lists.

"A new irrigation system," said Faubel, superintendent at Saginaw (Mich.) Country Club and immediate past president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

"We have a Toro single-row system. It works fine, but we really need a system that gives us more control and is capable of doing more. I'd like a double- or multi-row system. We're getting quotes and taking a serious look at how we could fit it into our budget."

Hiers said the irrigation system is 18 to 20 years old and needs replacing at the two beach courses at John's Island Golf Club in Vero Beach, Fla.

"It is obsolete and has undergone a lot of wear and tear," he said. "You can spend any amount on a system, but we're looking at roughly \$1.6 million for those two courses."

"We need something that won't be obsolete in six to eight years and will distribute water as we want it rather than as it is capable. The system we're looking at should significantly reduce our water usage."

"The members know we need a new system. It's just a matter of when we get it — 1992, 1993 or 1994."

While Adams, Faubel and Hiers are looking for new ways to get water on their course, Joe Esposito would like to keep it off. August's Hurricane Bob battered Esposito's Riverside Municipal Golf Course in Portland, Maine. The Presumpscot



Graphic by Leigh Raposo



I'd like a double- or multi-row (irrigation) system.'

— Jerry Faubel
Saginaw (Mich.) CC



Ten more employees would be nice.'

— Randal Gai
Claremont CC



We need an irrigation system that won't be obsolete in 6-8 years.'

— Tim Hiers
John's Island

of Jim Burton at Dubuque (Iowa) Golf & Country Club and John Granholt of Eau Claire (Wisc.) Golf & Country Club.

"A fairway aerifier would be great," answered Granholt. "We're pitching it to the greens committee now and I think we'll get it."

Added Burton: "We could use about \$100,000 worth of equipment — a tractor, leaf sweeper and some other things."

River flooded and left several inches of silt on greens, tees and fairways.

"No more Hurricane Bobs would be my wish," Esposito said. "The lowland areas were really soaked. We lost a few greens and about 15 trees. It took three to four weeks to clean up."

Santa Claus would have to swing by the personnel office to please Randal Gai of Claremont Country Club in Oakland, Calif., and George Frye of Kiawah Island, S.C.

"Ten more employees would be nice," said Gai, whose 18-hole, private course suffered thousands of dollars damage and is still cleaning up from late October's Oakland hills fire.

"I run a nine-man crew. I see courses nearby with 30-man crews and it's hard to compare. It's economics more than anything. But the members want to make this more of an upscale course, so we should be getting more people soon."

Kiawah recently hosted the Ryder Cup at its new Ocean Course, which Frye oversees in addition to the resort's other three courses.

"No more employee turnover would be wonderful," Frye said. "Turnover reduces quality. Every

time someone leaves you have to retrain a new person. That takes time away from something else you could be doing to improve your course.

"You also have to follow behind new people to make sure they do the job right. If they don't you can only blame yourself. They failed because you trained them poorly or didn't follow up. A lot of little mistakes can affect course quality."

"But a person who has been with you for five years needs little supervision. If a superintendent had no turnover for a year, think how much easier it would be for him to do his job. You could do so much more to improve the product rather than just maintain it."

Tom Fisher of Edinburgh USA, a Brooklyn Park, Minn., municipal facility near Minneapolis, would like another course. The 18-hole regulation and nine-hole executive facilities are full every day, he said. The 18-hole course pushes through 44,000 rounds during its seven-month season.

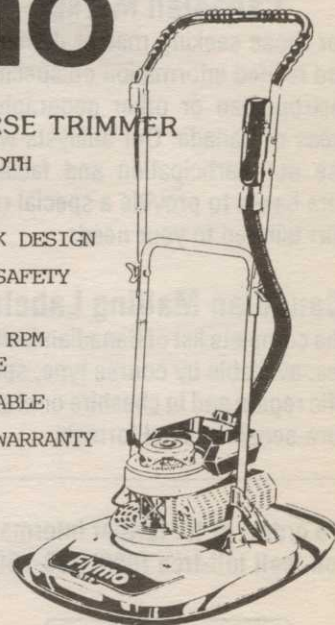
"The land is available in other parts of town," he said. "I think we'll do it in the near future."

Equipment needs topped the lists

Flymo®

GCT 20 GOLF COURSE TRIMMER

- * 20 INCH CUTTING WIDTH
- * WEIGHT 34 LBS
- * NEW REINFORCED DECK DESIGN
- * PATENTED & PROVEN SAFETY CUTTING SYSTEM
- * 98cc/2 STROKE/4200 RPM POWERFUL JLO ENGINE
- * COMPLETELY REBUILDABLE
- * 1 YEAR COMMERCIAL WARRANTY (ENGINE ONLY)



See us at
GCSAA Booth #2572

**PRECISION
SMALL ENGINE CO.**
POMPANO BEACH, FLORIDA
(305) 974-1960 OR 1-800-345-1960
REPS WANTED