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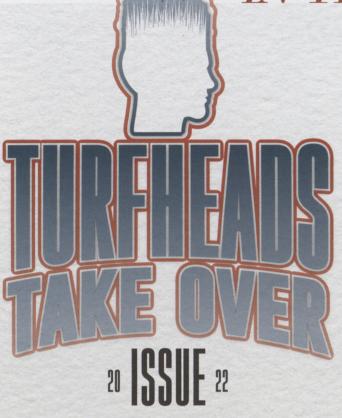
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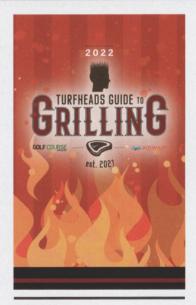
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SPECIAL

2022 TURFHEADS GUIDE TO GRILLING Sponsored by AQUA-AID Solutions



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ASSERTING WORTH **WITH WORDS**

illy Lewis submitted a forthright article for our 2021 Turfheads Take Over issue. Lewis, a veteran North Carolina superintendent at the time, examined whether superintendents undervalue themselves given the versatile skillsets and immense responsibilities they assume for their employers. Because Lewis is one of you, his article packed more impact than anything we could write on the topic.

You trust your peers above any writer, editor, consultant or professor, thus the reason we established Turfheads Take Over in 2016. Sorry, Golf Course Industry team! That's the candid content facts. Devoting one issue to your ideas, successes and rants is our pleasure. We're elated when busy people find time to help others via writing.

Enter bit.ly/TurfheadsLewis into any web browser if you missed Lewis's article. His words could empower you to take needed action to receive the compensation, responsibility and respect you deserve.

We recently encountered Lewis at the Carolinas GCSA Conference and Trade Show in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Lewis joined the Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply team this year as an account manager. He has a great gig visiting courses and serving customers in the Carolinas and Georgia. His career making golf a better game spans more than three decades, yet he exudes a zest for golf akin to a teenager discovering the joys of the game.

Our chat with Lewis and reading the terrific submissions on these pages reinforces the vast talents possessed by golf maintenance professionals. You are problem solvers, customer relation specialists, scientists, irrigators, technicians, financiers, conservationists, leaders, motivators, organizers, planners, listeners, speakers and, yes, writers. The recruiting pitch we use for this issue and other reader-produced content is straightforward: You write much better than we can maintain turf. Trust us when we tell you this.

Humility represents a noble pillar of the golf maintenance industry. But are superintendents and their teams too humble? Does humility cause superintendents, assistant superintendents, equipment, irrigation and spray technicians, and loyal crew members to undervalue their worth? Writing can be a tactic to gently tell your story.

Remember when nearly everything halted in 2020 except activity on golf courses? You kept courses playable despite scant crews and golf has emerged as a stronger, more profitable business. Facilities proved they can survive without surf and turf night. This gargantuan industry doesn't exist without healthy turf.

Your stories are the best golf has to offer. Leading a team through the unforeseen such as Bellevue Country Club's Mike Tollner (page 31) or flipping a course's fortunes through science, savvy and grit such as the Resort at Longboat Key Club's John Reilly (page 28) are feats few others can achieve. Again, trust us when we tell you this.

Hiding stories of triumphs and vulnerabilities hurts you and those closest to you. Seeking help on the job — Josh Lewis (page 40) and Nate Jordan (page 42) — is OK, especially in the high-play, low-labor era. Seeking help away from the job is also OK.

Openness leads to understanding, which means more productive life and work situations. How can employers, members and golfers understand the plight of superintendents and their teams if discreetness and anonymity permeate in certain segments of the industry? Outsiders don't know what they don't know.

Confidence represents a proven route to being open and asserting self-worth. Think about the glut of television and radio ads featuring attorneys. Are they the best attorneys in their respective markets? Doubtful. Are they perceived as best-in-class by legal outsiders? Probably. Are they maximizing their worth through confident messaging? Likely.

The trick is to find more subtle ways than boisterous marketing to demonstrate why you are a tremendous asset to your employer. Writing works for Matthew Wharton (page 50) at Carolina Golf Club and

writing helped Tollner handle a tough spot caused by historic winter damage.

Writing requires time and repetition. We're confident you possess the aptitude to make it a powerful part of a case to secure what you and your team deserve. GCI



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GOLF COUR

Vol. 34 No. 12 GIE Media, Inc. 5811 Canal Road Valley View, Ohio 44125 Phone: 800-456-0707 Fax: 216-525-0515

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Golf Course Industry is a member of: Golf Course Superintendents Association of America National Golf Foundation Golf Course Builders Association of America The Irrigation Association Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment



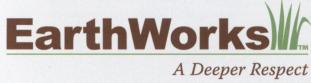


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By Rick Woelfel

uperintendents in cold-weather climates are increasingly finding themselves trying to strike a balance. Their members and customers want to play golf through the winter and advances in turf science and changes in the climate are making that a viable option, even in locales where it might not have been in the not-too-distant past.

But the turf professional must still prepare for the variabilities that accompany winter weather; cold temperatures, biting winds, and the possibility of snow and ice. All of this must be considered with an eye on their facility's bottom line.

How do they strike that balance?

Greg D'Antonio, superintendent and facilities manager, Concord Country Club, West Chester, Pennsylvania

"I think ultimately what I've realized is the course is here to be played. The members pay dues and they want to play. So, I think, ultimately, revenue and member satisfaction is kind of top priority, and agronomically we have to find that balance. But I think it's also our job to find that balance while letting them play."

Patrick McMahon, superintendent, Eagles Ridge Golf Club, Lakewood, New Jersey

"We go cart-path only after Thanksgiving to limit the abuse that the course takes and we then just kind of vary the traffic pattern. We have 27 holes, which is nice. We actually close a nine weekly and rotate that throughout the wintertime to break up the play a little bit."

Mike Dunk, director of grounds, Coyote Crossing Golf Club,

West Lafayette, Indiana

"After Thanksgiving until probably around March 1, if the greens are completely frozen, and we can't stick a tee in them, then we do not play golf. If we can stick a tee in them, then we're open to play golf."

Mark Knapke, superintendent, Mercer County Elks Golf Club, Celina, Ohio

"Anything after December 1 is bonus golf. Members are just glad to get out and exercise and play. We try to make sure all the leaves are taken care of, but all mowing has stopped. If we get some real warm weather, we will roll the greens and change the cups, but still no mowing until March. Maintenance of the golf course is more of the priority this time of year with projects and fertilization."

Tartan Talks 77

Listenina to somebody discuss listening on a podcast might provide a spark to refresh one of the most critical skills for longevity in the golf industry.



▲ Brawley

"It's a lot of the job, especially when you have a wide-range of clientele," Gary Brawley says of listening in an appearance on the Tartan Talks series. "At a private club, you have your 'A' golfers who have their agenda, you have our senior golfers who have been members for 30 years that want a certain thing and don't want to change, you have the ladies. You have to listen to them all and balance them all."

Brawley has done a solid job of listening over the years. His career spans more than three decades and he launched his own firm, Gary Brawley Golf Design, in 2015. Brawley has become adept at listening to clients describe water challenges and then implementing plans to address them. Brawley's firm is based in Peoria, Arizona, and he executes most of his work in the Southwest. He says threequarters of his current projects feature a water-related component. That percentage isn't likely to decrease soon.

"It's not just Arizona," he says. "We all have to be the best stewards we can of that resource. The big picture is everywhere. We have to be out there, we have to communicate."

The podcast can be found on the Superintendent Radio Network page of all popular distribution platforms.



INDUSTRY BUZZ

Heritage Landscape Supply Group acquired WinField United's Professional Products Group. Terms of the agreement were not disclosed. Professional Products Group is a green industry distributor that provides technical expertise, solutions and service across multiple markets,

including golf. The group operates 16 distribution locations across 12 states. PPG will continue to be led by Scott Gault, along with its experienced sales and operations team. The company is transitioning its name to Heritage Professional Products Group. ... Bass Pro Shops and Big Cedar









Lodge founder **Johnny Morris** will receive the 40th Old Tom Morris Award at the 2023 GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in Orlando. Morris used golf as an avenue to get people out to enjoy nature. After purchasing the Big Cedar property in 1987, he had **Jack Nicklaus** design Top of the Rock in 1996. The 9-hole, par-3 course was renovated in 2014, the same time Buffalo Ridge was renovated by **Tom Fazio**. Morris added Mountain Top, a 13-hole **Gary Player** design in 2017. **Bill Coore** s and **Ben Crenshaw** S Ozarks National opened in 2019 and Payne's Valley, a 19-hole **Tiger Woods** design, debuted in 2020. ... Superintendents and golf maintenance professionals filled more than 1,300 seminar seats at the annual Carolinas GCSA Conference and Trade Show Nov. 14-16 in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The final tally of 1,356 participants in education seminars was 10 seats shy of the record-high set in 2019. The number of exhibiting companies in 2022 was 186, down six from last year and down 28 from the record 214 set in 2018.

COURSE NEWS

Golf course architect Erik Larsen and St. Johns County completed a public golf course effort at the St. Johns Golf Club in Elkton, Florida. Larsen worked on the project for seven years and collaborated with director of golf/general manager Wes Tucker and his staff, the St. Johns County board of county commissioners, and Wadsworth Golf Construction Company. St. Johns Golf Club course was established from potato farmland as a county-owned facility in 1989 and operated as a 27-hole course despite poor conditioning and with nine holes going fallow a decade ago. After weighing whether to sell the land for housing, St. Johns County opted in 2021 to approve funding on an \$8 million renovation to develop an 18-hole course. The course has a new routing, expansive short-game area, beginning and finishing holes closer to the clubhouse, TifEagle Bermudagrass greens, TifTuf Bermudagrass fairways and zoysiagrass bunker faces. ... Occano, a new real estate community developed by Dilweg along the Albemarle Sound of North Carolina, partnered with Arnold Palmer Design Company and Signet Golf Associates to revitalize a course that opened in 2009. The \$3 million project included enhancing bunkers, expanding and restoring greens, resurfacing cart-path bridges, ornamental plant conversion, and tee space additions. ... The ASGCA honored the following architects and courses as part of its fourth annual Environmental Excellence Awards: Brookline Golf Course, Brookline, Massachusetts/Mark Mungeam; Columbia Golf Course, Minneapolis/Kevin Norby; Como Golf Course, St. Paul, Minnesota/Norby; Las Piedras, Punta del Este, Uruguay/Thad Layton; and Union League National Golf Club, Swainton, New Jersey/Dana Fry and Jason Straka. ... Chicago Golf Club in Wheaton, Illinois, was selected to host the 2033 U.S. Women's Open. One of the five founding USGA clubs, Chicago Golf Club will be hosting the event for the first time.



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Christine Kane

AUDUBON INTERNATIONAL

ndividuals who work in the turf industry share the desire to protect and enhance the environment. That shared desire helps make the bond between the industry and Audubon International such a strong one.

Since its founding 35 years ago, Audubon International, headquartered in Troy, New York, has been committed to sustaining and protecting the environment, and helping businesses, including golf facilities, do the same.

Christine Kane is the organization's executive director. In an appearance on the Wonderful Women of Golf podcast with Rick Woelfel, she offered an overview of its mission.

"In a nutshell, our goal is to create stable environments in all the areas where we all live, work and play," she says. "To accomplish that mission, we use a variety of tools, including technical assistance and certification for businesses that have properties they need to manage so they can manage them in a more sustainable way."

Although Kane has never worked on a golf course and no longer plays golf, she has an abiding respect for those who work in turf and their commitment to the environment, a commitment she says has become more entrenched during her six years in the executive director's role.

"I was very impressed with the opinions and knowledge of the folks that were already working in the golf industry. I would say a lot has happened in six years, not the least of which was the pandemic when people recognized the need to have nature close enough that they could be outside when they needed to."

Kane is pleased about the emphasis turf professionals place on managing their facilities in an environmentally responsible fashion.

"Many current golf superintendents, as well as those who are coming out of school and want to get into the industry, are very in tune with the need to increase sustainable management of the courses and the out of play areas that surround them," she says.

Kane notes the number of jobs available in the turf industry for those with environmental sensibilities.

"There are a lot of job opportunities in the broad context of environmental work," she says, "and I think that golf can certainly play a role or provide opportunities for folks who are looking for that work option with an environmental approach.

"That was another thing that I was happily surprised about when I came to this job, the number of new entrants into the golf world through the turfgrass programs, recent assistant superintendents, maintenance-team members, that came to the industry through that route."

Audubon International's association with the golf industry extends more than three decades to the creation of the organization's Cooperative Sanctuary program. Around 2,300 golf courses are affiliated with the program in three dozen countries. Each is charged with developing its own plan for protecting the environment, taking into account its individual circumstances, including available personnel and budget.

For a golf facility, aligning with Audubon International is not merely a matter of signing up.

"You have to do an environmental plan," Kane adds. "You have to understand your baseline and see where you are before you know what you can do to move forward."

The environmental plan is just the first step in the process. "There are five other steps that you can do in any order," Kane says. The steps include chemical use reduction, water conservation, water-quality issues, wildlife habitat, and outreach and education.

The outreach and education component makes Audubon International unique, according to Kane. "Actually, that is something I think that sets our program apart from many other types of certification out there," she says. "No matter what type of certification program you're working on with us, we do require outreach and education." GCI



There are a lot of job opportunities in the broad context of environmental work and I think that golf can certainly play a role or provide opportunities for folks who are looking for that work option with an environmental approach."







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t was another strange golf year, when our business looked even more like Hollywood, with almost as much action on courses and screens as there was in courtrooms. Because we prefer comedy to drama, here are the Grainy Awards for 2022. Please keep your acceptance speeches short.

THE "SHOW MUST GO ON" AWARD

To the GCSAA for carrying on with the annual Golf Industry Show — excuse me, the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show — despite the not-quite-post-pandemic hangover and the annoyances that came with holding it in one of the most expensive travel destinations in prime season. Is it a surprise that not too many showed up? But it was a great reunion for vendors. Most common refrain heard on the show floor: "Remember when ...?"

WORST SET DESIGN

Architects. Almost every one of them. Certainly, all those who randomly throw in swales, bunkers and native areas without regard to how they'll be maintained — particularly in the midst of a significant labor shortage among grounds crews

BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN

Southern Hills Country Club. Despite a big freeze the winter before, the course shone magnificently in the 2022 PGA Championship thanks to talented golf course superintendent Russ Myers and his team.

BEST (OR IS IT WORST?) DRAMATIC SERIES

"The Money Heist." Not the TV series, but the battle of bucks be-

tween upstart LIV Golf and the hanging-on-by-its-slippery-grips PGA Tour. Dustin Johnson wins \$35 million playing in tournaments nobody saw, while the suits from Ponte Vedra found a pot of gold somewhere that they're now throwing at rookies, "elevated" events and a new Player Impact Program.

BEST FOREIGN FEATURE

The Old Course at St. Andrews. Part documentary, part tear-jerker, this one had it all, from Tiger's (probably) last appearance across the pond to Open Championship winner Cam Smith grabbing the Claret Jug one minute then jumping tours the next. And while the Old was, is and will always be my favorite course, I really don't think it needed to be burnt like a slice of British toast. Her next big appearance is the 2023 Walker Cup and we'll be watching that sequel closely.

WORST SOUND EDITING

NBC relieves longtime announcers - and, notably, former players - Roger Maltbie and Gary Koch of their microphones, saying it wants to "refresh" its broadcasts. I wholeheartedly agree that golf broadcasts — all of them! — need to be refreshed. Maybe if they stop showing golfers taking three minutes to line up a 10-footer ... and then miss.

WORST SOUND EFFECTS

The ever-astute State of California Legislature, for banning gas-powered lawn equipment as soon as 2024. What have the lawmakers got against lawn mowers and leaf blowers? If they want to stop noxious exhaust, maybe they should keep their mouths shut.

WORST REMAKE

The USGA Green Section. To quote the great philosopher Yogi Berra, it's "déjà vu all over again." With all the knowledge, expertise, research and talent on the Green Section staff (not to mention all that money), you'd think they could come up with something fresh or innovative. Nope. What we got was the same





TIM MORAGHAN, principal, ASPIRE Golf (tmoraghan@aspire-golf.com). Follow Tim's blog, Golf Course Confidential at www.aspire-golf.com/buzz.html or on Twitter @TimMoraghan



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old stuff we've been talking about for the past 40 years. I strongly suggest they take a good look at the Best Remake of the Year, "Top Gun: Maverick," for some hints on how to take something that was pretty lame to begin with and give it a welcome redo.

WEIRDEST LIV-E PROGRAM

LIV Golf. It sucked the air out of the golf world for months and it isn't done. And you thought Hollywood studios could spend a lot of money on a box-office bomb ...

BEST ORIGINAL SCORE

The Irish ballads played at morning meetings in the maintenance facility at The Country Club to rally the troops preparing for the 2022 U.S. Open.

BEST SHORT FEATURES

The spate of 3-, 6-, 9-, and 12hole courses. A great way to get people to learn and engage with the game. From the Cradle to Circle T Nine, Little Sandy to The Baths, such courses are diverse, fun and can be played quickly. We need more of them, and it looks like we're going to be getting them.



days of Hollywood, Pat Jones has a way of popping up everywhere, especially when you least expect him. (See: Harvey Keitel — he's everywhere and in every movie!)

BEST VISUAL EFFECTS

Quail Hollow was in prime shape for the Presidents Cup (almost as good a shape as the American team). With an unbelievable build-out and superb conditions, Keith Wood and patriarch Johnny Harris hit it out of the park.

BEST SUPPORTING — YET ALSO UNSUPPORTING -**ACTOR IN AN ONGOING** SERIES

Phil Mickelson. Yeah, you knew Lefty had to win something. Not playing golf, but from us. He was here, he

> was there. he was everywhere (like Pat Jones), then he disappeared, and reappeared. He had a beard, then he didn't. He drank his own coffee to say nothing

of the Kool-Aid. And he was, as always, a quote machine. In football, they call that a "triple threat." In golf, we now refer to it as "one scary mother---er!"

Runner Up: Rory McIlroy, who was golf's Swiss Army knife this year, winning events —though not a major — while keeping the PGA Tour membership in line. A great example of leadership that many other golf organizations could learn from.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS(ES)

Hats off to the women's volunteer grounds crew at the 2022 U.S. Women's Open at Pine Needles. You made yourselves - and us - proud. Plus, a special shoutout to host golf course superintendent David Fruchte.

BEST ACTORS AND ACTRESSES

40 million golfers! That's how many are now playing our game, says the National Golf Foundation. Yes, that includes off-course games like Topgolf and even virtual reality, but we're happy to have them.

Runners Up: The hundreds of superintendents and their crews at more than 1,000 courses in Florida and elsewhere devastated by Hurricane Ian. Unfortunately, we're often not noticed until the worst happens. I hope your members/golfers show their thanks.

AND THE 2022 GRAINY GOES TO ...

Mike Whan and the USGA. Rather than celebrating themselves (like in the old days) and before congratulating

2022 U.S. Open winner Matt Fitzpatrick, they did the right thing by recognizing Dave Johnson, director of grounds at The Country Club, and his team. The inaugural Marshall Platter recognizes excellence in USGA championship agronomy and course preparation. The award was presented by Whan on the 18th hole after the completion of

the championship before the assembled gallery and a national television audience. It's about time! GCI



THE "WAIT, I'VE SEEN HIM **BEFORE" AWARD**

Like character actors in the old

2022

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TURFHEADS GUIDE TO CONTROLL OF THE PROPERTY OF

GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY





est. 2021



2022

GRILLING

Pet 2021

AQUA-AID

GOLF COURSE

Hard to believe that it is the beginning of December as I sit and write this letter. The year has flown by, as it seems they all do as I get older. What a year for golf! Hard to believe that a worldwide pandemic would allow for an uptick in golf that hasn't been seen since the '90s. Golf seemed to stay at the forefront of the news with LIV Golf starting and all the drama around the "split" between some of the world's best and the PGA Tour.

Turfheads Grilling had another banner year. Our second year participating with the wonderful folks at *Golf Course Industry* has produced another cookbook with some great recipes. Our goal was to show the camaraderie among agronomy teams, friends and families sharing time together through one of America's greatest pastimes ... BBQing.

Several times this year, as I was traveling, the topic of Turfheads Grilling came up. It allowed us to have some good conversations with customers and our distributor partners beyond turf, and allowed us to get to know people better. A highlight from the year was delivering Jay Wade from Magnolia Green Golf Club his grill from being last year's final grand prize winner. We enjoyed a day spending time with his crew and listening to some of their backgrounds, stories and overall banter. As I write this letter, we have one more grand prize to award. We look forward to seeing who wins and cooking for them in January.

We hope you enjoy the cookbook and take some time over the next year to share some of your recipes with us. AQUA-AID Solutions will be having a "cookout" in our booth 2649 at GCSAA Conference and Trade Show this year from noon to 3 p.m. Wednesday. Please come by the booth and enter to win a Pit Barrel Smoker.

Sam Green
President, AQUA•AID Solutions





Don Bloom

Durand Eastman Golf Course

Poor man's burnt ends

INGREDIENTS

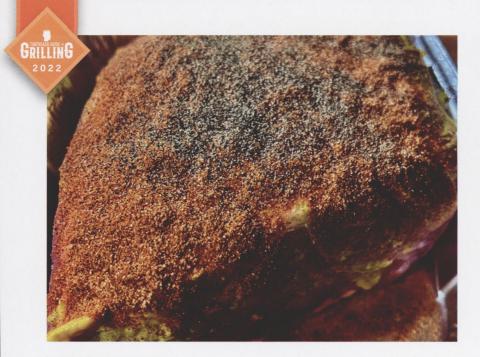
Roast

- · 3 pounds chuck roast
- 2 tablespoons French's Mustard for binder
- ¾ cup BBQ sauce
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, sliced
- 2 tablespoons raw honey

Dry rub

- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- · 1 teaspoon ground mustard
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ tablespoon raw (Turbinado) sugar
- · ½ tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper

- Apply mustard to roast (don't miss any spots).
 Season with the dry rub on all sides. Let sit for 30 minutes while preheating smoker to 250 degrees.
- Cook roast until 160-degree internal temperature is reached (around 3-4 hours).
- Remove roast from smoker, top with 2 tablespoons of unsalted butter slices and wrap in aluminum foil. Place back on the smoker until 195-degree internal temperature is reached (around 1-2 hours).
- Let roast rest uncovered for 30 minutes and then slice roast into 1-inch cubes.
- Place the cubes in an aluminum pan. Add BBQ sauce, honey and the rest of the unsalted butter.
 Stir and return to the smoker uncovered until the cubes reach a 202-degree internal temperature (around 1-1 ½ hours).
- Remove pan from smoker, mix one more time, and dig in.



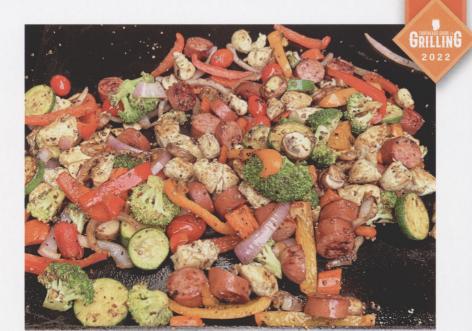
Jeremy Boone Springdale Resort

Boston butt

INGREDIENTS

- Pork butt
- Yellow mustard
- Salt
- Pepper
- Garlic
- 4 ounces
 Worcestershire sauce

- Begin around 9 p.m. and serve around 11 a.m.
- Rub the meat with yellow mustard.
- · Coat with an SPG rub: salt, pepper and garlic.
- Place meat in smoker in a pan to retain juices for later.
- Smoke for 8-10 hours at 225-250 degrees.
- Remove and place in a Crockpot.
- Add half the juice in the pan and the Worcestershire sauce to the pot.
- Begin to pull apart the pork after a 2-hour rest period.
- Top off the pot with water and turn the Crock on low.
- Continue to pull apart the pork over the next few hours.
- · Leave Crock on low until ready to be served.
- Grab tongs and serve, adding vinegar, BBQ, mustard or whatever sauce — or no sauce — as you desire.
- · Serve Keto style or on a bun.



Ryan Cummings Elcona Country Club

Blackstone succotash

INGREDIENTS

- 3 chicken breasts, diced
- 1 package smoked sausage
- 1 head of broccoli, chopped
- 3 large carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 8 ounces sliced bella mushrooms
- 1 package grape tomatoes
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 2 bell peppers, sliced
- Montreal Steak
 Seasoning

- Pre-blanch broccoli and carrots for 3 minutes.
- Season all veggies and meat with Montreal Steak Seasoning.
- Heat all sections of the Blackstone on medium-high heat. Add oil and veggies and stir for 2 minutes.
- Add meats to a separate section and cook until chicken is not pink in the middle.
- Once meat is cooked, turn heat to low and mix everything together in the center of the griddle.
- Pair with your favorite beer and serve hot.



Scott Forrester

Legacy on Lanier Golf Club

Competition mop

INGREDIENTS

- 1⅓ cups of packed brown sugar
- 1½ tablespoons black pepper
- 1½ tablespoons
 Cayenne pepper
- 4 tablespoons salt
- 2½ cups of Heinz ketchup
- 40 ounces of water
- ½ gallon of apple cider vinegar
- Note: This recipe makes 1 gallon

- Mix all ingredients together and bring to a simmer to dissolve brown sugar. Remove from heat and let cool.
- If using for a mop, then mop away on ribs, butts or chicken as you smoke or grill. Don't overdo it. Mop every 30-45 minutes or as desired.
- Recipe also works as a vinegar sauce.





Dan Francis Wildwood Country Club

Danno's Dust" dry rub

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon Cayenne pepper
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- · 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- · 1 tablespoon salt (to
- 1 teaspoon black coarse ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons brown
- · 1 tablespoon Tony Chachere's Original Creole Seasoning

- Combine all the ingredients to complete the rub.
- The rub can be used on grilled or smoked wings, chicken and pork.
- If making wings in an air fryer, cook at 400 degrees for 8-9 minutes, flip and cook for another 8-9 minutes.
- Chunky blue cheese recommended to serve with wings.



Troy Secton Noble Turf

Rotisserie rosemary rib roast

INGREDIENTS

Roast

- 3½ pound beef rib roast (2-3 bones)
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt Herb paste
- 12 cloves garlic, peeled
- 4 tablespoons fresh thyme
- 4 tablespoons fresh rosemary
- ½ cup fresh parsley
- Zest from ½ lemon
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

Drip pan

- 1 bag small fingerling potatoes
- 6 carrots
- 2 Vidalia onions

- Trim excess fat off the outside of the rib roast, then sprinkle evenly with the 2 teaspoons of kosher salt 2 hours before cooking. Cut bones off rib roast prior to salting. Set roast back onto the rack of bones, wrap in cling wrap and place into refrigerator for 1½-2 ½ hours.
- Poke six holes on the bottom of the rib roast where the bones were attached using a knife sharpener. Insert one garlic clove into each hole.
- Insert six garlic gloves, rosemary, thyme, parsley and lemon zest into a food processor. Mince slowly and add olive oil. Scrape down sides as needed using a rubber spatula.
- Rub the paste over the entire rib roast an hour before cooking. Tie the ribs back onto the roast using cooking twine.
- Preheat grill to 450-500 degrees.
- Place a deep tinfoil pan under the spit containing the potatoes, onions and carrots so the juices from the rib roast drip into the pan and vegetables.
- Center the roast onto your spit making sure the roast will be evenly centered under the infrared burner.
- Place the roast onto the rotisserie, turning on the
 rotisserie and closing the lid. Check the roast with an
 internal thermometer after 30 minutes and every 10-20
 minutes thereafter. I prefer taking my roast off once it
 reaches an internal temperature of 110 degrees (rare
 to medium-rare). It will continue to cook as it rests. Let
 the roast sit for 15 minutes before carving.





Craig Sondergaard Racine Country Club

Grilled shrimp tacos with jicama slaw and fresh Mexican crema

INGREDIENTS

Jicama slaw

- 1 pound jicama, peeled and cut into 3-inch-long matchsticks
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon grated orange zest plus 1/3 cup juice
- ½ teaspoon salt

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 tablespoons milk

Shrimp tacos

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon minced or 1 teaspoon dried fresh oregano
- 2 teaspoons chipotle chili powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

- 2 pounds extra-large shrimp, peeled and deveined, with tails removed
- 18 6-inch corn tortillas
- Lime wedges for serving

- Combine jicama, onion, cilantro, orange zest and juice, and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a bowl. Cover and refrigerate until ready to
- Whisk mayonnaise, sour cream, lime juice and milk together in a bowl. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.
- Whisk oil, oregano, chili powder, garlic powder and 1/2 teaspoon salt together in large bowl. Pat shrimp dry with paper towels, add to spice mixture and toss to coat. Thread shrimp tightly onto four 12-inch metal skewers, alternating the direction of heads and tails.
- Heat grill to high heat (gas or charcoal). Clean and oil cooking grate.
- Place shrimp on grill and cook until lightly charred on first side, about 4 minutes. Flip shrimp and cook until opaque throughout, about 2 minutes. Transfer to platter and cover with aluminum foil.
- Grill tortillas, turning as needed, until warm and soft, about 1-11/2 minutes; wrap tightly in aluminum foil to keep soft.
- Slide shrimp off skewers onto cutting board and cut into 1/2 pieces. Serve with tortillas, jicama slaw, crema and lime wedges.



Thad Thompson *Terry Hills Golf Course*

Oven pulled pork

INGREDIENTS

- Pork butt, picnic ham or any other large meat
- Mustard
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ½ cup kosher salt
- 4 tablespoons smoked paprika
- 2 tablespoons black pepper
- ½ tablespoon cumin
- ½ tablespoon onion powder
- ½ tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

- · Rub meat with mustard as a binder.
- Mix sugar, salt, paprika, black pepper, cumin, onion powder, garlic powder and cayenne pepper for rub.
- Cover the meat with rub and then chuck it on a wire rack in a pan.
- Cook at 200 degrees for 24 hours.
- Pro tip: Your oven will turn off after 12 hours. I learned the hard way!



Rob Uzar

Eastpointe Country Club

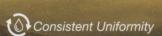
Prime rib roast

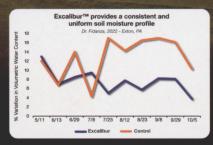
INGREDIENTS

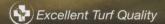
- Prime rib roast
- Salt
- Pepper
- Thyme
- Sage
- Rosemary
- Garlic cloves
- Olive oil
- Butchers twine

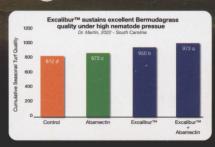
- For rub, combine olive oil, sage, rosemary, thyme and garlic in a food processor until it is a chunky paste. Set aside.
- Remove roast from wrapping the night before. Cut away butcher's twine and remove bones. Save bone slab for later.
- Wipe moisture off roast and then rub down with some olive oil. Coat with salt and pepper all over.
- Coat the roast and top of bone slab with rub. Retwine bones back underneath and set in fridge covered overnight.
- Set smoker (I use wood) at 225 degrees for 40 minutes a pound, 250 degrees for 30 minutes a pound, or 275 degrees for 20 minutes a pound.
- Cook to temperature instead of time. Rare: 120-130 degrees.
 Medium-rare: 130-140 degrees. Medium: 140-150 degrees.
 Medium-well: 150-160 degrees. Well-done: above 160 degrees.
- Remove and cover with foil to rest for 30-60 minutes.
 Redistribute the moisture through the roast. Temperature will rise around 5 degrees during this process.
- · Served best with au jus sauce and horseradish sauce.

- Ir









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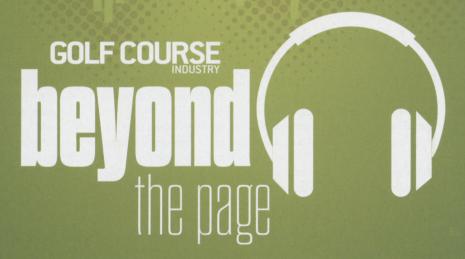
Solutions4Turf







DEEPER!

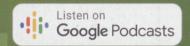


A conversation that expands the scope of a story from the most recent issue of Golf Course Industry, including a chat with one of our columnists on their latest work.

AVALIABLE ON:











COURSES HAVE CASH. NOW WHAT?

B ehind a flood of new private club members and their joining fees, many golf courses are awash in something they haven't had for a while – cash. And this is a problem. OK, a nice problem.

This newfound money raises a question about how it should be directed and presents a challenge for golf course superintendents and club leaders: how best to prioritize and then tackle projects – improvements, renovations and project re-dos – against a backdrop of increased costs, supply chain limitations and labor shortages. Best intentions aside, it doesn't help that their members and customers are raising the volume on the "more and better" channel and offering more than a smattering of suggestions and advice.

Golf course architect **Forrest Richardson**, a past president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, has some thoughts

on that challenge, which he's gathered into a neat little book, "Course Brains: 25 Questions to Help Measure the IQ of Your Golf Course." In essence, it's an effort to help superintendents and course operators think and act smarter.

"I wrote 'Course Brains' because I realized a need for cost efficiency among those who managed and cared for golf courses," Richardson says. "As a golf course archi'Course Brains' helps operators understand what really matters when it comes to taking care of their most valuable asset. Those who go to the head of their class stand out in three phases of operations and management."

tect, I see firsthand the ways we can be more efficient and actually make a dramatic difference to the bottom line."

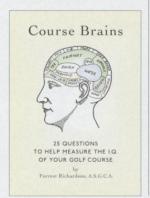
The book takes golf operators, managers and club leaders through 25 distinct topics. Following each, readers get a chance to grade the golf course, assigning an A through F assessment of the course's success in maximizing revenues and controlling costs. A handy tally sheet at the back of the book makes it easy to determine an overall Course I.Q. – from genius to dull.

"Course Brains" helps operators understand what really matters when it comes to taking care of their most valuable asset. Those who go to the head of their class stand out in three phases of operations and management.

DECISION-MAKING

To remind us that decisions made today can have long-lasting impacts, Richardson shares an example of investing in bunkers with durable liners that stand up to years of wear and tear instead of deciding against liners to save money on

the front end. "When we make decisions based on



the future, and costs moving forward, we all win."

RISK MANAGEMENT

Richardson encourages superintendents, owners and operators to look at their course from an architect's perspective, a vantage point that can prove beneficial when it comes to liability claims associated with errant golf balls that can cause property damage and personal injuries. The seemingly simple decision of removing or adding trees is an example of the value an architect can add. "All courses need to have a golf course architect on call and, at least, a professional to occasionally come by, have lunch, and help guide decisions. He or she may well be the most enlightened resource you have to help be a part of your course's future. It's well worth the investment."

EMBRACING CHANGE

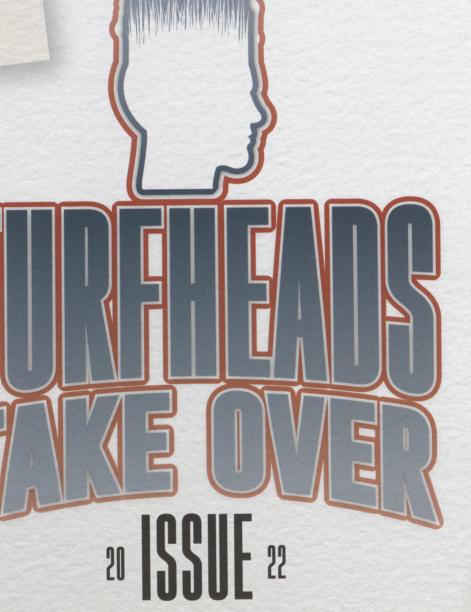
"Today we push efficiency, but we've taken it to a new level," Richardson notes. "From HDPE pipe in irrigation to new advancements in turfgrass varieties, we are now at a point when technology and innovation will shape the future of golf in even more dramatic ways. Robotics, drones and new water conservation are all a part of our future."

"Course Brains" walks superintendents, owners, managers and operators through an exercise that opens course stakeholders to more effective communication and begins the thoughtful process of improving course conditions and player experience while reducing costs. GCI



HENRY DELOZIER is a partner at GGA Partners, trusted advisors and thought leaders. He is currently Chairman of the Board of Directors of Audubon International.

7TH ANNUAL



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YOUR SUCCESS IS IN THE SCIENCE

This year, we sat down with **Director of Agronomy Paul Giordano**, **Ph.D.**, to discuss how Harrell's uses science to enhance the success of the end user through a Balanced Approach.

WHAT IS THE BALANCED APPROACH?

The Balanced Approach is a concept created many years ago by Harrell's. Our agronomic research and development team understood that while we could look at single products individually and find their value in terms of turf health, there was more we could do to serve the end user. When you get down to the golf course superintendent or turf manager level, you see that they are using a suite of different products, including various solutions in combination with one another to provide the ultimate playing surface or create a specific aesthetic value.

Based on our understanding of those needs, we developed The Balanced Approach. Here, we incorporate not just chemistry or nutrition but also soil conditioners and biostimulants. The result is a holistic approach to overall turf health and management.

SO, HOW DO YOU COME UP WITH YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS?

We invest in collaborative university trials, like the one we are conducting at Rutgers University with Bruce Clarke, Ph.D., on the stress-related disease, anthracnose. Our research and development team has also employed a similar "Balanced Approach" on topics such as nematode control in the southeastern United States or aerification recovery. We aim to address both abiotic and biotic stresses to offer our customers the best management practices for their individual challenges.

As we work with different cooperators at Rutgers University and over 15 other institutions around the country, we establish a diverse set of objectives for the products we're developing for our portfolio as we shepherd them through the development process within Harrell's.

One thing that sets Harrell's apart is that before we put our logo on any product, we rigorously vet the product. In fact, we research products for the better part of several years to prove that they perform the way we are saying they will perform.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT FOCUS OF YOUR RESEARCH?

The focus of our research for the past 20 years, especially on diseases like anthracnose, has been on best management practices. These best management practices encompass a number of different things. First and foremost, we focus on good fertility practices and other cultural management strategies, such as topdressing, moisture management , and fungicide programs. Over the past 20 years, we've been able to integrate all these factors into several unique best-management programs for turf managers.

DR. BRUCE CLARKE, FROM RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, WEIGHED IN, SAYING:

"From my perspective, Harrell's seems to be an excellent company with excellent tech support that focuses on providing a whole-program approach; not only addressing fertility but also biostimulants



and fungicides. We enjoy our relationship with Harrell's, especially with their product development people and their salespeople. They're very knowledgeable, and we work closely with them to develop research protocols that make sense and help the end user."

DO YOU ONLY RESEARCH HARRELL'S PRODUCTS?

We research the Harrell's lineup of products and new things we're developing, and we also research combining our products with other manufacturers' products to develop truly programmatic approaches that optimize the solutions individually. That is the holistic nature of the balanced approach.

It is pretty special for us to be able to work with partners like Envu, BASF, Syngenta, and others to maximize their products within a program. And that is precisely what the superintendents usually look for when it comes to our development process and bringing new products into the Harrell's lineup.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT TURF MANAGERS NEED?



Ultimately, the customer is the driver of this process. We have a direct line to the customer out in the field, whether that's the golf course superintendent, the lawn care operator, or the turf manager. We get to understand their pain points and their desires for new solutions. We

take this information and then seek out what those solutions might look like.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE AT HARRELL'S?

I'm excited about Harrell's investment in innovation and R&D. I'm excited about the direction in which Harrell's is going and about how we continue to bolster our efforts by bringing brand new products and combinations, and formulations to the turf world.

It's an exciting time for this company. I think it's an exciting time for the industry. We're at the precipice of not only nutritional chemical and biological solutions but also new technology that our customers and reps will have access to, allowing them to make better decisions.

Harrell's truly is a leader in this space, and we'll continue to be for many years to come.



For more insights into industry topics like turf health, nutrition, control solutions, and the latest in academic research, tune into our TurPh.Dudes podcast. Our TurPh.dudes are constantly connecting with industry leaders and turfhead game-changers so that they can share with you what's going on in the world of turf. You can subscribe on iTunes and Google Play Music, or tune in directly at www.harrells.com.

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The richest man in the world

Superintendent Ron Furlong reflects on a second chance, a need fulfilled and a decades-long friendship.

▲ Longtime Avalon Golf Links employee Les Zahn was a tremendous redemptive story.

hen you finally land a superintendent position, it is natural to have a strong desire to immediately make your mark on the new course. You have visions of improving conditions, developing a great relationship with others in management positions at the club, and hiring and molding a staff that will epitomize and mirror your visions and goals for the golf course. You seek a staff that will help you mold the course exactly the way that vision in your head appears to you.

I was no different when I landed the superintendent position at Avalon Golf Club, a Robert Muir Graves design 90 minutes north of Seattle, in February 2002. I couldn't wait to make my mark on the 27 hole-layout. Take it to that next level, blow away the membership and ownership with my, no doubt, unbelievable superintendent skills, and hire the perfect people to help me achieve all those goals.

So, in mid-February of '02, when I was still working at Everett Golf and Country Club, where I was finishing up my final couple of weeks as assistant superintendent before I started at Avalon on March 1, my mind was filled with these thoughts. I was mostly envisioning the perfect employees I would hire for the crew. It would be a breeze.

On a particular day in mid-February, a fellow on the crew at Everett G&CC came up to me on the course and said there was someone waiting at our shop to see me regarding my new course and job. I had no idea who this could possibly be. Did the owner at Avalon have a change of heart about hiring me? Was it some cruel joke?

I drove into the shop and found, leaning against a beat-up, dirty old Chrysler, a rather strange-looking fellow nervously waiting for me. His hair was white and wild and looked like it hadn't seen a comb in several years. His clothes were pretty worn and his face unshaven. But even as I took all this in, I also noticed his kind

Ron Furlong is the superintendent at Avalon Golf Links in Burlington, Washington, and a frequent Golf Course Industry contributor.

◆Les Zahn's

work helped

make Avalon Golf Links a

popular public

facility in the

Pacific North-

West

eyes and warm smile.

He extended his hand nervously and said his name was Les Zahn, and he had recently found out I was to become the new superintendent at Avalon. He was looking for a job. It instantly struck me that this fella had driven an hour from up north where Avalon was located just to meet me.

I kindly told him I had, obviously, not yet started at Avalon, and I had no idea what the current crew situation was. As I said this to him, I was thinking to myself, giving him the once over, 'No, no, no, this is not what I'm envisioning. Thanks, but no thanks.'

Les, very nervously, told me directly he understood this (that I wasn't officially at Avalon yet), but he just wanted to introduce himself. Although I would have guessed his age to be at least 60, Les was 47 years old when I met him that day. He

described himself as a handyman, amateur inventor and golf historian, and also told me he used to caddie for a spell on the Senior Tour. Although he had never worked on a golf course, he told me, he grew up with the game, and had worked for a few years at a dedicated driving range.

Les also informed me he was a recovering alcoholic, and the years of drinking had

cost him many things in life, including more than one job. But he assured me he hadn't had a drink in more than six months and intended to never have another. I couldn't wait to move on and get back to work. This was not at all my vision of my new job or the crew members who were going to mold it with me. And to be honest, it was not what I wanted them to look like. I thanked him for driving down and returned to work.

February turned to March, and I drove to work for my first day at Avalon, nervous but full of anticipation and excitement. I had forgotten about the meeting with Les. But as I pulled into the shop and walked into the building, the first person to greet me was none other than, you guessed it, Les himself — wearing, I noticed, the same clothes he wore two weeks before. What the heck?

He smiled and said hello. He was very apologetic for being there, but just wanted to reiterate his desire to work at Avalon, and how dedicated he would be. He also emphasized wanted my first moment at my new course to go. I told him I had no idea what my needs would be, and probably wouldn't know for some time. He gave me that damn warm, kind smile, and said, "No worries, sorry to bother you."

I survived the first day at Avalon, and walked into the shop the next day. Guess who greeted me?

"Sorry to bother you," Les said, the warm smile and twinkle in his eyes, "but just wanted you to know I'm an early riser. I love getting up early!" I noted he still wore the same clothes.

Again, kindness eluded me. I was getting annoyed by this guy. I was actually starting to feel a bit stalked. Would he ever go away?

By the third day, he was chatting with the crew when I showed up. On the fourth day, he brought donuts. That morning, I had Les fill out an application and asked him,

as kindly as I could muster, to please stay away. I'd be making some hiring decisions soon, but until then I would prefer he not keep showing up.

He smiled (that darn smile again) and said, "Sure thing."

And, true to his word, he was not there the next day.

Now, I wouldn't say I missed Les, but something in me felt a little empty when he wasn't there on

day five. Even a few of the guys on the crew wondered what had happened to him. That day I sat down to look at his application. The meat of his application was his references. I actual-



"For 20 years, Les was the most loyal employee I have ever had. The most loyal employee I have ever seen. He dedicated himself to this golf course like no one's ousiness. Not just the golf course itself, but the entire operation."

how much he needed this job. I remember clearly the word need, not want. It wasn't a case of want for Les.

I don't think I was terribly kind that morning. It was not how I



TURFHEADS TAKE OVER

ly made a copy of his application and I still have it. It had nine references listed, many of them written on the blank backside of the application.

I called the first one. It was a fellow named Kenny, who had most recently employed Les on his driving range, which had closed down.

"Hire him," Kenny said. "You won't regret it. I know how bad he wants to work for you. It's all he talks about."

I asked about the alcohol. Yes, Kenny admitted, it had been a huge issue. But he knew Les very well, and he had no doubt he would overcome it.

I called the next reference. "Hire him, you won't regret."

Think I may have tried one more of his references, received the same response, and then called Les.

The rest is history.

Les passed away from kidney failure in September of this year. His health had been failing for a couple years, but he continued to work as much as he could, including the day before he died. True to his word to me that first day I met him. Les never had another drink.

For 20 years, Les was the most loyal employee I have ever had. The most loyal employee I have ever seen. He dedicated himself to this golf course like no one's business. Not just the golf course itself, but



the entire operation. He was so woven into the fabric of Avalon, and especially the maintenance shop, that his loss will be felt by all of us for some time.

He made it a point to come in and open the shop every morning. And when I say every morning, I mean every morning, not just when he was scheduled to work. He would usually get here an hour and a half to two hours before the rest of us showed up. And, as we all know, for a golf course maintenance operation, that is pretty darn early. Doors opened, equipment pulled out, coffee brewing. He would often be sitting on No. 2 South in the mornings, still totally dark out, drinking his coffee, contentedly looking out at the Skagit Valley lit up below the golf course, and beyond the valley the shadow of the Cascade Mountains,

> waiting happily for the rest of to show up.

> Les even surprised a couple of burglars attempting to rob us blind at 3:30 in the morning one day last summer. Sent them fleeing, empty-handed, into the woods next to our shop.

Personally, Les became one of my closest friends. He was a music buff and an accomplished cellist, and we often talked music, old movies and golf. He called me Captain ("Aye, Captain"), and his smile, the warmest I have ever seen, never faded, even in the last couple of very difficult years for him. Les often talked to me about a couple of love interests from his distant past, and there was one woman he referred to as the one who got away. But he never married. He spent the 20 years that I knew him living a very simple life. In the time I knew him, Les mourned the death of his mother, his father, and several shop cats that he had cared for and loved.

He died with almost nothing to his name. Nothing physical that is. But to all of us who had the privilege of knowing him, and calling him a friend, Les, like George Bailey in 'It's a Wonderful Life', was indeed the richest man in the world.

Because of my success with hiring Les, I have ended up over the years hiring many people who have fallen on hard times. Sometimes these hires work out, and often they don't. But I will never again question myself about giving someone a second chance.

Shame on me for even considering not doing that.

Thank you for that, Les. And thank you for making me a better superintendent and, much more important, a better person.

Man, I miss that smile. GCI





Brotherly love

After more than 60 years combined in the industry, Thad Thompson and Drew **Thompson** compare notes on public and private golf, survival, and more.

ongtime Western New York turf pros Thad Thompson and Drew Thompson still talk almost every day.

About agronomy.

About management.

About life.

The second and third of four brothers, they were born just 15 months apart and have worked on golf courses for decades. Thad is the superintendent at Terry Hills Golf Course, a 27-hole public facility in Batavia, and Drew is the superintendent and general manager at East Aurora Country Club, an 18-hole private club about 35 miles southwest in East Aurora.

They love the Bills, the business and, if it isn't obvi-

ous throughout this story, each other.

THAD: You very much have to develop a thick skin in our family. When we were young, we shoveled the pond off so we could play hockey and we were one person short, so our mother came down in her figure skates, dropped the puck and Drew runs her. She took her skates off and went back home.

DREW: Not one of my finer moments.

THAD: How did we get into golf

courses? We grew up at a horse farm summer camp. That's what we did every summer, all summer. I got to be 18 and played my first nine-hole round of golf the day I got out of high school. Kind of fell in love with it that year. That was '88. The next year, I went to the local course, Turkey Run in Arcade, and asked the guy, 'Do you need any help?' It was nine holes, him and one other guy. He said, 'I'll get a hold of you.' The guy's name was Chuck Mayer and we turned out to be great, great, great friends.

Drew Thompson, Brendan Thompson and Sam

Thad Thompson is the superintendent at Terry Hills Golf Course in Batavia, New York. Drew Thompson is the superintendent and general manager at East Aurora Country Club in East Aurora, New York. This is their first Turfheads Take Over contribution.

TURFUE DE LA SESUE 22

▶ East Aurora

Country Club

(top) and Ter-

ry Hills Golf

Course, are

sional homes of Drew

the profes-

Thompson

and Thad

Thompson,

respectively.

TURFHEADS TAKE OVER

I worked there for two or three years, and he finally said, 'Why don't you go to college for this?' I kind of chuckled and said, 'You can go to college for this? That's ridiculous.' And he said, 'No, really.'

Chuck passed away of a massive heart attack on the seventh green at Turkey Run on the Sunday of Labor

Day weekend my second year of college. That's really where Drew and my younger brother, **Stacey**, come into the story. Stacey was working for me. He was the first person I ever fired. Drew was selling golf clubs at the time. **DREW:** Yep. I thought I was going to be a golf professional. Might be the dumbest idea I ever had in my life. It's your fault I'm in this business.

THAD: I knew very little at the time, but this was before you knew anything.

DREW: Once you get a taste of it, it's easy to fall into it.

THAD: It turns into a lifestyle.

DREW: Lot of late nights, we discussed my transition into the turf business over about, I don't know, maybe 500 beers. We were drinking Coors Lights at the time, probably. I didn't want to do it because I didn't want people to think I was just doing the same thing you were. I guess I finally said, 'Screw it, let's give it a shot. I don't have anything else going on at the time.' The golf shop I was working at was failing. I applied for a bunch of assistant golf pro jobs and I wasn't getting any looks because you have to know somebody. I was running out of cash.

THAD: Before I even went to turf school, we roomed together in college at Jamestown Community College. We went for one year.

DREW: I got a 1.92 GPA.





THAD: Let's just say we sowed some of our wild oats. What were we? 19 years old? Long time ago.

DREW: It was terrible. I went back for part of the next year and it wasn't the same. We lived off of ramen noodles and egg salad.

THAD: Lot of smokeless tobacco and beer.

DREW: Think we regripped our golf clubs in the bathroom numerous times. And occasionally we went to class.

THAD: I had decent grades there. We got a lot of street learning in those couple of years.

DREW: It was an entirely different education.

THAD: We realized there was something beyond the summer camp.

DREW: First time we had cable TV! **THAD:** You dropped out of Jamestown Community College and afterward stopped in to see Chuck. Told him,

'I'm dropping out now, but I'll go back,' and Chuck told you, 'No, you won't.' That really annoyed you, but it also made you want to prove Chuck wrong. **DREW:** If he hadn't keeled over, I probably wouldn't have gone back to college. But after he died, what are you going to do?

THAD: You made a promise to Chuck!

I have two pictures of Chuck in my office to this day. He was a very profound influence on my career and a lot of how I look at the world. I went to SUNY Delhi for turf and graduated with a 3.85 in 15 months. Did it in a semester and a half. And I put my final report card in Chuck's shirt pocket before they closed the casket.

THAD: I finally got comfortable about 10 years ago — and I had been here about 15 years. I knew every stop before this one wouldn't be my



last job because they weren't paying me enough. I loved my last job loved it — but there was no money. My president took the pro, the clubhouse manager and me out to play golf, June 1, and he looked at us on the first tee and said, 'You know I love you guys. Find a new job after the season because we can't afford to pay you.' That was the kick in the ass I needed to get me to look for a job, even though I knew I needed to do it maybe three years earlier.

DREW: I work in private golf. I never feel comfortable. I enjoy my job. I feel like they want me here, but it's a balancing act. With the regime changes, you never know. I've gone from one of the youngest guys in the area to one of the oldest.

THAD: I never once felt comfortable working in private golf. That's the biggest difference between working for an individual owner or a family and working for a membership. I really don't have to worry about who likes me. It used to be a tightrope. We sell golf, not the country club experience, which has its advantages. I was really good at politics, but so much pressure is off me because I don't have to deal with that anymore.

When it comes down to staying at one place our whole career, or finishing where we want to, we're like football coaches: that isn't up to us. At some point, somebody is probably going to kick one or both of us out. That's just the way this business works. Would I be bitter? Yeah, probably, but you have to be realistic. That's what happens. We see it happen with our friends, guys who have been somewhere 20 years, 30 years.

DREW: The nice thing I see about public golf is you're making decisions with people who work in the golf business. When you work in private golf, you have committees and boards that turn over every single year. Your board chair, your green chair is different every single year, and they don't work in the golf business. And the majority of them realize that.

THAD: And just when you get them educated, they leave the board.

DREW: I hope I can finish my career where I'm sitting right now. My members are the best of any private club in the country. They seem to respect my input, they have enough faith in me to oversee their finances and manage the club. We all know the golf business is a roller coaster. Would I ever work public? Maybe if I owned the place.

THAD: I wouldn't want to own the place. Not me.

DREW: Our homes are about an hour apart. You don't want to live too close to work and you don't want to live too close to family.

THAD: An hour's it. If we lived any closer, we would be in major trouble together all the time.

DREW: We never wanted to work together.

THAD: Absolutely not. Not now, not in the past and not in the future. You have two Type A personalities who have been beating the shit out of each other their entire lives, and that would continue if we worked together. Now we're good.

DREW: We both have very strong personalities and are both very committed to our ideas, especially when it comes to golf course maintenance. We'd end up killing each other.

THAD: I'd be your assistant.

DREW: You'd have to work for me. There's no way around it. I've answered to you for 50 years. It's time for you to take your turn!

DREW: This is a good business. It really is. If you're good at it and you can give the club value, private or public, it can be fun. Yeah, there's stress, but there's stress in management in any business. So what? You might as well be outdoors doing it. I get tired of hearing superintendents saying it's a terrible business.

THAD: I remember getting a job and a salesperson telling me, 'Keep your head down.' This job was notorious for going through superintendents every year and that never phased me. No matter the reputation of a job, it's up to you to change it. When I left that job, it was a desirable job because of what we did for a decade out there. It isn't what the club offers. It's what you make of it.

DREW: And if you want to work for a top 100 or 200 course, yeah, there's going to be higher levels of stress and scrutiny. But there's a lot of golf in this country, and there are a lot of golf holes to be maintained, and there are a lot of really, really good clubs, private and public, you can get into where you can make a fine living without destroying your worklife balance. I used to be an all-in guy. Now, when someone says they need a day off, I say OK. Because you know they're going to take it anyway, whether you approve it or not.

THAD: I'm convinced the only way you can be successful in this business is to have a very, very strong network. You have to have your family behind you, and you have to be considerate of your family, too. Some of us learn that a little later in life, I guess.

DREW: Some of us also met our wives after we got into this business. THAD: Some of them knew what they were getting into!

DREW: I went through the whole dating process while I was an assistant. She was aware of what I did.

THAD: You have to have people you can talk with about this business, because if you just try to keep it all inside yourself, that's not how it works. I'm fortunate I have an ownership here I can vent to sometimes, my friends in the business, my family. You can't do it all on your own.

THAD: I think we're proud of each other. He's come a long way, I've come a long way. We've gone from kids to men in what seems like a few years, but it's been 30-plus years of doing this. I think we still rely on each other. There are very few people in the world I trust.

DREW: Yeah. GCI



Change is part of our game

Jeremy Boone bids a fond professional farewell to a co-worker and prepares for whatever comes next.

▲ Buddy Lawrence, Jeremy Boone, Rodney Russell and Lex West comprised Springdale Resort's leadership team in 2022

ou need to be comfortable with change or you will always be uncomfortable. I had an owner once tell me he didn't want me to get too comfortable, that's why he was always changing something. Just about the time we had the routine refined, improved and cruising, along would come some type of change:

Let's reverse the nines

Let's do shotguns on the weekends instead of tee times

Let's only have full-time employees Let's only have part-time employees.

As superintendents, I think we adapt to change well because we must deal with weather, which is always changing. But we don't seem to change jobs as often as some of our co-workers.

A former general manager of mine told me that his chair was the closest to the highway. I found out later he didn't mean that in a literal sense. He meant that his position was turned over faster than other department heads. Sure enough, the next season he was on his next step up the ladder and headed to a different club.

One property where I was the superintendent, I worked with five general managers in 10 years. Be prepared for your team to change, for your assistant to move on, for equipment techs and other staff members to leave for greener pastures or a different career path. We have all experienced this, and if you haven't yet, you will at some point.

I have had the pleasure to work with some great general managers and outstanding golf professionals throughout my career. Recently, my golf professional and I received a text from our GM. Our group text thread is usually filled with relevant club information, good-natured harassment, property pictures of something that needs attention, funny memes, inspirational quotes or simply, "Hey, guys, hope you're having a good day." This one asked if we could meet at 7:30 the next morning. All of us replied with a thumbs up emoji.

My pro and I got together a little after 7 to compare notes and guess what was up. Our guesses weren't even close.

Our club owner and GM were in the room as we all sat down. After telling us how great the member-guest

went the past weekend and that the members thought it was the best one ever, the GM dropped the bomb. "I am resigning," he told us. "Springdale will have a new general manager next year."

It was a health decision and what was best for him, but my heart sank. After hearing the news, I was asked for my thoughts. "I can tell a joke or cry," I said. "Your choice." They picked a joke.

I had been training him for three years and now all that was lost. That was part joke and also part truth.

Buddy Lawrence is a PGA member, a former course owner and a GM with previous superintendent experience at a warm-season turfgrass property. Springdale is a cool-season facility, so it took some time and patience to develop his trust in me that I was, in fact, telling him the truth about some agronomic practices being different than what he was accustomed to. The first year was tough on both of us. It takes time and shared experiences to build trust in relationships. Buddy and I have gone through the getting-to-know-you phase, said farewells to staff leaving by their choice or ours, endured the COVID-19 pandemic and what all that has included, mourned the passing of a staff member's wife and the passing of a staff member on property, and prepped for and cleaned up after a Biblical flood that decimated the community and parts of the golf course. We seem to have fit a decade of experiences into three short years. During this time, we improved our relationship and improved the property and product we presented.

Enjoy your team, embrace the differences, and help one another become stronger. Learn from each other, knowing you will not always be teammates.

"Change is inevitable. Growth is optional," says leadership expert John C. Maxwell. I keep the quote in my office. It has proved to be both prophetic and helpful. Even more change awaits in 2023, I'm sure, and my hope for all would be to learn something new each day and continue to improve. GCI

Jeremy Boone, CGCS, is the superintendent at Springdale Resort in Canton, North Carolina. This is his first Turfheads Take Over contribution.



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No need to be salty about adaptation

A conversation with a Long Islander led to **John Reilly** becoming open-minded about switching grasses in Florida. The changes on the course – and his life – proved startling.



oughly 13 years ago I was riding with my director of golf to-be on the Links Course at the Resort at Longboat Key Club during my second interview. The course name was different. The nines were reversed, and the turf conditions were something out of a "Twilight Zone" episode. We exited 13 green and the PGA professional who moved his young family from a forever job in the Northeast asked if I could fix what I was seeing. I responded: "With a boatload of dynamite, I can." His fear meter pegged.

Knowing all too personally the footprint of interview hari-kari, I quickly pivoted, placing an arm around his shoulder and offering the locally famous prophecy to a person I had just met. I gestured with my free hand and said: "Terry, when you and I get done

with this place, there will be two statues on this island. One of you, Terry O'Hara, here where the island starts, and the other of me where the island ends." To all of you on the way up in your turf career, don't ever underestimate the pure unadulter-

ated narcissism of your interviewer, especially when he or she might be or has been a golf professional.

Needless to say, I landed the gig, which was good *and* bad news. On the surface, I doubled my salary and received a fancy title at a unique private resort with 45 holes on the Gulf of Mexico.

In reality, it was the most messed-up golf course maintenance operation I had ever encountered. As a second-career superintendent, I matriculated based on new projects and/or renovations. I was further specified as a fixer of projects gone bad. But nothing I encountered in past job experiences could have prepped me for this place.

I had two separate courses with separate crews and superintendents. One course I named the "Graveyard" for its work culture and its agronomic acumen. The other, a 27-hole facility which received most of the play, I gave the moniker "The Gang Fight." This shouldn't have been a surprise during my initial interview. The general manager truncated the process after

nine holes of disgust. He basically said the rest of the place looks about the same. Inside of this rested a giant maintenance facility that at the time of my hire housed a temporary superintendent. A parasitic management company promised the daily

Author and the Resort at Longboat Key Club director of agronomy John Reilly.



John Reilly is the director of agronomy at the Resort at Longboat Key Club in Longboat Key, Florida. He operates the popular @turfmonkeyboy Twitter account. This is his first Turfheads Take Over contribution.

management contract and a guerilla crew headed by an equipment manager who orchestrated an overthrow of the poor chap before me.

Thank God I had three months of free housing, rabid workaholism and florid alcoholism. Although it was a brutal start, the above combination proved unbeatable to the countless naysayers and ne'er-do-wells.

I don't remember too much from turf school, but fundamentals that stuck included air, water and nutrients. I punched tons of holes, started using the water without the sulfur burner and went to a water insoluble nutrient plan. It was a plan that had minimal short-term yield - or so I thought. For immediate impact, I went after things I could control such as membership rapport.

I quickly and most importantly learned that I was playing chess, not Jeopardy. Having all the answers was not going to keep me employed; having a plan was. I quickly delivered on the controllables such as course setup and detailing. That slow agronomic approach must have been so unique it made everything instantly pop.

I delayed my first overseed to after Thanksgiving. When everyone returned from Christmas, I looked like the chosen one. About two months before it should, the ryegrass crapped out and I looked like every other promising startup director of agronomy. But I managed some good putting surfaces. Unfortunately, the membership was sold a bill of goods, I thought, on paspalum grass and anything short of that represented a letdown.

The ryegrass took a dump because the water at Longboat is crazy salty and rainfall is literally half of what my inland colleagues experience. These two factors are very limiting for longterm, sustainable golf turf. They had the potential to send highly decorated superintendents into other careers.

Longboat Key was a place where superintendents went before they literally got kicked off the island. The irrigation water and possibly the worst delivery system of that water drove that bus.

After three years, we ended up with our current ownership group. My regime showed glimpses, but it was like a sports team that couldn't get over the hump – until I went all-in on paspalum. The running joke was they added another body part to the statue and then construction was halted. I did not have an ah-ha moment regarding paspalum conversion. I had a Margaret Laughman moment, a "tell-itlike-it-is" conversation with a longtime member at Longboat. In a Montauk, Long Island, accent she asked bluntly, "What are you fighting it for?"

The "Graveyard" superintendent had been patching bad spots before my arrival on greens at Links with paspalum for several years. The different textures made the surfaces unsuitable for any consistent roll. But Margaret was right, because two of our 50 greens were around 85 percent paspalum and they were the healthiest greens we managed.

New ownership bought the idea. Eleven years later, in dribs and drabs, the courses are wall-to-wall Platinum Paspalum. Truth be told, I didn't like the grass. Its counterintuitive nature on so many levels proved maddening. I was always an aggressive turf manager seeking the best greens possible. This overly dense, lush grass type shite the bed often after seemingly textbook cultivation practices while asking to be moved lower and lower.

Fortunately, for me, although far from my understanding at the time, I got sober a little under two years into our 11-year renovation process. The side effect of the things I do on a daily basis to stay away from a drink helped me be open to innovation and led me to change regarding our grass, especially on greens.

My aggressive Bermudagrass-like management approach gave way to a freefall mowing approach that had us mowing at the width of a dime as often as possible, with scalping and crown injury eventually producing less than healthy greens. It wasn't unlike when



we previously managed Bermudagrass in the salt. I could quickly go from hero to zero, first in my own mind, then I let the naysayers get me down. It was a hell of a rollercoaster, but I never gave up. I did look at a bunch of jobs and psychologically I don't think that is unhealthy or wrong. Much of what we try to steward is out of our control and the job hunting provided a much-needed diversion and a chance to have hope in a perceived hopeless situation.

By happenstance, I attended a talk on rolling on Michigan courses by Dr. Thom Nikolai. My takeaways were that daily rolling reduced mowing, established moisture uniformity and increased soil bacteria, leading to less disease and better overall greens performance using Stimpmeter measurements.

I came up believing the Stimpmeter was not an agronomic tool and rolling created compaction and mechanical stress. Allowing myself to be open to change and committing to daily measurements convinced me otherwise in many ways.

In 13 years at the Resort at Longboat Key Club, the courses have gone from their worst to their current best. I went from hate to great love for Platinum Paspalum. Personally, I came from a dark, dark place to a sober and clear existence sans statue. GCI





What is your answer?

As a golf course superintendent, you receive plenty of requests. **David Morrow** cautions your initial response might not be the best line of thinking for you or your department.

have been on a golf course for most of my life. During that time, I have seen and heard many requests and demands from members and players. As superintendents, so many times our initial answer is NO. There are many reasons behind that, and it can be justified. But I suggest a different approach. Listen and then answer with what is best for the club, not necessarily with what is best for you.

Too often we are forced to think it's us against the world. But remember we are not in it alone. The pro shop, the clubhouse and the restaurant are all in it together with us. We all have different objectives to hit, but we all want the club to succeed. Communication is key. Let the other departments know what you need and how you can help.

The old saying goes that you catch more flies with sugar than you can with vinegar, and it's good to remember that. I have found that when you need the pro shop to delay that outing 15 minutes so you can finish and be off the course, they are a lot more likely to do that if you're not complaining about them sending one single off a few minutes early. Remember their job is member satisfaction. Small things can go a long way in making that happen. Here are a few policies we have put into effect that allow us to work seamlessly:

EARLY MORNING PLAY

Players are allowed to play before the first tee time with the knowledge that the grounds crew will not stop for them. I tell my crew that no cart means no stop.

CARTS

Our job is to maintain an impeccable golf course and carts don't help. But it is important to remember that it is not our golf course, it's theirs. Our job

is not to stop them from playing but to make sure we get as many rounds as we can. I only stop carts if most of them will be causing damage, not if they're the exception.

WEDDINGS

They can be a pain with tents, high heels and drinks, but let's remember they make the course a lot of revenue. That little inconvenience might just buy you a new piece of equipment. I have also found that most people don't even blink at a surcharge for having the wedding on turf.

PROJECTS

Some are good, some are bad, and that's where our knowledge needs to be communicated. Don't be afraid to try new things or ask for help. There is a wealth of knowledge out there and the answer can be a lot easier than you think. All we can do is lay out the pros and cons of each and remember that, again, this is their golf course and not ours.

REQUESTS

We have all heard them, from ball washers to yardage markers. Some have merit, some are a waste. Take the time to listen to why they are asking for it. Sometimes a different option is available to solve their issue. Most of our ball washers have been removed, although some remain because that is what the members want.

These are just some things we have done to help the club and our department bring in more revenue and provide superior member satisfaction. I always try to keep an open mind and strive to make the club more successful. That often helps my department in getting the time or resources that we need to get our course in the best shape it can be.

Sometimes the answer is still NO, but sometimes the answer that is best for the club just might be ... YES. GCI





Communicating out of a quandary

Mike Tollner and his team used a variety of calculated words in many different methods to overcome the angst caused by historic winter damage.

he author and presidential speech writer James Humes once said, "The art of communication is the language of leadership." I have found this to be an extremely accurate statement when it comes to communicating with the membership at our club, and never more so than during the early part of this season.

The year started with a unique set of challenges that I had never faced in my nearly - yes, it's hard to believe the following number - 30-year career. Where the time goes is another story.

After seeing a big increase in the

number of members at the club since 2020, I knew something needed to be done to have adequate practice facilities. A driving force behind this project was making sure we had enough space on the range tee to be able to grow healthy turf throughout the season. Our golf course architect, Ron Forse of Forse Design, was brought in during 2021 to update the club's longrange master plan. In doing so, he also revised the design of the practice facilities. In today's competitive golf market, having top-notch practice facilities is a way to attract members as well as to keep the ones you already have.

After reviewing the architect's plans, I was approached by our general manager and club president and asked if this was something we could handle in-house. I knew this type of project would test my skillset, but I also knew that we had the knowledge and the talent on our staff to pull it off. There would also be certain aspects of it that we would need executed by outside contractors, such as laser grading and dozer work, to have it completed correctly. So, we set off in January and early February to create a new and exciting portion of the club that members could enjoy when they returned

▲ After experiencing winter damage to begin the year, Bellevue Country Club in Syracuse, New York, was shining as the golf season progressed.



to the club in the spring.

In addition, the club wanted a better space to hold outdoor weddings, a big revenue source. Tacked onto the practice facility renovations was creating an outdoor event space within close proximity to the clubhouse with the ability to hold a 300-person wedding tent.

The winter portion of this project included bringing in fill and using a bulldozer to remove the old practice bunkers, leveling the area where the new, 19,000-square-foot range tee would be located, and begin the leveling and grading for the event space. Our existing driving range tee was significantly undersized by today's standards at 7,000 square feet, and the chipping area was in desperate need of a new practice bunker. The plans also called for moving the green to create a larger and safer chipping area.

Nobody could foresee what happened next: Mother Nature delivered a blow to many golf courses in the Northeast and Syracuse, New York, area that hadn't been experienced for many years. As winter began to fade, it

> quickly became evident that not only did we have about three acres of a muddy construction site to deal with, but we also had 13 greens with significant winter damage. Needless to say, this was not how myself or any of our members wanted the 2022 golf season to begin.

As time went on, the extent of the winter damage became clear, and I knew we would need to do

We started by bringing in the USGA for a site visit. If you haven't used their Course Consultation Service, I can't

needed to quickly create a clear line

of communication between myself,

our board of directors and the mem-

recommend it enough. USGA Green Section agronomists are highly skilled professionals, just like we are as superintendents. Having them on site helps to bridge a gap between golfer and superintendent. There's something about that logo that makes people want to listen to what they have to say.

Once we had the agronomist's detailed report, we shared it with our membership. It was posted on the club's website immediately, and emails were distributed so members would know how to access it. We then began a weekly "Q&A Series with the Superintendent," which consisted of a list of questions drafted by our club's vice president that I answered each week as thoroughly as possible. This format made for an easy way for our members to understand every step we were taking to return the greens to full health and how the construction work was progressing.

One of the early decisions the club made based on USGA recommendations was to keep the golf course closed until May 1. This decision wasn't an easy one and it was deliberated for some time. We have short enough golf seasons here in Central New York, so telling our members it might be even

▶ Bellevue Country Club unveiled a new range tee earlier this year.



"Unfortunately,

at all times."

them playable in the shortest amount

bership. This was critical so that every one of our members understood the seriousness of the damage on the greens and how I planned to return the greens to the condition that is expected at a high-end club. We also needed a timeline for the completion of the construction project.

significant amounts of seeding as well as re-sodding portions of greens to get



shorter this year was a tough pill for some to swallow. Questions like "When the course opens on May 1, will our greens be back to normal?" and "How has the weather impacted your recovery program?" were critical to answer as honestly as possible so people could understand that conditions would not be what they were accustomed to seeing in a normal spring. As time went on, we updated the membership when greens that had been closed were ready to be opened for play. We also sent a number of emails with photos attached to show the progress that was made week after week.

By using a combination of email blasts and our "member text" program, we provided a constant communication stream to the entire club on a consistent basis. We began using the member text program a few years ago and it has been a huge success for all

aspects of the club. It's a very easy and effective way to communicate to any members who opt in to receiving the texts. We also use it to relay information about frost delays or the need to ground carts due to bad weather. Other departments also take advantage of this modern method of communication for such things as announcing gameday food and drink specials in our tavern or sales in the golf shop.

These many methods of communication enabled me to keep everyone at the club on the same page throughout a busy and difficult time. Not only did this help to inform our members of everything I've mentioned, but it also prevented rumors and falsehoods from being spread due to a lack of accurate information. Unfortunately, living in the information age also sometimes means we are living in the misinformation age, so I think it is critically important to make sure we as superintendents are getting the right messages out to our memberships at all times.

I'm happy to say all 18 greens reopened by Memorial Day weekend. Although some areas that had severe damage struggled a bit during the hot summer months, with the help of my fantastic staff and solid turf management practices, the greens returned to full health, and we provided great playing conditions for the majority of the season. We also finished the range tee and opened it in mid-May. The short-game facility was completed and opened about a month later. These renovations have been extremely well-received and appreciated by the entire membership, and the club can proudly say that we have some of the best practice facilities in Central New York. GCI

▲ Severe winter damage tested the fortitude of the Bellevue Country Club golf course maintenance team in 2022.



Back to the future, part trois

hat a difference another

Thirty years after first entering the industry, Charlie Fultz fulfilled a dream this year by finally running the whole show without an interim tag ahead of his title.

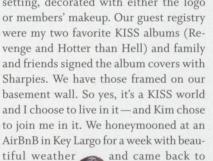
year makes here in Vir-When I last left Golf Course Industry readers in December 2021, I was still handling three positions with the city of Harrisonburg: interim golf course

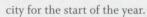
general manager, golf course superintendent and athletic fields supervisor, the last of which included overseeing the maintenance and upkeep of the city's 10 athletic fields. It was not an uncommon

theme again in 2022, but things began to change as my third year with the city wore on.

First of all, in January I got married. It was a balmy 10-degree affair with newly fallen snow as our background for pictures outside. My wife, Kim, made it an extremely memorable wedding for us both as it was a KISS-themed wedding. To my surprise, Kim came down the aisle to my favorite KISS song, Strutter. We had a video made of the wedding and two KISS songs were used as the background music (Forever and Then She Kissed Me). But there were other KISS surprises as well. Kim had special KISS cookies made for each place

setting, decorated with either the logo or members' makeup. Our guest registry were my two favorite KISS albums (Revenge and Hotter than Hell) and family and friends signed the album covers with Sharpies. We have those framed on our basement wall. So yes, it's a KISS world and I choose to live in it - and Kim chose to join me in it. We honeymooned at an AirBnB in Key Largo for a week with beau-





As I started my third year with the city some changes were in store for me. I lost my assistant superintendent shortly after our wedding. Due to the uncertainty of the general manager position with the course (if a dual role was going to be made permanent), I was unable to hire an assistant and began the year with all of five people on staff to maintain the course. Added to that issue was the current labor force woes we have all dealt with since the start

> of the COVID-19 pandemic. We couldn't find any seasonal help for the golf course or the pro shop. Because of this issue, and as acting general manager, I instituted Maintenance Mondays, when the golf course was closed until noon. That one morning allowed us to mow all the rough and get ahead of the week's work. It would have been impossible to maintain the course without it, and with Mondays normally being slow, it was implemented easily.

> One amazing thing that came out of the first half of the year was our golf play, which was up substantially. By the end of June, we had the highest year-end



Charlie Fultz is the general manager and superintendent at Heritage Oaks Golf Course in Harrisonburg, Virginia. This is his third Turfheads Take Over story — and what he claims is the end of the trilogy.



revenue in the course's 21-year history, and we turned a profit for the first time. It's an achievement that involves the whole team at Heritage Oaks and it's probably our biggest accomplishment since I arrived in 2020. That springboard pushed us through the season as some of the changes I really wanted finally happened.

In June, I interviewed for the newly created permanent position of general manager and golf course superintendent for Heritage Oaks and was chosen to serve. The finality of the almost two-year journey as interim GM was not lost on me,

and the relief was instantly gratifying. It fulfilled a dream that I have had since getting into golf in 1992. I had always wanted to run the whole show and never thought I would have the opportunity to do so, but COVID changed all that. I always felt it was where I was supposed to be, and I crossed it off my professional to-do list.

As we rolled into the summer's heat of July, the parks and recreation director came to me and said he had chosen an interim athletic fields manager to run the city's fields. I couldn't have been more ecstatic. The young man who took it over has a fields background and has already started to make some fantastic changes. I've only been over to the fields three or four times in the last several months, but he sure has them looking great. It was bittersweet to give the fields up as I had rebuilt two of the fields to #bluemuda and the results had been amazing. But the individual pacing needed to continue to be a GM, golf course superintendent and fields manager was just too much. I was happy to finally have that responsibility off my shoulders and into very capable hands.

As the summer wore on — an atypical mild and rainy summer for us here in the Shenandoah Valley — I was able to post the assistant superintendent position at Heritage Oaks, and in September I hired a fantastic young man named Bryce Miller to fill the position. He has already showed the desire to learn and the drive to make us better. Frankly, I need that push from him. I expect nothing but great things from Bryce as we begin to shape the future

of Heritage Oaks. He has already begun taking responsibilities from me. The first big one on his plate is handling the nutrient management plan for our course with a certified nutrient management planner and working under Virginia's BMP.

I remember a 24-year-old firstyear superintendent who had a similar drive, and here he is, 28 years later, writing the end of this trilogy. He had more hair then, carried a few less pounds, and didn't have a lick of gray in his goatee. He heads into 2023 with a much different perspective than he did in 2022, with fewer responsibilities but the same internal motor to try to make the course a

little better each day. (Kaizen.) Heritage Oaks has been on a similar ride as well, and our future looks promising, much more than when it almost closed at the start of 2020.

I can't thank Golf Course Industry enough for allowing me the space to write my drivel. Guy and Matt gave me the latitude to write what I wanted. I also want to thank those of you who read it. I hope it made for some great bathroom reading material.

I also want to thank a great friend, who we lost a few years ago, for her desire to make a writer out of me. Liz Nutter, formerly of Leading Edge Communications, was a writer and editor of several local and state trade journal magazines. She pushed





me to be a better writer many years ago when I wrote for the Virginia Turfgrass Council Iournal. She beat on me with her literary stick and I took my lumps. I'm far from anything close to her level, but her persistence was a driving force in my writing and ultimately helping me win the GCSAA's 2006 Leo Feser Award and becoming a published writer. Liz passed away in 2018 and I still think of her often. I am thankful for our friendship. I hope she would have enjoyed what I've written these last three years, and I know she would probably still critique the heck of me. I would expect no less from her.

Lastly, I need to thank my wife,

Kim. She put up with this ridiculous schedule the last two and a half years with barely a word about it. She knows I love what I do and that I put my heart and soul into it. She too maintains a hectic schedule, as she just took a new job with a CPA firm out of New York and is finishing her associate's degree in accounting with 15 credit hours this past semester while working a fulltime job. She'll have her degree next spring and I'm super proud of her work. She has As across the board in all of her classes! Her schedule sounds very familiar, juggling multiple jobs at one time while being a new wife and mother. She is amazing and I'm thankful she's in my corner now and for the start of year No. 4. GCI



▲ The Old Course at Omni **Bedford Springs** in Bedford, Pennsylvania.

mni Hotels and Resorts has the privilege of managing two Golden Age golf resorts in the Appalachian Mountains, Omni Homestead and Omni Bedford Springs. The former owns two championship golf courses, The Cascades and Old Course, both designed by Donald Ross, and the latter is home to The Old Course, with major work done by Ross and

A.W. Tillinghast.

It's a massive responsibility to make sure both facilities survive the winter and are in tip-top shape when spring play begins, but director of golf and grounds Chuck Wagmiller at Omni Homestead and superintendent David Swartzel at Omni Bedford Springs know what it takes to thrive during the offseason.

The duo shared strategies they employ in preparation for winter and what they do to prepare their respective courses for play the following spring.

WINTER PREP

Wagmiller and his team take a holistic approach prior to the colder months and begin with these key

· Apply snow mold prevention prior to snowfall on greens, tees and fairways.

Chuck Wagmiller is the director of grounds at Omni Homestead in Hot Springs, Virginia, and David Swartzel is the superintendent at Omni Bedford Springs in Bedford, Pennsylvania. This is their first Turfheads Take Over contribution.





- · After final mowing of greens in late fall, apply the first of three Proxy+Stressgard to Poa annua for seedhead prevention.
- · Winterize the irrigation system and clean the pump station intake screen.
- · Complete system repairs, update sprinkler and nozzle information, evaluate noted irrigation issues.
- · Edge and flush out all drainage trucklines to the system to ensure proper flow and performance. Cast iron drain lids are sanded and repainted.
- Remove tee markers, direction signs, tee signage and posts, wood flagsticks and bunker rakes to make sure they are like new in springtime.
- · Complete simple building maintenance repairs along with washing golf course tunnels, outside F&B furniture and tournament scoreboard areas.
- Maintain in-house tee markers, directional signage, and driving range ball crates and benches to hold onto personal touch and the natural setting of golf in the mountains.

At Omni Bedford Springs, Swartzel shares specifics on course mainte-

nance tricks to make sure The Old Course is ready for opening day:

- · Add phosphite and green pigment to snow mold applications to help plants deal with winter stress and come out stronger.
- Apply heavy sand topdressing to greens, tees and approach areas after final mowing.
- Apply late-season fertilizer to fairways and tees when the turf is still green but not expecting much more growth for maximum storage of energy as opposed to pushing lush conditions heading into dormancy. Approximately 50 percent IBDU and 50 percent quick release at about .50 pounds N/M is applied.
- In general, keep turf stress-free and "happy" as possible headed into cold months.

USING WINTER TO GET AHEAD

At Omni Homestead, Wagmiller's team is concentrated on course enhancements and maintenance practices to get ahead for the upcoming year. They include:

- · Evaluate and add bunker sand to a minimum depth of 3 inches.
- Evaluate and redistribute areas that have greater than a 4-inch depth to improve bunker playabil-

ity and consistency.

- Probe bunker edges to redefine bunker shape to original architectural design and hand-edge bunkers.
- Schedule greens, tees and fairway aerification following the golf season to eliminate the disturbance to these areas during the golf season and improve experience for overall revenue capture.
- Use relief and spin grind reels.
- Service all equipment during the offseason to minimize need to conduct service during the summer.
- Review and adjust job-specific training plans for upcoming operating procedures and re-certify training programs.
- Develop internship training plans along with seasonal staff recruitment efforts.

At Omni Bedford Springs, Swartzel takes a similar approach and is also cognizant of what the weather will allow.

- Check sand depths and redistribute/add sand, edge bunkers and raise sprinkler heads as weather permits prior to spring season.
- In late fall/early winter, four to eight bunkers are rebuilt in-house. By not contracting out the work, the product is kept at a consistently high level while avoiding the need for a large-scale capital project.
- Solid-tine aeration and verticutting beginning after mid-February.
- Drainage improvements throughout the winter, with snow removal often occurring to execute the task.
- Steam cleaning/degreasing, detailing and preventive maintenance for maintenance equipment.
- · Removal of dead/declining or safety-concern trees.
- Continue education by attending conferences and meetings to stay current with the latest research and trends in the industry. GCI

◆ The Omni Homestead Resort is a twocourse facility in Hot Springs, Virginia.

The right turfgrass is key

From the Ryder Cup to the World Cup and everything in between, **John Holmes** shares selection lessons from his global travels.

hroughout my turfgrass-themed career, I've spent time as a golf course superintendent, a golf course builder and now a turfgrass provider. These experiences have taken me around the world, provided challenges of every kind and taught me many valuable lessons. The most valuable is the turfhead's equivalent to "measure twice, cut once." I like to say: minimize the fight by selecting right.

The right turfgrass, that is.

So, how do you know which turfgrass is RIGHT? That's the tricky part, but it's definitely worth the effort of measuring twice — or even five times. I jump to five because at least five factors need to be considered to get to the right turfgrass.

Climate is the first factor that most people think of when selecting turfgrass. Average and extreme temperatures, annual rainfall, cloud coverage and humidity are all climatic conditions that affect the performance of a turfgrass.

Site conditions also need to be considered. What is the quality of the soil and water? How much shade is involved? Are ocean spray or storm surges an issue? Any one of these factors can decimate some turfgrass varieties.

Usage is important as well. How many rounds of play will the course see annually? What is the level of golf cart traffic? What is the facility type: resort, private, municipal or some combination? Are professional tournaments likely to be scheduled?

The architect's design goals should be considered for both new construction and renovations. Does the course cater to the lower-handicap golfer or more to a broad range of handicaps? Is the design meant to

play firm and fast or at a more leisurely pace? Turf varieties can play a significant role in the playability of a golf course.

And last but absolutely not least on this list are maintenance capabilities and budget. Will the budget allow for frequent cultural practices? Is chemical usage limited either due to budget or local restrictions (a real issue in some countries)? What is the quality of the equipment? What is the size and experience level of the maintenance staff?

That's a lot of measuring. Is it really worth such an in-depth analysis to select turfgrass? It is when you consider the benefits. When the turfgrass choice aligns as closely as possible with these five factors, optimal growth is achieved with the least amount of effort and inputs, and the course is much more likely to satisfy stakeholders.

NO ONE SIZE FITS ALL TURFGRASS

Anyone who says that a turfgrass can be a one-size-fits-all option is guilty of oversimplification. Considering the many factors affecting turfgrass performance and the almost unlimited number of different scenarios, a super grass that meets every condition just doesn't exist. As a note of caution, with new turfgrass varieties hitting the market annually, beware of misleading advertising claims. Sometimes a new turf variety will not show its weaknesses for several years, and those weaknesses rarely appear in the research at the development stage.

Thankfully, there is a tremendous selection of turfgrasses available—many tried and true varieties as well as groundbreaking new ones. Don't just take the word of your turfgrass provider (although some of us are pretty reliable). Vis-





John Holmes is president of Atlas Turf International and co-founder of Atlas Turf Arabia. Before becoming a turfgrass provider, he was a golf course superintendent and a golf course builder. This is his first Turfheads Take Over contribution.





it golf courses with similar conditions and ask the hard questions. Attend turfgrass field days to learn about new varieties. And perhaps most worthwhile, trial different options on your site.

When the decision is made, always purchase from a reputable source. Buying certified turfgrass is an insurance policy for quality. In the United States, look for a state-certified source. Outside of the U.S. insist on product certified by the International Turfgrass Genetic Assurance Program.

Working with turfgrass installations of every kind, including new construction, renovations and turf conversions in locations across the United States and around the world, I've seen where selecting the right turfgrass has paid off and where not selecting the right turfgrass has caused long-term challenges.

TURFGRASS SELECTION LESSONS FROM OTHER REGIONS OF THE WORLD

Southeast Asia is, arguably, the most challenging area in the world to grow consistently good turf year-round. There are rainy periods that last for months with unprecedented disease and insect pressure, followed by periods of no rain with extreme heat. During the region's golf boom from the late 1980s through the 1990s, most golf construction projects used local turf varieties or older varieties of Bermudagrass imported from the United States. The selected turf varieties had a difficult time performing in the challenging conditions. In the early 2000s, we began introducing improved

paspalum, zoysia and Bermuda products. These new varieties, primarily developed at southeastern United States universities, offered improved performance in critical areas and significantly reduced inputs required, such as fertilizers and pesticides.

In recent years, I was fortunate enough to be the turfgrass provider for Marco Simone Golf & Country Club in Rome, Italy, where the 44th edition of the Ryder Cup will be played in 2023. Rome has a temperate climate with cool winters and hot summers - somewhat similar to the Transition Zone in the United States - allowing Marco Simone to select from both warmand cool-season grasses. The course architect, as well as the agronomist from the European Tour, wanted fescue roughs for added challenge and aesthetics. Bentgrass greens were selected for speed. For tees and fairways, warm-season turfgrass was chosen to deliver the highest-quality tournament conditions and hold up under inconsistent water quality. A collaborative effort between our seed partners Pure Seed and Tee-2-Green, along with the European Tour, came up with a turf pallet that includes Pure Distinction Bentgrass greens, Pure Dynasty Seeded Paspalum tees and fairways, and a blend of Pure Seed fescues in the rough. The course will be challenging, with the turf playing a pivotal role in player strategy during the matches.

One of golf's most active growth areas is currently the Middle East. More than 20 new golf courses are projected for construction over the next 10 years in Saudi Arabia alone. With a national sustainability initiative in place, selecting the right turfgrass for these new developments carries more weight than ever. The turfgrass challenges in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Region overall often center around heat and water scarcity and quality. A new turf farm was established near Riyadh by Atlas Turf Arabia to provide a local source for the most sustainable turfgrass selections for the region.

The desert Southwest in the United States has a similar climate to the Middle East, with the most comparable conditions in states such as Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada and California. The pressure to use less water or switch to TSE irrigation in these states continues to make sustainable turfgrass choices not just important but crucial.

TURFGRASS SELECTION FOR THE WORLD CUP

Veering from the golf focus for a moment, a career highlight of mine is the front-row seat I've had for the turfgrass selection of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. With considerations similar to those used by golf courses, selecting the right turfgrass is just as essential for sports fields. Now imagine that sports field will be the site of the final match of the World Cup. The stakes are high.

Climate, site conditions, stadium design, usage and maintenance were all considered carefully. Among the areas of most concern were the turfgrass strength, for obvious reasons, and shade tolerance due to the areas of the field blocked from the sun by the stadium design. Selection criteria also focused on salt tolerance due to water quality, heat tolerance and drought tolerance.

In Qatar, the selection process included almost four years of testing turfgrass varieties from the three major warm-season species: Bermuda, paspalum and zoysia. Based on the results of these extensive trials, the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy selected Platinum TE Paspalum as the playing surface for all eight stadiums and 81 training fields. Platinum TE outperformed the other turfgrasses in many areas, including durability with stronger tensile strength, shade tolerance, recovery and rapid regrowth from injury, and faster establishment and grow-in. With the whole world as the audience, turf performance at the World Cup certainly justified a rigorous and thorough turf selection process.

MORE AND MORE ABOUT THE WATER

We are living in an ever-changing world—one where more and more golf courses are facing water quality and quantity challenges. In regions where courses are mandated to use TSE water, viable and effective turfgrass options are available through advanced new varieties that offer not only extreme salt and drought tolerance but also check many other boxes for overall performance. New technically advanced seed varieties can be used to convert a course more easily to a turf species that best fits a changing situation.

Even with advances in technology, the obstacles and challenges a turf manager faces will never go away entirely. Whether the stakes are a Ryder Cup, a World Cup or just individually high standards, the battle for excellently maintained turfgrass can appear to be endlessly uphill. But when the opportunity arises to select a new turfgrass, minimizing the fight - against elements, obstacles and other turf challenges — it is much more achievable with the RIGHT turfgrass. GCI



Asking for help is **OK**

Golf course superintendents tackle a tremendous workload. **Josh Lewis** describes why it can be beneficial to rely on outsiders to handle certain parts of the job.

hen is it OK to ask for help? The answer to this question has changed significantly over the course of my 25-year career in golf course management.

Our profession used to be primarily focused on turf quality and long hours. Superintendents are also now required to have a comprehensive knowledge of business, finance, human resources, project management, executive leadership, human psychology and more. It's a long list.

I don't highlight any of this as a negative. On the contrary, I feel it's a testament to the quality of the people in the profession and a direct result of the efforts over the years to make people outside of our industry aware of the value and expertise a golf course superintendent adds to their organization. Still, it brings a need to evolve in how we approach our organizational role and manage our time.

Early in my career, I felt that the more hours I worked and the more responsibility I could take on, both personally and for my department, were a badge of honor representing my "value." In some of my employment situations, this ended up being true and reinforced what I've come to see as an unhealthy way of living. It ultimately led to a situation where a lot of my selfworth was linked to the success of the course. When it struggled, I struggled.

This approach to my job negatively affected me and the people around me. As I attempted to understand how I got there, I realized that I wasn't alone; this way of thinking was endemic in our industry.

As superintendents, we're great at saying yes, but when we take on too much, it often comes at a personal cost in the form of physical health, mental health and the health of our relationships with the people we care about. The foundational job of being a golf course superintendent is more than a full-time requirement, but how often do you get asked to take on a problem or task in addition to the scope of your assumed daily workload? In addition to our daily responsibilities, we often get asked to take on the "I-don'tknow-who-handles-this-for-us" or the "I'm-not-sure-but-I'm-pretty-sure-thesuper-can-figure-it-out" tasks.

Over time, as we continue to say yes, it becomes the expectation, and you must sacrifice important aspects of your lives to meet those expectations. I'm well aware that "no" is a four-letter word in our industry, so I'm not suggesting you should start saying that. Instead, know when to ask for help—and to not be afraid to do so.

In hindsight, I think that one of the biggest mistakes that I've made over the course of my career is feeling like asking for help is a sign of weakness or is viewed as an unwillingness or an inability to complete a task. I've found the opposite to be true. Successful executive leaders in business know that they aren't doing what's best for their organization when they are overwhelmed and spread too thin, so why wouldn't we approach our jobs the same way?

The problem is easy to identify. But what about the solution? The shortage of assistant superintendents is well-documented, so delegation isn't always an option. What about outsourcing? I know this goes against how many of us were raised in the industry, but bringing outside help to



providing a broad range of service in agronomic assessments, pre-construction planning and project management in the western United States. This is his first Turfheads Take Over contribution.



support certain parts of an organization has been normalized for a long time in business for many of the same reasons I've already discussed.

There are many responsibilities as a superintendent that are non-negotiable and that only you can handle. But tasks like human resources, IT, project management, compliance and employee recruitment can be effectively outsourced, freeing up your schedule while bringing massive benefits to the organization.

With the recent boom in golf course construction and renovation, project management is an area where there is a significant opportunity for superintendents and club leadership to outsource some of the workload. While we all like the fun parts of golf course construction, many parts of the process aren't as enjoyable and demand a significant amount of time, energy and expertise, such as permitting, budgeting, bid coordination, environmental compliance, material procurement, inventory management, contract negotiations, oversight, quality control and communication. These tasks are complex and can be challenging to manage successfully. They are integral to the overall project's success, so having a dedicated project manager who focuses on these areas can be

Major projects tend to be emo-

tional, especially if they involve a course closure, close vote and assessment. There are many situations where a superintendent got too involved in the process and ended up with their face on the project rather than the board, committee or owner who decided to move it forward. A good project manager can help buffer the politics by assisting in the communication and education process, making the process more data-driven and less emotional. The layer of separation created by inserting an objective third-party manager into the process can change the entire energy and allow the superintendent to focus on the project's overall success and not be worried about the potential for a political misstep.

Your club's tolerance for assuming liability is another area to consider

when determining what project components should be outsourced. Improper permitting and environmental compliance issues can completely derail a project and potentially lead to hefty fines for your club or ownership.

In many cases, the superintendent becomes responsible for understanding and ensuring that the proper permits are in place and that the property maintains compliance throughout the project duration. This demands a significant amount of time, attention and focus, and details can get overlooked when we're spread too thin. Outsourcing this project component removes the superintendent from the line of fire if something goes wrong or the process gets held up for some reason and allows that burden to fall to your project manager.

One of the most incredible things about the people in our industry is that they say "yes" more than "no." This holds true for everything from serving on the boards and committees of our associations to donating time to help the local baseball team when their field isn't up to snuff. As the scope of your job responsibilities continues to expand, asking for help needs to become as easy as offering it.

The industry will continue to evolve and so will expectations on golf course superintendents. As the people around you continue to realize your value in areas of the operation that fall outside your job description, you will continue to see your workload expand. Remember there is strength in knowing when to ask for help and the level of respect from the people around you will only grow when you do. GCI

highly beneficial.



Nate Jordan explains why resorting to contract services can be an effective tactic to overcoming the tight labor market.

t's the end of another season. The irrigation system is winterized, snow mold protection has been applied, leaf collection is complete, and the seasonal staff has gone home. You finally have time to catch your breath and reflect on the successes and challenges of the past growing season.

What comes to mind? Was there a project that you started but weren't able to finish? Did you find your to-do list longer than expected the week before the member-guest? Did turf loss or injury occur on a tee, fairway or green due to faulty irrigation that was only recognized after it was too late?

If you can relate to any of these scenarios, you're not alone. During my tenure as a golf course superintendent, I personally encountered each of these situations.

After feeling defeated on multiple occasions, it left me wondering if there was another approach to course maintenance.

Week after week, I watched the linen company, among other providers, service the needs of the clubhouse. This piqued my interest and led me to the use of contract services to help meet the needs of the property.

One early success story includes the use of a contractor to install and maintain the landscape plants around the clubhouse and throughout the golf course. For a rather affordable cost, the club secured a maintenance contract with an area landscape company. Curb appeal greatly increased, our maintenance team stayed focused on daily conditioning and member satisfaction increased with these more manicured spaces. Contract services are a potential way to benefit the budgetary bottom line while also helping fill the gap between labor supply and demand.

Throughout 2022, I often heard of maintenance operations with positions that went unfilled because of the difficult labor market. This creates a significant challenge when we approach laborious tasks such as aerification. Plus, aerification often must be completed during a defined period of time and cause the least amount of impact to the event calendar. Combined with unexpected weather events, this can be a tremendous undertaking.

On multiple occasions, I found myself lacking the necessary equipment and personnel to work most efficiently. Fortunately, I was able to borrow a few key pieces, but that might not always be the case.

It might be best to contract all, or at least part, of the services pertaining to aerification. The coring and cleanup can be completed by a hired professional, leaving the maintenance staff available for topdressing, brushing and rolling. In the end, you can still achieve a high-quality product under the constraints of a shrinking labor pool.

I don't envision the labor situation changing any time soon. This presents a challenge that few of us have seen before. Perhaps now more than ever we need to rely on our allied partners.

As you plan for the year ahead, I'd encourage you to consider the use of contract services to help lighten the load of your operation. While not every service may apply or be available in your market, I think you'll find benefit employing one or more of those listed below. In some instances, a club might be willing to exchange membership dues with a member-owned business for services provided. At times, discounts can apply if a contractor can perform like-services among multiple golf courses in one city or region. This can be a good opportunity for collaboration among your colleagues.

Services for consideration:

- · Cultural practices
- Liquid and granular product applications
- · Aquatic treatments
- · Irrigation repair
- Tree removal and stump grinding
- · Landscape maintenance
- · Pool maintenance
- Snow removal
- · Building maintenance
- Custodial services

When approaching this subject with an owner, a general manager or another club official, I'd encourage you to do your homework and come prepared with justification for each recommendation. For example, a \$5,000 irrigation repair might sound expensive, but if your team doesn't have the bandwidth to take on such a repair, it could become the best money spent all year if your turf health is in jeopardy. **GCI**

Nate Jordan is a Class A member of the GCSAA and owner of NTJTurf, LLC. Founded in 2022, the business provides contract services to golf courses throughout the eastern United States with an emphasis on irrigation, drainage, construction and grow-in.





Double duty

High school senior Jakob Scales loves turf so much he spent the summer working at the ballpark and on the golf course.

rowing up, I always knew I wanted a career in sports. Until about a year and a half ago, I thought it would be in a marketing role. As a sophomore in high school, I began working on Ben Hartman's crew for the Wichita Wind Surge, the Double-A affiliate of the Minnesota Twins. Little did I know it would be one of the best things to happen in my life.

I started for the Wind Surge in May 2021, working 10-hour days about 60 hours a week during homestands - and occasionally helping with cultural practices on off weeks.

The rest of the season flew by. I fell in love with the job.

Fast forward to the start of the 2022 season. I wanted to experience a different side of the turf industry, which led me to Flint Hills National Golf Club's maintenance team, where I started in March. My mindset entering the summer was that if I could handle working 17-hour days for both the Wind Surge and at Flint Hills National, I could make it in the turf industry and was going to pursue either being a golf course superintendent or a sports field manager.

I've had a fantastic summer and fall. I got a new nickname - more





on that in a minute — met with the Houston Astros, Minnesota Twins and Milwaukee Brewers ground crews, helped and met with multiple different MiLB ground crews in the Upper Midwest, participated in a couple of field days, volunteered at the Wichita Open, attended Kansas Turf Foundation's conference, went on college visits to Oklahoma State University, Iowa State University and Kansas State University, and was even invited on a Golf Course Industry podcast to talk about being a young turf pro and my experiences this summer. What I realized is everyone I've met has been very encouraging, giving me advice and telling me to keep in touch with them. People in this industry are willing to help foster the young generation of turf pros and that's one of the finest entities about the turf industry. We're so small that we're like a fraternity. We all know or have heard of everyone, for better or worse.

But it hasn't been all cupcakes and roses. I crashed a Toro Workman into a lake at the golf course - where it sort of bobbed on the surface, giving me the new nickname of Bobber - and broke a quick coupler, a leaf blower and even a television. This was my first professional setback and just by the nature of my jobs, I spent an extensive amount of time alone, in my own thoughts, enabling them to run wild. All the above contributed to an ever-so-present doubt that maybe I'm not cut out for this industry. Is the root of these accidents being tired? Or is it my lack of ability? Or am I just a 17-yearold who is learning? This was what went through my mind almost daily throughout the summer.

But in hindsight, my two biggest takeaways from this summer are that success isn't linear and that discipline is a great character trait to possess. My belief regarding fail-

Jakob "Bobber" Scales is a senior at Andover High School in Kansas, and a member of the grounds crews for Flint Hills National Golf Club and the Wichita Wind Surge. This is his first Turfheads Take Over contribution.



ure and learning has changed drastically since May. If I never learn how to do a job that's out of my skillset, how will I ever get better? And, with learning, there will certainly be failure. Embrace it. Own up to it. Most important, learn from it and move on. That's all you can do. Regarding discipline, I learned early on that it takes a special kind of person to manage turf, whether as a superintendent or an assistant or a crew member. The job demands getting up early, long hours of physical labor, oftentimes in the heat of summer with the expectation to be unseen, unheard and unthanked. The golf side is a grind. One doesn't really get a break in the action like a groundskeeper in baseball. I have a newfound respect for everyone on the golf side of the industry just because of that — not to mention having to maintain 150 acres compared to baseball's four and a half.

I hold myself to high standards as a high school senior, so it's only right to have high aspirations for the rest of my career in the turf industry. Ultimately, my dream job is to be an MLB or NFL head groundskeeper. There are a lot of variables that could change that goal as I age, but that's what I have my sights set on. But I don't want to just be a groundskeeper. I want to remove the stigma around our profession and be an advocate for it. I know we've all been there, telling someone what we do for a living and they reply, "So, all you do is cut grass all day? Man, I could do that!" It takes all our decency to not go off on them and explain that it's much more than that. Bringing to light what the turf industry is really about, fighting for salary increases and attracting young talent are all things I would love to take a lead on if I become an influential figure in the industry.

I will leave you with advice on how to attract and keep young talent in our industry, whether on the golf or sports field side: Relationships are huge for my generation. I have found healthy relationships with my bosses at the ballpark and the golf course. They know what my goals are and don't fight over me. I learn so much from the two of them, both professionally and in terms of personal development. So, when a crew member tells you something that's important to them, listen. Especially if it is about turf. Be willing to train someone from the ground up. Some questions young people ask might be rudimentary to you, but they don't know any better. Treat them how you wish your boss treated you. Guide them along their networking journey and maybe bring them to a conference or a trade show with you. Thousands of high school and college kids are hired as seasonal help on golf courses worldwide. They are impressionable at that age. As a boss in the turf industry, it is your duty to help instill a passion to the next generation. How you treat them in the short time they have in this industry likely determines their thoughts of the industry as a whole. It could ultimately determine if they choose to enter it. GCI

Broad-based learning

Not everything you read must be turf-related to help you with your job or career. Bibliophile Donovan Maguigan dives into using books for wisdom.



Donovan Maguigan has been the golf course superintendent with Troon Golf at Springdale Golf Club in Princeton, New Jersey, since 2018. This is his third Turfheads Take Over contribution.



n 2020, I had the opportunity to share time with Matt LaWell for the "Off the Course" podcast, where he correctly introduced me as a bibliophile. As "a person who collects or is a lover of books," I am proud to fit that Oxford English Dictionary definition, and aside from providing me with the perfect icebreaker when meeting people, it allows me to see the world through a different lens. Steve Leveen, in his book "The Little Guide to Your Well-Read Life," sums up my feelings on understanding the world through books perfectly, "The point of reading is not reading but living. Reading helps you live with greater appreciation, keener insight and heightened emotional awareness."

While on the podcast, I shared that I enjoy finding inspiration and advice in books regardless of the topic. I view books as "Aesop's Fables" to where I look for a quote, an anecdote or a story that I can draw life lessons that may be unrelated to the specific topic you are reading. For instance, you could read a story about a business unrelated to turf and be able to draw something apropos to your life as a golf course superintendent or assistant. For some books, it slams you in the head like Robert Iger's "The Ride of Lifetime," or one of my favorites, Yvon Chouinard's "Let My People Go Surfing." In fiction books, it could be a soliloquy from a character, like Howard Roark's speech at the end of "The Fountainhead." As I continue to enjoy reading, I love digging out these nuggets of knowledge that don't require a master's in English to mine.

While my literary education ended after required English courses at Ohio State, I have been privileged to stretch my reading and writing muscles as the editor-in-chief of The Greenerside, the quarterly publication of the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of New Jersey. The magazine allows me to feel like a writer without giving up the superintendent life. New for our issues this year was, "Wisdom in Uncommon Books," where I shared my favorite books and the lessons that I have learned from them. I enjoy sharing these things with the members of our association in New Jersey, but as a writing turfhead, I wanted to share some examples I have found with a wider audience.

"Honest self-assessment is in short supply."

- "Upheaval" by Jared Diamond

iamond gained notoriety for two amazing books about society, including "Guns, Germs, and Steel" and "Collapse," and with his third book "Upheaval," he dives in how societies have moved at pivot points in their history. When I read this sentence about "honest self-assessment," it struck a chord with me about how we as superin-



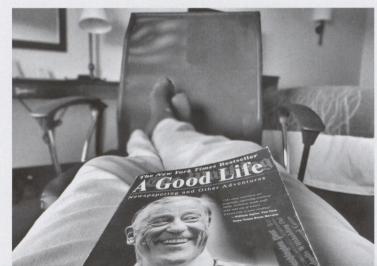


tendents or turf managers need to really step back and assess how we are doing, specifically from the perspective of our members or owners. Don't be too headstrong to say that you are doing everything perfectly or that you don't need help. Take a moment and review where you are and make the changes you need to for success.

"It also made him realize the contributions that could come from unexpected sources, and that he must always be open to the idea that the man on the job knew more than he did. He never failed to go down the line every evening asking for suggestions for improvements."

— "The Mysterious Affair at Olivetti" by Meryle Secrest

uring the podcast with Matt, I mentioned this book as an example of a simple quote or lesson that I found within a book recommended by a friend of my wife. While the book is an interesting story of Olivetti's early introduction of a personal computer and how it met an untimely demise, this quote stood out to me as it references how the general manager at the Olivetti factory trusted the experience and knowledge of his staff over his own. As turf managers, we can't rely solely on our expertise and observations; we need the support of our staff who will have firsthand knowledge of what is going on at the course.





Rule 13 — Embrace Paradox Rule 23 — You are your best publicist Rule 28 — What worked in the past, won't work in the future. — "Eat A Peach" by **David Chang**

At the end of Chang's memoir is a long list of important rules that he has followed as a chef in New York building a worldwide noodle restaurant franchise, a streaming TV show and a large social media following. The three rules I have pointed out were selected from 33 at the back of the book and each can be helpful in our turfgrass careers. I am fond of photography of my course, so "You are your best publicist" strikes a loud note with me as I believe we need to be hard working self-promoters of what we are doing every day.

"Craftsmanship means dwelling on a task for a long time and going deeply into it, because you want to get it right."

— "Shop Class as Soulcraft" by Matthew B. Crawford

n my career as an assistant and then as a superintendent, I have strongly viewed work on a golf course as a craft and that we as superintendents are craftsmen, spending our careers working on fine tuning and learning the art of golf course maintenance. As the quote says, we want to "get it right" which requires us to devote time to improving ourselves and our work. The book is a deep study in the personal benefit of dedicating oneself to a craft and the rewards of a job that creates a physical tangible result, another lesson that I instill in the staff working for me. I preach that at the end of the morning or the day, you can look across this beautiful landscape and see the physical manifestation of your labors.

"I think the conscientious pursuit of happiness by itself can validate decisions to change, to try again, especially when failure to change will lead to lives of duplicity, dishonesty, and deceit."

— "A Good Life" by Ben Bradlee

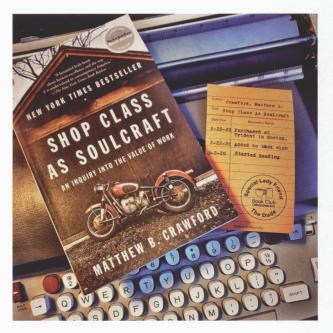
hen you pick a book to read, it should be on a topic that you are interested in. While you can say, "Duh!" at that, many of us spent the early parts of our lives reading what we were told to read. As a I struggled to read in high school, I was fortunate enough to have a teacher who promoted the idea of reading a book of our choice each month outside our normal required reading. By doing this, she encouraged us to explore topics and pick content that we wanted to read. During this time, I discovered authors that I continue to read including Jon Krakauer, Sebastian Junger and Bill Bryson. In short, if you are enjoying the topic that you are reading about, you will find that the pages turn effortlessly. Outside of reading about golf and turf, I have dedicated my reading time to multiple subjects with two standing out most recently: Theodore Roosevelt and the investigative journalism surrounding Watergate. For the latter, I have read at least a half dozen books on the subject as I am fascinated by that era of investigative journalism. While I love "All the Presidents Men" by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, the book that really stands out to me is the autobiography of Bradlee, their editor at The Washington Post. A well-known figure in Washington politics for his control of the newsroom, he was a fearless defender of the truth. His quote above stood out to me as a life lesson about not fearing change, whether it is a change in your career, your personal life or something small — if it is motivated by what is going to give you a successful, happier life.

"Get out of your house. Get off of your phone. Then go and participate in things that thrill you."

— "The Greatest Love Story Ever Told" by Nick Offerman and Megan Mullally

want to close with some advice that I recently started to really appreciate after getting married. Through my relationship with my wife, I have learned that books are best when shared with others. This very funny book by Offerman and Mullally was the first selection in our cheesy-as-hell book club that my wife and I have together (sorry, only two members). We pick books together, share our experiences reading, talk about our favorite parts and constantly look for additions to the shelf. In the last four years we have been together we have shared 56 books. The experience of discussing books together has allowed us to grow closer while elevating our understanding of the world.

As I have also grown close with turf managers who read in New Jersey, I encourage you to share the books that you read with other industry friends, look for deeper meanings and keep reading. **GCI**





EVIDENCE OF THINGS TO COME

ometimes when visiting a golf course for an article, a consult or simply to enjoy a round of golf, I end up feeling like a detective stumbling upon clues. Not exactly a murder case, more like a slow death — or, on more memorable occasions, a chance to celebrate that things are going fine and the golf course and club are in reliable hands.

I got tipped off to this phenomenon when forced to engage in a conversation with a security guard at the front gate who asked me who my host was. When I named the emeritus golf professional, he immediately launched into a mild smear of his character. Not a good sign.

At another facility, my parking lot arrival was slowed because the spaces were full — except for two front spots reserved, as per the signage, for the men's and ladies' club champions. Now here is a place, I thought, that takes itself too seriously. As did the club where, on the way to the driving range, I spotted a sign that listed the day's Stimpmeter speeds for each green.

Of course, there are municipal counterparts to such entitlement: like the parking lot where all the spots closest to the clubhouse (besides the handicap spots) are taken by employees.

I know I'm headed for trouble when the bag drop folks automatically put arriving golf bags on golf carts — which are lined up by the dozens outside the pro shop and you have to tiptoe around them to get to the clubhouse

Out on the golf course, my heart sinks when I see red-

white-blue flags arrayed for front-middle-back positions on greens. Or tombstone hole indicators on the tee sporting not just hole number, par and yardages, but also the blessings of a local mortician or haberdasher.

There are deeper pathologies evident at some clubs. Golf members at private clubs who flaunt the first starting time by insisting on going off early and then must wend their way through maintenance crews doing early setup. Or courses so jammed with Monday outings that the ground never recovers and the maintenance crew hardly has free run for topdressing, aeration and repairs.

The best-run courses find their general manager, golf professional and superintendent in sync and conferring regularly. The worst have a person nominally in charge who is one step up from a wine steward squabbling with the board. Or a pro who is more invested in placating his friends among the membership than enforcing rules about cart-path only and five carts to a fivesome. Or an overworked, underpaid veteran greenkeeper saturating the Poa annua fairways and greens in a desperate effort to keep his job long enough to see his kids through college.

At well-run golf courses, the management team coordinates

At well-run golf courses, the management team coordinates matters up and down the line. The green committee, for example, meets at the maintenance facility and channels facility needs to the board."

matters up and down the line. The green committee, for example, meets at the maintenance facility and channels facility needs to the board. At poorly run clubs, the board functions like a personal fiefdom, with lots of turnover, committees appointed (or ignored) at the whim of a one-year president, and decisions about the course made to fit the golf event schedule and the playing habits of a green chairman — whose only familiarity with agronomy are the two articles he read that morning on Google.

Turning around the culture of a degraded facility is a topic that gets very little industry attention. At most stagnant facilities, the biggest obstacle is a senior membership (or playing cohort) that plays all of its golf there, enjoys low rates, doesn't spend beyond a bare minimum of fees, and threatens to resign if any changes are made that will cost them financially or in terms of access.

By contrast, healthy facilities have an active churn of new members: generally younger, more monied, more traveled, more golf-worldly and thus understanding of what it takes to keep a place competitive. If progressive board members can align themselves with a truly professional senior staff,

> then the facility has a very good chance of adapting to our rapidly changing times, usually by investing in infrastructure upgrades.

Otherwise, the club will languish and lose ground. The signs of that will be everywhere. GCI



BRADLEY S. KLEIN, PH.D. (political science), former PGA Tour caddie, is a veteran golf journalist, book author ("Discovering Donald Ross," among others) and golf course consultant. Follow him on Twitter (@BradleySKlein).

TRAVELS WITH TERRY

Globetrotting consulting agronomist **Terry Buchen** visits many golf courses annually with his digital camera in hand. He shares helpful ideas relating to maintenance equipment from the golf course superintendents he visits — as well as a few ideas of his own — with timely photos and captions that explore the changing world of golf course management.



THE "CHUCK WAGON"

huck Totten, equipment technician at Westmoreland Country Club in Wilmette, Illinois, developed this unique namesake, a well-equipped 2003 Toro Workman vehicle for working out on the course instead of taking a piece of equipment back to the shop. Equipment includes a Lincoln AC225-S stick welder; Miller Millermatic 130 MIG welder; Cutmaster 42 plasma cutter; Speedaire 4GB4Z air compressor with a 4-horsepower Honda Motor and a 30-foot hose reel; DuroMax XP12000EH power generator; Oxyacetylene W/victor cutting torch; bottle of Arcon/Carbon Dioxide N.O.S compressed gas for MIG welder; 30-foot tow strap; two 20-foot tow chains; Prentiss large vise; two Craftsman toolboxes with metric and standard wrenches and sockets; Prizm HOC gauge; 5x magnifying glass for quality of cut; Accu-Gauge height and groomer gauges; and jumper cables. It cost \$6,000 to \$7,000 for all the equipment, including \$1,000 for the tools. It initially took about eight hours to build back in 2014 with an additional 10 hours to add and subtract tools. Totten, superintendent Matt Flory, assistant superintendent Colin Huber and assistant equipment manager Kevin Sinkus are the epitome of teamwork. Bruce Hepner is the restoration architect.

DEW WHIPPING POLE HOLDER

arts and supplies were already in inventory. The top and middle flat pieces of steel, measuring 1 inch by 16½ inches by ½th inch, were mounted to the cinder block wall with concrete nails. Two-inch radiator clamps were bolted

in place into pre-drilled holes. The bottom 1½-inch angle iron, holding the handles in place, was also mounted using concrete screws. Total labor time was about one hour. Course superintendent **Kurt Jennings** and assistant superintendent **David Muth** at the Redstick Golf Club in Vero Beach, Florida, and their team are very creative. **Rees Jones** and **Greg Muirhead** designed the golf course.



Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, is president of Golf Agronomy International. He's a 51-year, life member of the GCSAA. He can be reached at 757-561-7777 or terrybuchen@earthlink.net.

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I AM WRITE

It is hard to believe it has been six years since I penned my first column for *Golf Course Industry*. Turfheads Takeover provided an outlet for this wannabe writer to share my thoughts on happenings within our industry. And that outlet eventually created the opportunity to share those thoughts more regularly as your back-page columnist.

How did I get here? I don't know. Growing up I never fancied myself a writer. Writing my master's thesis was definitely the most daunting of all tasks required of my advanced degree. Yet somehow while composing that scientific document I was learning and growing.

Three years after graduation, I accepted my first position as head superintendent and immediately was tasked with providing content for the club's monthly newsletter. This was my first opportunity to tell stories about what our team does and why. Looking back at some of those early Turf Talks, I realize how little I knew then about writing.

When I arrived at Carolina Golf Club, there was a printed newsletter. I continued to make monthly contributions, this time under the guise of Grass Roots and went to work informing the membership so they could be "in the know." My goal was to ensure the narrative spreading within the membership was not full of inaccurate misconceptions.

Like most things printed, the club newsletter eventually fell victim to the digital age, but I received the autonomy to deliver email blasts directly to the membership at will. For a while, this worked fine, but I eventually tired of merely communicating with the written word and desired to provide greater content with pictures, videos and more. So in November 2011, I created The

Greenkeeper, my blog page.

I believe it was during the first two years of The Greenkeeper when I honed my writing skills and developed my style. I once received feedback from a member who was a retired English professor — and his technical praise certainly boosted my confidence. Two years later I joined Twitter and linked my account to the blog page so posts from each can work hand-in-hand informing the membership what they can expect day-today on the golf course.

Apologies for such a long-winded introduction, but the importance of communication — well-written communication — cannot be understated in our industry. Ask any superintendent who has been in their position for at least 15 years, and I am certain they can name at least one fellow superintendent who was relieved of their duties despite not a blade of grass being out of place on their golf courses.

Last month, I shared with you the parable of the clover: your written communications to owners, boards, committees, members, and/or patrons that is your opportunity to express clearly and correctly what is happening on the golf course and why. Remember you will be judged on your communications so it is important to overcome any anxieties you may have.

How do we overcome writing anxieties? The same way we overcome those associated with public speaking: do it. That's right, get to writing. Practice and learn to become the most trusted and respected communicator at your facility.

Interdepartmental emails are a great place to start. Be professional, whether composing or responding, and make sure you don't have any grammatical errors. Take the time and make the extra effort to ensure you are using the correct versions of to, too and two or your and you're. And stop blaming your "smartphone" for the egregious mistakes. Learn why using ALL CAPS is frowned upon and take responsibility for your words. Make the effort to ensure what you are communicating is accurate and correct.

And if you have a great idea you want to share with your peers, write it down and submit it for a future Turfheads Take Over issue. The December issue has been vastly popular because your peers are most interested in what assistants, superintendents and others within the industry have to say. And who knows, you just might get asked to contribute more frequently. That is exactly how I wound up on the back page. And it has been fun and rewarding.

I thank you for reading and, more important, for interacting online when something strikes a chord. How long can I keep going? I do not know, so if someone out there is ready to step up and share their ideas with America, now is the time to write. **GCI**

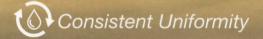


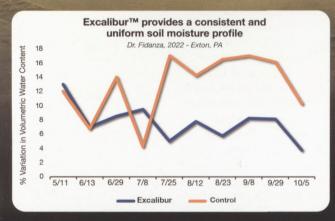
MATTHEW WHARTON, CGCS, MG, is the superintendent at Carolina Golf Club in Charlotte, North Carolina and past president of the Carolinas GCSA. Follow him on Twitter @CGCGreenkeeper.



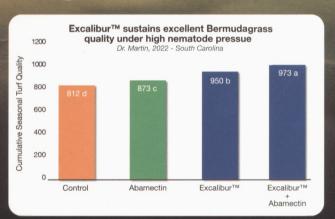
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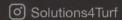
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