

By MARK LESLIE

NORTH READING, Mass. Dave Kahrman does not like aggravation. Faced with a frustrating and time-wasting chore that aggravates many superintendents, the Thomson Country Club superintendent took steps to eliminate that job this year. The result: directional and hazard flags that will not, can not and could not loosen, tilt or fall down.

"The problem I had was, late on a Friday or Saturday, someone would say, 'The pin is down on one of the holes,'" said

Winds & pins not a problem any more

Kahrman, who has four holes with blind shots into the fairways. "We'd have to go all the way out there and reset the pin. Then it would happen again later. This [new pin set-up] never has to be reset."

Because they are top-heavy and sometimes 12 feet high or higher, directional pins "often become loose and tilted and require placement changes in order to stay straight and snug," he explained.

Kahrman happened upon the remedy to the situation this spring after the winter frost had wreaked havoc with his flags and they had fallen over in the first wind.

Spotting extra PVC pipe on the premises, his imagination took over. He dug a hole below the frost line and sunk a 4-inch PVC pipe with the bell end at the top.

He leveled the pipe, then cemented it in place. The bell

end has a rubber ring gasket and it snugly holds a regulation-size steel or plastic cup.

"If the cup wears, just replace it," Kahrman said. "It drains fine because the pipe is hollow. Since it is level, the mower goes right over it. And you never have to fix it."

His idea is a time-saver, but "more than that, it is an aggravation-saver," Kahrman said. "When you put pins in, half the time you're hitting rocks here in



ON THE GREEN

New England. And those pins are always falling down when you least want them to."

Thomson Country Club uses its flags as directional signs and to warn golfers of hazards. Signs at the various tees and on the scorecard instruct the golfers on their meaning.

"You can put up a sign on the tee telling them that if the directional flag isn't there, to wait to hit," Kahrman said. "Golfers pull the flag when they're down there [blind spot] and replace it when they move on."

"It works well on our private course because the members all know about it. On a public course they might not know." So extra emphasis should be placed on signage, he added.

This success might lead colleagues to believe Kahrman doesn't like to waste his leftover PVC pipe. They'd be correct.

His invention involves using lengths of the stuff to build homemade periscopes on holes where golfers can't see if the foursome ahead of them has moved on.

He may even make these periscopes for fellow superintendents some day.

Delhi shows off new back nine

DELHI, N.Y. — Turf professionals from across New York recently got a first-hand look at a unique educational project-development of the back nine at the Delhi College Golf Course.

The project was the focal point for the Golf Course Design and Construction Seminar, sponsored by the New York State Turfgrass Association and Delhi College.

"This year's seminar was different from any other conference," said Dominic Morales, professor and plant science program director at Delhi College. "The participants went right out on the construction site to learn exactly how a golf course is built."

Presenters included experts with key roles in the project. Norman Hummel, president of Norman W. Hummel and Co., spoke on "Site Specific Greens Construction;" Paul Roche of the S.V. Moffett Co. and Chris Menno of CMI Systems Irrigation Inc. led a presentation on "Determining Irrigation Needs on Golf Courses."

Larry Reistetter, a member of the project's design team, spoke on the basics of golf course design. Paul Young of the Clark Cos. and Prof. Morales spoke on "Coordinating a Golf Course Construction Project."

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*Based on research conducted by the Center for Golf Course Management, a subsidiary of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.