



Without Fairways Every

***Studies have shown that golf course superintendents rate fairways low on their priority list, but without fairways, you'd only have a par-3 course.**

Fairways take up acreage and cost a lot to maintain. To lower your costs, try these award-winning, fairway-specific bentgrass varieties from Tee-2-Green.

Whether you are interseeding, renovating, or starting anew, Tee-2-Green has the varieties for your fairways.

PennLinks II and Penneagle II -

PO BOX 250 Hubbard, OR 97032 USA • 800-547-0255 • FAX: 503-651-2351 • bentinfo@tee-2-green.com

*To view fairway seed study visit www.tee-2-green.com/fairway



28



74

FEATURES

Executive profile

- 22 FACILITATING THE FUTURE**
Joe O'Brien talks about The First Tee, fond memories of the GCSAA and being reunited with Steve Mona.

COVER STORY:
Industry growth

- 28 HOUSE ARREST**
The housing market downturn hampers new golf course construction.

Cover illustration: Gary Overacre

Equipment management

- 36 BACK OUT AGAIN**
The resale mower market presents several options to superintendents.

Pest management

- 46 REMAINING VIGILANT**
Superintendents try to keep the upper hand when battling nematodes.

Irrigation management

- 52 SPOT TREATMENT**
Mister systems address the maintenance needs of bunkers and approaches.

Industry resources

- 64 BACKING IT UP**
Through research and knowledgeable staffs, chemical manufacturers support their products and superintendents.

Course construction

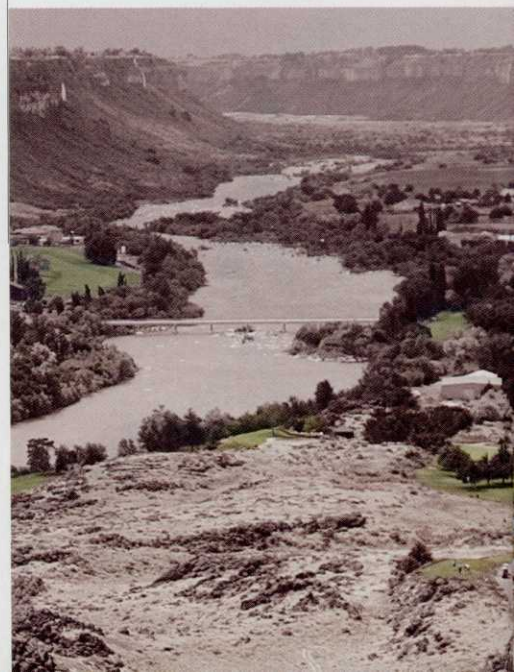
- 74 THE REAL DEAL**
A development team works closely with environmentalists to build a true links course in Scotland.

Product feature

- 90 LET IT GROW**
A New York superintendent sees better growth after applying organic fertilizer.

RESEARCH

- 80 BEHAVING BADLY**
Soil insects' below-ground activity affects pesticide applications.



GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY (ISSN 1054-0644) is published monthly. Copyright 2008 GIE Media Inc., 4020 Kinross Lakes Parkway, #201, Richfield, OH 44286. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted by any means without permission from the publisher. One-year subscription rate, \$33 in the United States, \$42 in Canada and Mexico, and \$88 in other foreign countries. One year foreign airmail rate: \$102. Two year subscription rate: \$65. Subscriptions and classified advertising should be addressed to the Richfield office. Periodicals postage paid at Richfield, Ohio, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY 4020 Kinross Lakes Parkway, #201, Richfield, OH 44286.

gie
media
INCORPORATED

DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----|---|
| 6 | Editorial
The right kind of diversity | 12 | Design concepts
Jeffrey D. Brauer: Defining an architect |
| 8 | Letters | 14 | Advancing the game
Jim McLoughlin: Failing the mission statement |
| 20 | At the turn | 16 | Human resources
Robert A. Milligan, Ph.D.: Hiring right requires planning |
| 96 | Travels with Terry
Equipment ideas | 18 | Equipment management
Stephen Tucker: Respect and recognition |
| 98 | Classifieds | 94 | Tournament insider
Tim Moraghan: Inside the ropes |
| 99 | Ad index | 100 | Parting shots
Pat Jones: Au revoir, Steve |

COLUMNISTS

- 10 **Assistant's view**
John Ekstrom: Quality control management



46

VISIT US ONLINE – www.golfcourseindustry.com

HAWAII'S GOLF HANGOVER

Almost 20 years after the Japanese buying boom and subsequent sell-off, the golf industry in the Aloha State continues to try and boost business.

STATUS REPORT

Mike McLaren, director of course and grounds at Boulder Country Club in Colorado, is successful with his golf course projects because he communicates effectively.

ONLINE POLL: ORGANIC FERTILIZER

During the next few years, do you plan to increase the amount of organic fertilizer applied on your course? Visit the GCI home page to vote in this online poll.

AIR IT OUT

Do you have a gripe about something? Do you completely agree or disagree with a recent column or article? Voice your opinion about a topic or try and bring recognition or attention to someone or something you feel deserves it. Visit our message board at www.golfcourseindustry.com/messageboard and speak your piece.

EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT:

Golf Course Industry reports on and analyzes the business of maintaining golf courses, as well as the broader business of golf course management. This includes three main areas: agronomy, business management and career development as it relates to golf course superintendents and those managers responsible for maintaining a golf course as an important asset. *Golf Course Industry* shows superintendents what's possible, helps them understand why it's important and tells them how to take the next step.



John Walsh
Editor

THE RIGHT KIND OF DIVERSITY

At the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association's annual conference in November, I attended a general session and listened to David Downing, CGCS, president of the GCSAA and past president of the Carolinas GCSA, talk about the reasons why the GCSAA does the things it does.

One of Downing's comments struck me as an example of blatant political correctness with flawed logic – he said the GCSAA needs to “look more like America,” implying the association doesn't have enough female and black members. Because of this, the association is implementing a plan to make the association more “diverse” during the next six or seven years. Well, what constitutes enough women and blacks? Does that imply quotas?

The ethnicity or gender of a superintendent is irrelevant no matter where a course is because course conditioning and hospitality – the two most important factors to golfers (those spending money at a facility) – transcend those two characteristics.

Targeting blacks and women to play golf is a different issue, part of which is because of the stagnant number of golfers and rounds played nationally. Involving blacks and females in the game at a young age will increase the odds of them being more involved in the game, including the business side of it, later in life. There are several much-needed programs addressing this.

However, there's no shortage of golf course superintendents. There are so many students graduating from turfgrass programs looking for jobs that the market is flooded with qualified, capable people. It would be one thing to actively seek people based on gender or ethnicity if there was a shortage of talent entering the market, but there's not. Besides, why would one seek someone based on ethnicity or gender to begin with? It's discriminatory and generally a bad idea. Why should ethnicity and gender trump what people have in their minds and hearts? It shouldn't.

As far as I know, not one person, university or company in this industry is preventing or hindering blacks or women from becoming golf course superintendents. (If there are examples, by all means, let me know.) Furthermore, many institutions of higher learning tend to implement quotas and policies that determine where people can educate themselves based on ethnicity and gender. As diverse as college campuses are, blacks and women are choosing the fields they want to enter. It just so happens few choose the golf course superintendent field.

The simple reason there aren't more female and black superintendents is because they obviously prefer to enter other professions. It's the free market and people's free will at work. Superintendents, as a whole, are salt-of-the-earth, principled, hard-working people – no matter their ethnicity or gender – and the GCSAA shouldn't feel bad about the racial and gender makeup of its membership.

People say diversity is good for business. While that might be true, it's a weak argument to change the makeup of the association's members. Through research, we're told golfers' No. 1 concern about a facility is course conditioning, not the ethnicity or gender of superintendents.

The GCSAA shouldn't have to “look more like America” like Downing says. It should look like the people who want to, and work hard to, become superintendents. When the GCSAA talks about diversity, it should talk about it in the context of people's minds and their different ideas and business philosophies, not in the context of ethnicity or gender. **GCI**

We would like to hear from you. Please post any comments you have about this column on our message board, which is at www.golfcourseindustry.com/messageboard.



GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

Serving the Business of Golf Course Management

Vol. 20 No. 1

EDITORIAL

GIE Media, Inc.
4020 Kinross Lakes Pkwy, 2nd floor
Richfield, OH 44286
Phone: (800) 456-0707
Fax: (330) 659-0824

Cindy Code

Editorial director
Phone: 330-523-5331
ccode@gie.net

John Walsh

Editor
Phone: 330-523-5361
jwalsh@gie.net

Heather Wood

Web editor
Phone: 330-523-5348
hwood@gie.net

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG
terrybuchen@earthlink.net

Pat Jones

psjhawk@cox.net

Kevin Ross, CGCS

kjross@vail.net

David Wolff

dgwolff@charter.net

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG
Golf Agronomy International

Raymond Davies, CGCS

CourseCo

Kevin Downing, CGCS

Ballensles Country Club

Tim Hiers, CGCS

The Old Collier Golf Club

Laurence Hirsh

Golf Property Analysts

Ted Horton, CGCS

Ted Horton Consulting

Michael Hurdzan, Ph.D.

Hurdzan/Fry Golf Course Design

Pat Jones

Flagstick LLC

Jim McLoughlin

TMG Golf

Kevin Ross, CGCS

Country Club of the Rockies

Matt Rostal

Interlachen Country Club

Golf Course Industry is published 10 times per year by GIE Media, Inc., which also publishes: *Lawn & Landscape, Commercial Dealer, Interior Landscape Business, Snow Magazine, Pest Control Technology and Recycling Today* magazines. GIE Media is a leader in custom publishing, book publishing, database marketing, conferences and special events.

Coming in 2008

EcoLogic™

Environmentally Responsible
Professional Turf, Landscape & Agricultural Products
from The Liquid Fence® Company

**Makes sense for the planet.
Makes sense for your bottom line.**

The Liquid Fence Company is proud to introduce EcoLogic™, the next generation of eco-safe turf, landscape and agricultural products.

Landscape professionals, turf specialists, horticulturists and commercial growers alike, will now experience the benefits of "going green" while enjoying the unparalleled service and economy they have grown to expect from the makers of America's best all-natural animal and insect repellents.

Visit us at the Golf Industry Show at Booth #3487.

The Liquid Fence Company

Call (800) 923-3623 www.liquidfence.com pro@liquidfence.com

LIQUID FENCE
PRO
DIVISION



Fundamental to success

I enjoyed John Walsh's column and various articles in the October issue focusing on the importance of grow-in experience for superintendents. We opened our new Robert Trent Jones Jr. course in February 2005 after enduring four hurricanes during construction. Our golf course superintendent, Mark Nykorchuck, who came on board before we broke ground, did a superb job throughout the process and continues to do a superb job. It was his second start-up. There's no doubt his prior experience helped him, and us, this time around. Although a team effort is the main reason for our success, the fact that we have a golf course superintendent with grow-in experience is fundamental to that success.

Ian D. N. Fetigan, CCM, CAM
General manager
The Founders Golf Club
Sarasota, Fla.

Better public facilities

The cover story in the October issue ("From public to private") was well written and researched. However, one has to be careful about making the generalization private clubs are always better than public facilities. For example, in Washington, the highest paid superintendent is at a public course. Also, in Idaho, the highest paid superintendent is at a public course in Couer d' Alene. I've been told by a colleague in Minnesota that the superintendent at The Wilds, a public course, is the highest paid in the state. The most prestigious courses in California (Pebble Beach) and New York (Bethpage Black) are public. I also would venture to say Bandon Dunes in Oregon is one of the top jobs in the country. The most famous course in the world, St. Andrews, also is public. One can't be so cut and dry in stating the ultimate goal is a high-end private club. My public 27-hole course is nicer than a dozen private clubs in Seattle.

Ron Furlong
Golf course superintendent
Avalon Golf Links
Burlington, Wash.

An eye on finances

What a great piece Pat Jones wrote in the September issue ("Grumpy old farts"). He

nailed me with that column. I've been a superintendent for 26 years, 12 of them at Oakwood, an established country club with a small budget and an aging, dwindling membership. I'm always finding ways to do things that need done for little money – ways to do things that a younger superintendent might not think of or might be afraid to try. In October, I added 12 inches of depth to my six-acre irrigation lake by packing dirt in front of two leaking spillways. It didn't cost me anything to raise it a foot.

I'm always ready to try new things when managing turfgrass, especially with my greens. Twenty-six years hasn't come close to teaching me all I need to know about greens care, especially when I have to watch the club's money so closely. I've never lost track of my and the members priorities – excellent conditions daily for about half the money the big boys in town do it for.

Jeff Elmer, CGCS
Oakwood Country Club
Kansas City, Mo.

Career guidance

Jim McLoughlin's career seminar, guidance and friendship has worked again. Recently, I was offered the golf course superintendent job at North Hempstead Country Club in Port Washington, N.Y. With so little movement in the area, and two out of the four jobs going to assistants, prospects didn't look good. Shortly after, I met with club officials to finalize my contract. Before that, I reviewed Jim's negotiating tips and contract template from his seminar. My Web site was used by the entire search committee, and it was able to encourage more interested members to view the site. I created a PowerPoint presentation, along with hand-outs, for each of the two interviews. I also visited the golf course a few times, walking it twice, and met with the golf pro and the g.m. on separate occasions, which allowed me to gain valuable insight. Members of North Hempstead came to view the condition of the golf course at Fairview Country Club in Greenwich, Conn., where I was working at the time. This was the clincher.

Michael S. Mongon CGM
Golf Course Superintendent
North Hempstead Country Club
Port Washington, N.Y.

GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

Serving the Business of Golf Course Management

SALES

GIE Media, Inc.
4020 Kinross Lakes Parkway, 2nd Floor
Richfield, OH 44286
Phone: 800-456-0707
Fax: 330-659-0823

Kevin Gilbride

Publisher
Phone: 330-523-5368

Amee Robbins

Account manager, West Coast
Phone: 310-546-6060

Dave Szy

Account manager, Northeast
Phone: 330-523-5338

Russell Warner

Account manager, Southeast
Phone: 330-523-5385

Bonnie Velikonya

Classified sales
Phone: 330-523-5322

Marie Spencer

Marketing manager
Phone: 330-523-5374

Debbie Kean

Manager, books
Phone: 330-523-5341

Maria Miller

Conferences manager
Phone: 330-523-5373

GRAPHICS / PRODUCTION

Mark Rook, Creative director
Andrea Vagas, Managing art director
Helen Duerr, Production director
Samantha Gilbride, Production coordinator

CORPORATE STAFF

Richard Foster, Chairman and c.e.o.
Chris Foster, President and c.o.o.
Dan Moreland, Executive vice president
Jami Childs, Director, business resources and IT
Kelly Roop, Manager, accounting department

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

Copyright 2008 by GIE Media, Inc. All rights reserved and reproduction, in whole or in part, without written permission from the publisher is expressly prohibited.



WITH AN APPLICATION WINDOW THIS FLEXIBLE,
YOU CAN APPLY GRUB CONTROL ALMOST ANYTIME.
ALMOST.



Arena® Insecticide is the preventative and curative grub control with maximum application timing flexibility. Apply anytime from May to September for superior white grub control and control over a broad spectrum of pests for improved turf quality. Just make sure the course is clear first.



Products That Work, From People Who Care® | www.valentpro.com | 800-89-VALENT (898-2536)
Read and follow the label instructions before using.

Our Window is Wider. is a trademark and Products That Work, From People Who Care is a registered trademark of Valent U.S.A. Corporation.
Arena is a registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Takeda Agro Company, Limited. ©2008 Valent U.S.A. Corporation.
All rights reserved. AM18368.04



OUR WINDOW IS WIDER.™

www.golfcourseindustry.com/readerservice - #12



John Ekstrom is the assistant golf course superintendent at Hinsdale Golf Club in Clarendon Hills, Ill. He can be reached at snapp79@aol.com or 815-922-0587.

QUALITY CONTROL MANAGEMENT

Most of today's businesses have quality control measures to manage production. They use internal controls while measuring employee and consumer feedback as means to improve the quality of products and efficiency.

Golf also is a business – a big one that generated more than \$65.2 billion in 2005. Because golf is a business, the same strategies that promote best practices in other industries also should be effective in the golf course industry.

In 2003, the Hinsdale Golf Club began forming a golf course master plan. William "Billy" Fuller, principle of Billy Fuller Golf Design and the architect of the master plan, said the plan was meant to preserve the club's history and design and offer improved strategic quality while bringing the club up to date with specifications and features such as bunkers.

With membership expectations thought to be at an all-time high following this project, a means to standardize course tasks was necessary to raise and maintain the level of maintenance. This would act as a means to increase efficiency through communication and staff training while gaining constructive feedback from strategic club members. In 2004, two years before my arrival as assistant, the grounds department implemented a quality control program – a visual improvement process. The VIP revolves around the specifics of each job standard, which is written – in Spanish and English – specific to what was expected to help alleviate confusion. These standards pertain to:

- Greens mowing;
- Tee and collar mowing;
- Fairway mowing;
- Bank mowing;
- Landscaping;
- Lakes and ponds;
- Cart and foot paths;
- Equipment management;
- Shop cleaning;
- Practice range;

- Raking bunkers; and
- Cup and tee setting.

Taking the time to think about and write expectations for each job might seem daunting. However, with the jobs you wish to standardize, think of everything you expect after it's completed.

Each day, another supervisor or I rate the standard of each task with a score from zero to 10 (10 being best). The numbers of each rating are collected with the week's other daily readings to find a weekly average. The use of Microsoft Excel is paramount in these processes. With the weekly averages, you can create bar graphs to help measure your progress throughout the season. Posting the standards along with the graphs can help your staff visualize its progress.

Understanding that the findings of the VIP were one-sided (because only the feedback from the grounds department supervisors was used), it was decided to incorporate the feedback of selected members of the club. This is similar to a consumer survey you might receive after you purchase a product.

We offered our rating sheets to a cross section of members at the club. They included members of the board of directors and grounds committee. Overall, there were about 30 members who were solicited for feedback. In a public setting, use your golf staff and rangers to help promote golfer participation in these ratings.

When we received these rating sheets back from our members, we averaged the total of each rating to find a monthly number. This number would be measured every month in a bar-graph form similar to the number measured by the grounds staff.

From the written job standards of each task, we found another tool to help staff training. Each task is broken down again to identify the individual standards. The biggest commitment in the training process is the time needed to talk to each employee. However, it's worth it because you're able

to build a connection with him and convey your concern for workplace safety and quality. Meanwhile, you can explain your expectations when using the task training sheets for each job.

Pictures are worth a thousand words and are easy ways to communicate to the staff without saying a word. By taking a picture of a correct action or incorrect action, you can give the staff your feedback. A digital camera is a valuable and necessary investment because it's part of the visual improvement process.

Hinsdale has an in-depth program using ratings, charts, photos and written standards. This might not work at every facility, but incorporating the photos to communicate to your staff or writing standards for the jobs is valuable. This might help organize your department better. The greens mowing standard (see below) is just a template to get you started.

This subjective program is a relatively objective measuring tool to improve operations. VIP helps streamline communication and training with the staff and golfers.

When I began on a golf course crew 11 years ago, I never thought training and communication skills gained through a quality control method would be some of the biggest skills necessary for success. Now I know it can be invaluable if done properly. **GCI**

Green mowing criteria

- Debris removed before mowing
- Greens mowed in same direction
- Mowing lines straight
- Overlap minimally without missing
- Turns properly made off collar or on mat
- No scalping on greens or roughs
- Clean up passes properly
- Flags in cups without damage
- Grass clippings not noticeable
- Nursery mowed properly
- Equipment cleaned, fueled and stored
- Additional item