

Dye, Dedman the perfect match for Golf Course Expo



Hal Phillips,
editor

The funny thing about Pete Dye — who, along with his family, will keynote Day I of Golf Course Expo on Nov. 9 — is that almost everything that's been said about him (and there's been quite a bit) is patently false.

First of all, his given name is Paul, not Pete.

Second, he is routinely termed a "radical" designer, yet the great preponderance of his so-called innovations — plank-faced bunkers, elevated greens with closely shaved approaches, pot bunkering and island greens — have been long-standing features on "traditional" British courses for 150 years.

Pete is often chided for being too macho, for making his courses too heroic and needlessly difficult... First of all, he designs courses with his wife, Alice. How macho is that? Further, he and Alice have pioneered the idea that courses should be designed to include multiple tees so that anyone, of virtually any skill level, can play them. Indeed, the TPC at Sawgrass, with the exception of the knee-knocking 17th, is very playable and forgiving from the middle tees.

The elder Dye has also been tagged with a big-budget label; one who moves lots of dirt and spends lots of the developer's money. Well, close scrutiny would show that Pete's fees are often a fraction of what some big-name architects charge. His early designs were very modest and many of his masterpieces — Blackwolf Run, Casa de Campo, Kingsmill, PGA West, Harbour Town, Eagle Creek, The Ocean Course and Kearney Hill Links, among others — while high-end, remain open to the public. Indeed, his sons, Perry and P.B., have made their careers catering to the ever-growing numbers of municipal and daily-fee developers.

The Dyes' interest in public-access golf makes them a perfect match for Golf Course Expo, the only national trade show and conference for daily-fee, resort and municipal golf facilities.

One thing that does hold true about Pete? He doesn't do a lot of public speaking, which is why we're so pleased to have him at the Expo. I did hear him speak at a Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA) function a few years back. After paying hilarious tribute to his friend, Joe Jemsek — jumping

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Committed, influential Foy? Florida is blessed with two

In Golf Nation each state should have its hero-heroine-wunderkind. Florida is blessed with several, but one who stands out this month is Shelly Foy, secretary at the U.S. Golf Association Green Section's Florida Region and wife of its director, John Foy. Every time I turned around the last few weeks, someone mentioned Shelly Foy. It was Shelly and the helicopter drop... Shelly and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP)... Shelly and the School Program... Shelly and the Hobe Sound Women's Club...

So I called Shelly. Call it curiosity.

Why, and how, can she devote so much time and effort into advancing the public awareness that golf and the environment are co-friendly?

"I've been in this job 10 years; these people [superintendents] are like family to me," Shelly said. "And I'm tired of seeing my friends take a beating in the media."

The solution is to get the word to The People that men and women who care for golf courses are true environmentalists. As stated by the Treasure Coast GCSA: "At a time when the entire industry is struggling against misinformation and half-truths, disseminated by ill-informed sources, it's very important that we publicly draw attention to our case so that the general public ... can see how environmentally sensitive and aware our industry really is."

Testament to this comes from the thousands of superintendents involved in the ACSP, Audubon Signature and Audubon Heritage programs. Add the new Schools Program, sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), and the Backyard Program and "it goes full circle in your community," Shelly said.

In Martin County, where she lives, all but two or three schools will belong to the School Program by August, she said. Although the GCSAA has just signed on to sponsor that program nationally, the Florida GCSA has been active in it for 1-1/2 years.

The Treasure Coast's Blue Pearl (that's what the earth looks like from outer space) Charity Tournament last year raised \$10,000 for a wildlife hospital and this May earned \$10,000 for the School Program. That's enough to adopt 10 schools and provide them with reference materials and supplies for environmental projects. The North Florida GCSA is about to adopt five



Mark Leslie,
managing editor

schools, Shelly said. And the beat goes on.

"It's a great educational tool for the students and teachers, and for their [FGCSA] members," Shelly said.

Ohhh, the helicopter drop? With the help of Greg Norman's helicopter, the Hobe Sound Women's Club raised \$3,000 for the Schools Program and \$3,000 for scholarships by selling golf balls at \$10 apiece, numbering the balls, and dropping them from the helicopter, with the owner of the closest ball to the cup winning \$1,000.

Held in conjunction with the Blue Pearl Tournament, \$13,000 was raised in one day to educate the public on the environment.

Will the helicopter drop be an annual event? "Any time you can find a fundraiser that's fun for everyone, keep it," Shelly advised.

Now, she and friends want to create a statewide resource committee for the Audubon program, disseminating helpful information. This is an idea supported by Green Section National Director Jim Snow, who said: "We will work on the idea of state coordinators. We will probably try it out."

Continued on next page

Letters

SOD VS. SEED, PART MCV11

To the editor:

I hesitate to take exception with anything in your usually fine publication, but the June article (page 26) claiming, "Seed vs. sod equals 'huge cost savings' for superintendents," is incomplete at best, inaccurate at worst.

Golf course builders, owners and superintendents are proving what bankers have known for centuries. The return on investment is more critical than initial cost. No one can argue that 50 pounds of seed costs less than a pallet of sod. But neither can anyone play golf on that bag of seed. It will take many months and thousands of dollars of additional input costs for that seed to reach the turfgrass sod's delivered level of maturity. The sodded course will open earlier, have greater player appeal, and play better while it provides the owners a faster return on their investment.

For example, let's agree it will cost \$300,000 more to sod than seed a course. If the sodded course opens just 60 days earlier, with only 100 rounds a day at even \$50 per round, the entire investment is recovered. In reality, there probably won't be a \$300,000 sod vs. seed cost spread; the sodded course will

open more than 60 days ahead of a seeded one; there will be more than 100 rounds played every day and \$50 per round may be low. The sod cost will be recovered very quickly and continue to be more profitable than a seeded course.

In addition to the direct cost/investment return comparisons that favor sodding an entire course, there are other cost and environmental benefits such as less watering, fewer chemicals, virtually no patching of wash-outs and less equipment damage.

As far as the sod/soil interface concern raised by one of the seed salesmen your article quoted, millions of square yards of sod, installed on hundreds of thousands of sites every year, prove that's not a real problem for a homeowner, let alone a professional golf course superintendent. As someone once said, "The sweetness of low price too often becomes the sour taste of mis-spent money."

We trust your readers will look beyond the initial price of seed and realize the vast potential available to them through sodding.

Douglas H. Fender, CAE
Executive Director

Turf Producers International
Ed. In the context of our story — that is, establishing a playing

surface — seed is cheaper than sod. However, as Mr. Fender points out (and as Golf Course News has reported many times in the past), an earlier course opening means the earlier onset of cash flow. Obviously, seeding and sodding have their benefits and disadvantages. In the end, superintendents, owners and developers must decide between seed and sod based on their particular needs — most critically, how quickly the start-up debt need be recovered.

TO GET IN TOUCH...

To the editor:

Thank you for the opportunity to share with your readers some of the examples and trends in cooperative marketing and purchasing that I have seen and been associated with recently [Guest Commentary, July 1995]. Strength in numbers does pay exponentially.

I inadvertently left out my phone and e-mail addresses when I sent in the material for the guest commentary. Thank you for running them.

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