

Internships a win-win situation for courses, students

By MARK LESLIE

As turfgrass management becomes more technical and specialized, golf course superintendents are finding it increasingly important to have more knowledgeable crew members. And so they are pursuing agronomy students, offering positions on their crews in a win-win situation — the student intern gains experience and the superintendent gets a knowledgeable employee.

"Having a dependable core of folks who are going to understand more in-depth what turf maintenance is about, and what golfers want, is an asset," said Bob Brame, agronomist with the U.S. Golf Association's Mid-Atlantic Section.

Saying that most of his interns from "top-notch programs like Michigan, Iowa and Ohio State," Medinah (Ill.) Country Club superintendent Danny Quast said: "They already have four or five years working on a golf course. All the basic training has been done. Plus they come with a great attitude and they're excited about the job, conscientious, educated and experienced. That's a perfect formulation."

"We not only have the facilities to house people, which I think is key. We're making internships very valued positions instead of learn-as-you-go," said Greenwich (Conn.) Country Club superintendent Greg Wojick. "We're looking for the top one percent of students, enticing them with top pay, living quarters, bonus potential and responsibilities that are not typical for an intern."

Those responsibilities include pest monitoring and scouting, chemical applications, and manhour recordkeeping, inventory control, a full range of technical training, irrigation scheduling and other administrative duties.

"In the past, a lot of courses have thrown students out into low-level jobs and had them bite off as much as they could chew," Wojick said.

"We're giving them a lot of responsibility in the maintenance facility and then, when



Apartments in Greenwich (Conn.) Country Club's housing unit would rent for \$1,200 a month, says superintendent Greg Wojick.

appropriate, putting them out in the field," he said.

Having turfgrass students is "certainly an important improvement," said Bruce Cadenelli, superintendent at Caves Valley Golf Course in Finksburg, Md. "You have another pair of trained eyes — someone who is more enthusiastic and energetic."

"It's been difficult getting good people. I think when we do, it is in a small way,

paying back the profession, and it's win-win. The club gets good people to work and it's an opportunity for them to learn," he added.

"I've been in the business 30 years and seeing my interns go out and be a success is the most rewarding part of it," Quast said, adding that he has hired a number of them as superintendents at his three courses.

Attracting best interns: Major investment, big rewards

Continued from page 15
filling up [job openings]."

One of Caves Valley's five maintenance buildings is a 1,200-square-foot structure. It contains a one-bedroom apartment for an assistant superintendent, and two college-style dorm rooms that share a livingroom and bath. A washer/dryer room is also included.

"The rooms are not luxurious but certainly adequate for the four-to-six-month period they [students] will be with us," Cadenelli said.

For the 1994 season Caves Valley has attracted one student each from the universities of Massachusetts and

Maryland, Penn State, Michigan State.

"It's not the Ritz," said Danny Quast of his dormitory at Medinah (Ill.) Country Club, "but it serves its purpose."

His 11 rooms include two set aside for interns, each room with two beds. Employees are served three meals a day seven days a week at the clubhouse dining room.

To keep up with the Greenwich Country Clubs, Caves Valleys and Medinachs, other courses must first find the cash. But, as the USGA's Brame put it: "The kick has been making the initial investment. Even if a course can rationalize building a facility, it still has to come up with the money."

Turf students garner GCSAA scholarships

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Joseph Livingston of Elk Point, S.D., an Iowa State University junior majoring in turfgrass management, received the Chester A. Mendenhall Award as the outstanding student in the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's (GCSAA) 1993 scholarship competition.

The award honors the late charter member of GCSAA.

Scholars are selected on the basis of academic excellence and potential to become leading professionals in golf course management and related fields.

Robert G. Marshall of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, a senior at Michigan State majoring in turfgrass management, received the Ambassador Award as the outstanding student from outside the United States.

Other winners and the schools they are attending are Michigan State University students Matthew J. Ashton of Lake Orion, Mich., and Mark Krick of Brighton, Mich.; Colorado State University students Jason Aerni of Roundup, Mont., and David L. Calder of Bemidji, Minn.; Penn State University students Stephen P. Edkin of Lebanon, Pa., Edward W. Gross of State College, Pa., and Gary L. Heath of King City, Mo.; North Carolina State University student Chris Hartwiger of Raleigh, N.C.; and University of Nebraska student Troy J. Merkel of Omaha, Neb.

Family pulls together

Continued from previous page

small landing areas add to the course's appearance and playability, said Bobby. "It did and does cost a little more money to function and meet regulations," Bobby said. "But it's better than getting a \$1,500 to \$10,000 fine for not complying."

To cover expenses, the Bechdolts raised greens fees to \$32 and spent profits. They hope to replace their 40-year-old clubhouse, consolidate the maintenance yard into it, and repave driveway and parking areas. Within the next 10 years, they plan to add more of the easily cleanable, black fiberglass concrete paths. All will require environmental permits.

For now, however, the Bechdolts are battling with a bi-state environmental agency and the county over a proposed community plan for the town and a storm drainage project. Aspects of the community plan might require dangerously narrowing the course and relocation of a green. The county is seeking easements on the course which would temporarily shut down two fairways and move a hole during excavation of an 18 to 20-foot ditch.

"We would like to see something done, but it will all be tied up in litigation," E.J. said. "Most frustrating is ignorance ... political answers that aren't cost effective."

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Designed to keep your turf healthy.

BROUWER VERTICAL MOWER

Make sure those expensive chemicals and fertilizers are doing their best job - by getting right to the roots of your turf via aeration created by the Brouwer Vertical Mower.

The Brouwer Vertical Mower also improves water distribution, prevents thatch build-up, improves the success rate of overseeding and reduces surface compaction.



BROUWER

TURF EQUIPMENT LIMITED

289 N. Kurzen Road
P.O. Box 504
Dalton, Ohio USA 44618

Tel. (216) 828-0200
Fax (216) 828-1008