

## Taeger places emphasis on 'organization'

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lower fertilizer requirement. The only reason Taeger ever fertilizes it is to get a darker green color. During the growing season, however, it needs steady mowing. While it grows very fast in the summer, it shuts down in the winter, and needs mowing only every two weeks or so.

"A lot of my salesmen don't understand why I'm not buying much fertilizer or why I don't need more reye grass seed," Taeger said. "But I have a real common-sense membership here, and as long as the playability is good, esthetics comes second."

It may be helpful that his membership's average age is 74. With kikuyugrass, the ball nearly always sits up high, much like on a tee. It is an ideal surface for those who don't take deep divots.

An initial problem with kikuyu was that it kept creeping into the greens, marring the putting surface. Taeger found that he can keep it limited to the collar of the green by using a broadleaf herbicide called Turflon. "We used to spend a lot of man-hours just pulling kikuyu from our greens," he said. "Now we apply a very small amount of Turflon in August, September and October, at 30-day intervals with a backpack sprayer, and it does the job for us."

It is the business aspect of the superintendent's job that Taeger had to learn when he took the job at Village Country Club. "I have an engineering committee,

a beautification committee, a greens committee, a board of directors, a general manager, my crew, and my membership. All of these people want to be educated on what I'm doing and why I'm doing it," he said.

He is still smarting from his most recent mistake. He decided to have all the ball washers refurbished. His mistake was in sending them all out at the same time, rather than on every other hole.

Taeger has also had to con-

tend with a bacteria problem in his deep well. Shortly before he took the job at Village Country Club, a new irrigation system had been installed. The sprinklers were replaced with sprinklers with smaller orifices. Algae, which flowed through the Rainbirds, kept clogging the new sprinklers.

It took three years to diagnose the problem. It was finally determined the cause was an iron-reduction bacteria in the well. This bacteria adhered to

the walls of the main irrigation line. During the warmer summer months, clumps of algae adhering to the bacteria would break off and plug the sprinklers.

Taeger first thought the problem was in his lakes. He tried using copper sulfate in the lakes without success. Finally, he learned that farmers in the area were having the same problem with their drip irrigation lines. He believes he can now effectively treat the problem by dripping chlorine into the well.

Taeger has also joined "Turfnet," a program on the internet. Turfnet is now prima-

rily an East Coast program. What he is finding through internet chats is a way of comparing prices for things he needs to purchase. He feels he can save hundreds of dollars through this comparison shopping.

"I can sometimes buy products in Florida cheaper than I can from Los Angeles, and the company picks up the shipping charges and there is no tax," he said.

While Taeger is young, he is obviously progressive, and has determined where his priorities lie, which makes for a satisfying arrangement with both his workers and his club membership.

## Toro backs 'Par for the Course'

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has announced The Toro Co. has returned in 1996 as a supporting sponsor of the association's television show, "Par for the Course," which airs nationwide on ESPN.

"Par for the Course," which offers a look at the world of golf and its beauty, will return to ESPN for a second year in 1996. Twenty-five original, half-hour episodes will be produced this season. New episodes are airing each Sunday morning at 7:30 Eastern through Aug. 25.

As a supporting sponsor, Toro is receiving a logo billboard on "Par," which will appear after segments that highlight the playing fields of golf and include information about new course design and construction.

"Educating viewers about golf and the environment is a common goal of 'Par for the Course' and the Toro Co.," said Mike Anderson, director of marketing and service for Toro. "We are pleased to continue our partnership with GCSAA in presenting 'Par' and its entertaining and informative messages."

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