

Tour of Duty

DOUG JOLDERSMA

Tanglewood Park
Clemmons, N.C.
Vantage Senior Championship
Sept. 20-Oct. 2, ESPN

Doug Joldersma, 33, was born in the Detroit area but he's made the South his home. After graduating from Lake City (Fla.) Community College with an associate's degree in golf course operations ('84), Joldersma headed a construction and renovation project at Bidega (Ga.) Country Club. From there, he worked as head superintendent at Litchfield Country Club and The River Club in Pawleys Island, S.C. He arrived at the Robert Trent Jones-designed Tanglewood complex in 1986. This will be his 8th Vantage Championship. Joldersma is responsible for all 54 of Tanglewood's holes, plus all the grounds.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR: Joldersma has Tifway 419 on fairways and Penncross bentgrass on the greens. And after the winter kill suffered along the East Coast this year, he feels Tanglewood just missed a major turf catastrophe.

"Within an hour of here, they got really hammered," he explained. "We were lucky. We did get a significant amount of winter kill. No sprigging or row planting. Just sodding. We had to do 80 percent of our tees and a few spots on fairways, plus high-traffic areas around the greens.

"We'll probably oversee for the tournament. It's coming in rather high, so we've had to scalp it."

MADE-FOR-TV PREPARATIONS: "I would say the rye is definitely being done for the TV... We also do a lot of mum work: five to six thousand on several tees.

"And we'll stripe. We've been told not to." Joldersma continues to be amazed by players' complaints over striping, the argument being, some balls catch the grain and roll further.

"I cannot believe that," Joldersma scoffed. "That's insane."

BRIAN MORRIS

Silverado Country Club
Napa, Calif.
The Senior TransAmerica
Oct. 6-9, ESPN

Brian Morris, 41, was born a Southern Californian, but he's moved north and doesn't plan to move back. "Oh yeah," he declared with a laugh. "My parents have a hard time getting me down there to visit." A graduate of the Cal-Poly Pomona turf program in 1978, Morris worked as an assistant at Calabassas Park, west of L.A. near Thousand Oaks. He took his first head superintendent's job at Candlewood Country Club in Whittier before taking the assistant's post at Silverado in 1980. Six months later he was top dog at the

Wine Country club. The TransAmerica has been held at 36-hole Silverado since 1989, so tournament prep is no great trial for Morris anymore. The tournament is played at Silverado's South Course, a Robert Trent Jones II product, rumored to be his first solo track.

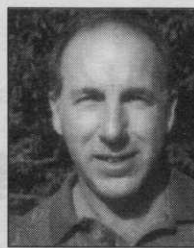
THINGS TO LOOK FOR: "We really don't do anything out of the ordinary," said Morris. "We don't do anything special. We try to maintain all year round, then step up our frequency of cut and tighten things up for the tournament.

"The biggest challenge we've had, prior to the tournament, has been poor soil conditions. We've done extensive top-dressing of the fairways. Very rocky soil. The water wouldn't penetrate and the roots wouldn't grow down. We've lost lots of grass.

JIM JOHNSON

The Rail Golf Club
Sherman Ill.
LPGA State Farm Rail Classic
Sept. 3-5, ESPN

Jim Johnson and The Rail Golf Club are nearly inseparable. The 42-year-old Johnson first worked at the Robert Trent Jones design during high school, building tees, digging lakes and generally moving dirt. Off he went to Penn State, where he would earn his turf management degree in 1977. However, a year before his graduation, The Rail hired him as superintendent. "While I was going to school, the superintendent here was terminated," Johnson explained. "I knew where I was heading and they asked me whether I would consider coming back after graduation." He did, and he hasn't left since. "I grew up in this area, been here all my life. My wife's family has been here all their lives. I grew up with the owner's son. And they've treated me well. And I love what I do."



Jim Johnson

82 traps. "We started on them a year beforehand and finished six days before last year's tournament," Johnson said. "With a year of settling in, I think you'll see a significant difference this year, aesthetically [sod facings] and with regard to playing quality."

Johnson said the old bunkers experienced chronic drainage problems. "Now we pump zero water," he said. "We've also just installed a new Rain Bird Maxi 5 irrigation system. No more dry areas from poor coverage."

MADE-FOR-TV PREPARATIONS: "Last year was our first year for TV," said Johnson, "and we really didn't do anything differently. We painted the cups and the lightweight fairway mowers did a great job. We do stripe the fairways, but that's something we do through the whole growing season. And when we saw the helicopter shots they used to preview the tournament, the fairways looked fantastic."

THINGS TO LOOK FOR: Two years ago, The Rail embarked on an ambitious bunker renovation, a thorough rehab of all

On our worst fairways we've accumulated 4 inches of sand to grow the roots."

MADE-FOR-TV PREPARATIONS: "We haven't gotten into putting on the big show, putting on the glitz," said Morris. "We're more into trying to refine our tournament playing conditions than dress the course up with flowers."

The various tours have asked superintendents not to stripe the fairways vertically, believing some balls roll further with the grain. Has the Senior Tour talked to Morris?

"Indirectly," he said. "They haven't come out and said, 'Do not stripe.' But they have said, 'Mow at an angle so the roll of ball is fair.' They were pleased to see us mowing diagonally."

Research green to provide help for Atlantic supers

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Scotia Agricultural College is a second step. The college has provided an area "to construct our green and carry out research. It's also cooperating in providing students to care for it. If we can come up with research money, we could probably reach our objective to get people on a full-time basis," he said.

Area superintendents and golf-industry suppliers helped build the 4,000-square-foot experimental green, which was seeded with bentgrass in early July.

The third step toward the ATRF goals is bolstering the turf management program at Nova Scotia Agricultural College. The school has a one-week course in turfgrass management, but expects to enhance that program, Palmer said.

The ATRF has already begun raising money to support its efforts, conducting a tournament at Amherst (Nova Scotia) Country Club in August.

Pine Valley members extend annual thanks

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of recognizing the crew's efforts.

"Hughie would be out there walking the course at 5:30 a.m. every day," Mueller remembered. "He saw how hard the staff worked and wanted to let them know how much the members appreciated their efforts."

Said Johnston, a friend of the late golf writer and Golf Hall of Famer Herb Graffis: "He [Graffis] was instrumental in getting the name changed from greenkeeper to superintendent. We visited a lot in his later years and he left a soft spot in my heart for the guys that keep America beautiful."

Mueller believes the recognition afforded his crew has helped him recruit and hold competent staff at Pine Valley.

"A lot of these guys make close to minimum wage, so the extra money is a nice bonus," Mueller said. "We have people who have worked at other clubs who mentioned [during their interview] that they had heard about the party."

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