

Back to school pays off for Antoniazzi, 35

By PETER BLAIS

Out of work and low on options, Paul Antoniazzi was not looking ahead to the summer of 1990.

Like many laid-off workers in the economically depressed Northeast, the 35-year-old production worker was wondering what the heck to do with the rest of his life when the Pittsfield, Mass., General Electric Co. plant closed that May.

Few jobs remained in western Massachusetts for a 10-year production worker with a 13-year-old bachelor's degree in natural resources. But being a father of two, Antoniazzi wasn't about to give up.

He knew several students who had gone through the University of Massachusetts' Stockbridge School of Agriculture and emerged with degrees and jobs.

He also discovered the Training and Re-education Act, a partnership between the federal government and private industry to help pay for retraining of American workers laid off due to foreign competition.

To take advantage of the program, students must train in a growing field with good employment potential.

Antoniazzi took a battery of aptitude tests and came up strong in horticulture. An admissions counselor recommended turf management. Though he had no prior turf experience, and classified himself as an "occasional golfer," Antoniazzi enrolled in the two-year turf management program that fall.

"I was very hesitant to go back to school at the beginning. I worked extra hard and did very well on tests. Fortunately, I've been one of the better students right along," he said.

Added Professor Richard Cooper, coordinator of the UMass two-year program: "One of the few positives from the bad economy is that we've had money available for retraining. A lot of older students, who have lost their jobs, have taken advantage of it.

"They've increased the number of incoming students to the turf program and improved the quality of students. Older students are a more career-oriented bunch. Most have been top-notch, motivated people."

Antoniazzi began a five-month internship in March 1991 at Cranwell Resort & Golf Course, a 70-year-old Wayne Stiles and John Van Kleeck layout in nearby Lenox. He trained under superintendent Karl Baumann, also an older student, who had graduated from

UMass a few years earlier.

"Many other students had already worked on golf courses. But that internship was invaluable for me because I didn't have any previous experience," Antoniazzi said.

Antoniazzi's wife, Mary-Lou, along with his children, Jessica,



Paul Antoniazzi

9, and Daniel, 6, attended graduation ceremonies in late May. He returned to Cranwell as assistant superintendent shortly thereafter.

"It's worked out perfectly," Antoniazzi said.

"There was a lot of anxiety. Losing a job is awful, especially when there is no place else to go. And raising a family while going to school is tough.

"But everything has worked out for the best. I'm doing something I like and my family couldn't have been more supportive."

Brooks appointed superintendent at Palmer-run The 'K' Club in Ireland

ORLANDO, Fla. — Tom Brooks has been named golf course superintendent for The Kildare Hotel and Country Club (The "K" Club) in Straffon, Ireland.

Robert Holzman, Arnold Palmer Golf Management Co.'s chief operating officer, announced Brooks' appointment when it reported on May 29 that the firm had signed a course maintenance service agreement with the "K" Club.

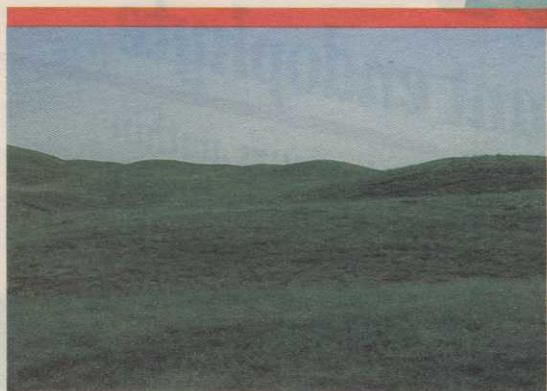
The "K" Club is an exclusive

country club, which features an 18-hole Palmer-designed course.

Brooks assumed his position on July 1. He had been working as assistant superintendent at Dayton Valley Country Club in Nevada — a Palmer-managed facility — for two years.

He has 12 years of experience, and was awarded a bachelor's degree in horticulture, with a minor in business administration from the University of Nevada in 1988.

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Bob Ranum, Golf Course Superintendent, Atlantic Golf Club located in Southampton, Long Island, NY, and Dr. Richard Hurley, Director of Research, Lofts Seed Inc.



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