

2c.



2d.



2e.



2f.



2g.



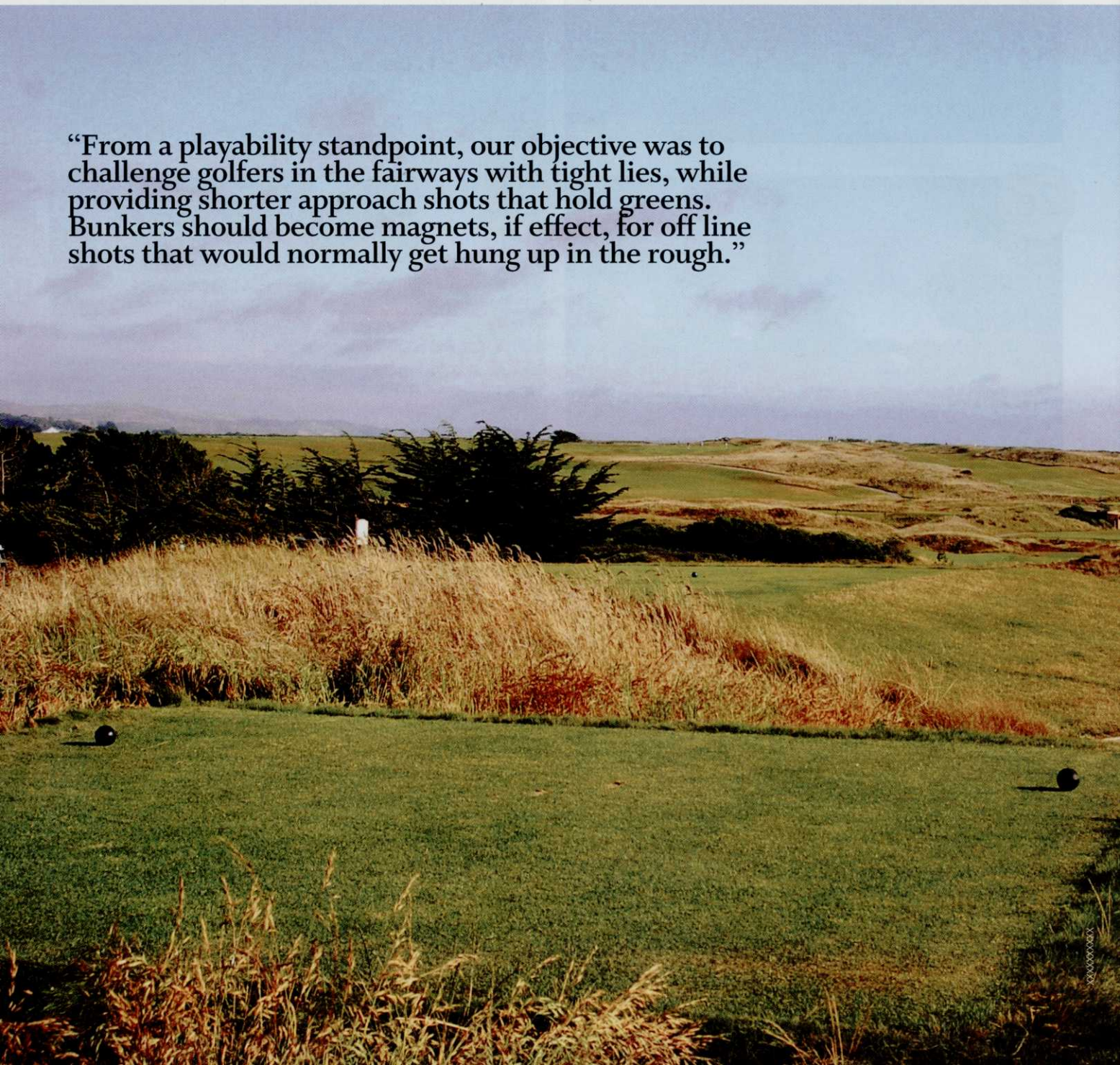
2h.



Firm, *Fast* and Furious

Through a links enhancement project, Half Moon Bay Golf Links transformed into the links-style course it was always meant to be.

“From a playability standpoint, our objective was to challenge golfers in the fairways with tight lies, while providing shorter approach shots that hold greens. Bunkers should become magnets, if effect, for off line shots that would normally get hung up in the rough.”



by Dan Miller

“Firm and fast” has been the preferred playing condition of British links courses for centuries. Only recently has the trend found acceptance in the U.S., where a handful of courses have transitioned from lush green to a drier shade of brown.

This is partly borne out of necessity: parts of the Southeast and Texas have been mired in one of the worst droughts in recent history, and water shortages in Southern Nevada, Phoenix/Scottsdale and Palm Springs have wreaked havoc on the water supply of these popular golf vacation hot spots.

At Half Moon Bay Golf Links, Half Moon Bay, Calif., the idea of converting the Arthur Hills-designed Ocean Course into a firm and fast, links-style playing experience was the brainchild of Kenmark Golf Management, operators of our 36-hole facility just 40 miles south of San Francisco.

Since opening in 1997, the Ocean Course had gradually morphed into a *Poa annua* playing surface similar to so many of Northern California’s coastal facilities. Rough was high and thick, the greens surrounds were spongy and mowed well above green height, and putting surfaces were quick, but not necessarily firm.

Yet everything about the Ocean Course cried out for it to be a links style course, not an aerial golf affair: the tra-



ALL IMAGES: HALF MOON BAY

At Half Moon Bay Golf Links, the idea of converting the Arthur Hills-designed Ocean Course into a firm and fast, links-style playing experience was the brainchild of Kenmark Golf Management.

“The goal of the links enhancement has been to reposition the Ocean Course as one of the best links golf experiences in the U.S. through a series of agronomic upgrades creating a firmer, faster playing surface with an emphasis on shot values and the ground game.”

ditional out-and-in routing; the natural fairway contours that allows movement on the ground around greens and bunkers; the mounding between holes; and the course's setting along one of the most breathtaking swaths of coastline in North America.

In an effort to capitalize on these elements, and restore the Ocean Course it links golf intent, Kenmark Golf Management initiated the “Links Enhancement Project.” It has become the primary focus of our agronomic plan over the past 18 months, and its principles will continue to guide maintenance practices well into the future.

A word about the Ocean Course: to this day, Mr. Hills considers the seaside layout one of the best marriages of golf, land and sea in North America. The first two holes take golfers out past the onsite Ritz-Carlton, Half Moon Bay and the ocean.

Holes No. 3 through No. 9 turn inland, with holes separated only by fescue mounding, sporadic bunkering and a water feature on the seventh hole. The back nine begins the dramatic return trip to the ocean, and the final three holes play along a cliff overlooking the crashing waves of the Pacific.

The goal of the links Enhancement has been to reposition the Ocean Course as one of the best links golf experiences in the U.S. through a series of agronomic upgrades creating a firmer, faster playing surface with an emphasis on shot values and the ground game.

In August of 2009, several areas on the Ocean Course were rejuvenated through seeding and mowing, bringing hazards

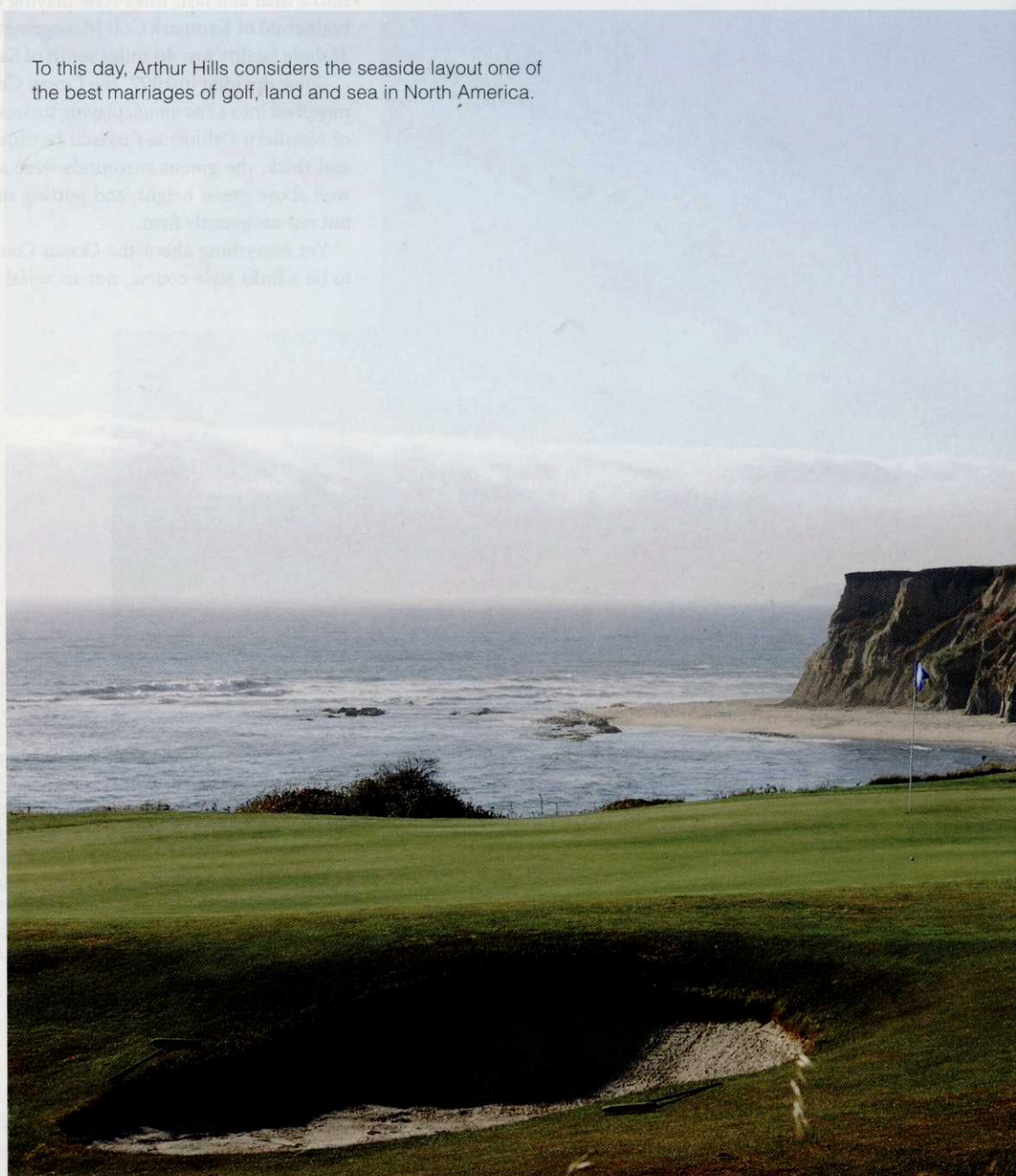
and fairway bunkers back into play off the tee. In late July this year, the installation of five new tee boxes added 200 yards to the course and created new angles and strategic approaches.

FIRM, FAST AND FURIOUS. The primary agronomic objective for 2010 has been to create decidedly firmer and faster fairways. Immediately, we addressed our year-round climate and condi-

tions to see if this was feasible. The rainy season for Half Moon Bay is November through March, with a total of up to 23 inches of rainfall annually.

With approximately 160 dry

To this day, Arthur Hills considers the seaside layout one of the best marriages of golf, land and sea in North America.



days per year, we were still able to accomplish our goal of harder surfaces throughout the Ocean Course.

To do so, irrigation was drastically reduced from previous years. Year to date, the Ocean Course is using about 50% less water than it did in 2009. With drier, harder conditions the ball rolls farther off the tee, allowing for variety in club selection (but also bringing numerous hazards back into play). The ground

game is back in play around the greens, allowing for a range of shot options and fostering player creativity.

Poa annua remains the predominant grass on the Ocean Course, however irrigation practices are designed to maximize the growth of the perennial ryegrass. The *Poa annua* is allowed to stress out and, in some cases, even die in order to maintain the hard fast conditions we are striving for.

From a playability standpoint, our objective was to challenge golfers in the fairways with tight lies, while providing shorter approach shots that hold greens. Bunkers should become magnets, if effect, for off line shots that would normally get hung up in the rough.

NATIVE GRASS CONVERSION. Approximately 2.5 acres of maintained turf was converted to native grass in the fall of 2009. This is the first phase of a three-year program to convert a total of 10 acres, reducing the total amount of maintained acreage from 85 to 75.


In preparation for the native conversion, turf was sprayed once with "Round-Up" for four weeks prior to seeding. A second application was made two weeks prior to seeding to pick-up any

areas that were not controlled after the first application.


Most of the dead turf was removed before seeding using dethatching reels on a National 84" triplex mower to insure better seed-to-soil contact. Finally, the seed was broadcast on the surface at a rate of 60 pounds per acre and incorporated into the soil using the same de-thatching reels.

Keeping the seed moist was not a problem as the irrigation heads were still in place. The new native areas not only reduce irrigation and fertilization, but enhance the appearance of the golf course.

The converted areas were closely monitored to gain an understanding of how play was impacted. Mowing of the rough was discontinued in March at the end of the rainy season.




Irrigation
Consulting, Inc.



EPA WaterSense PARTNER

**Design, GPS, Evaluation
and Audit Services**



*Independent Golf Course Design Services
Experience on more than 300 Golf Courses*

Corporate Office: (978)433-8972
Providing innovative design solutions worldwide.
www.irrigationconsulting.com

www.golfcourseindustry.com/readerservice - #24

COURSE RENOVATION

We allowed the areas to grow without water and, as the season progressed, the grass became thin and more playable.

Areas throughout the Ocean Course that appear thin will be reseeded prior to the beginning of rainy season in November. We have initiated the process of converting three more acres to native areas and will closely monitor it as the climate and seasons change.

MOWING, DESIGN AND CONDITIONING.

To give golfers the option

of playing an array of shots and clubs around the green, the rough around greens was completely eliminated to provide a uniform surface. This mowing strategy also places a greater premium on hitting the greens: errant shots that miss the green can now come to rest some 30 feet from the putting surface or in a bunker.

Speaking of mowing: The net effect of the water reduction and native area conversions has been a drastic reduction in the mowing frequency from tee to green.

This has allowed for a reallocation of staff to other areas and responsibilities.

Future phases of the Links Enhancement include converting a series of sand bunkers to stacked sod (we've already converted one on the No. 8 hole) without altering the contours of the course. If golfers find themselves in a new stacked sod bunker, they will still be able to take a full swing, but the lie and feet placement could create a new (and more penal) predicament.

The feedback from our mem-

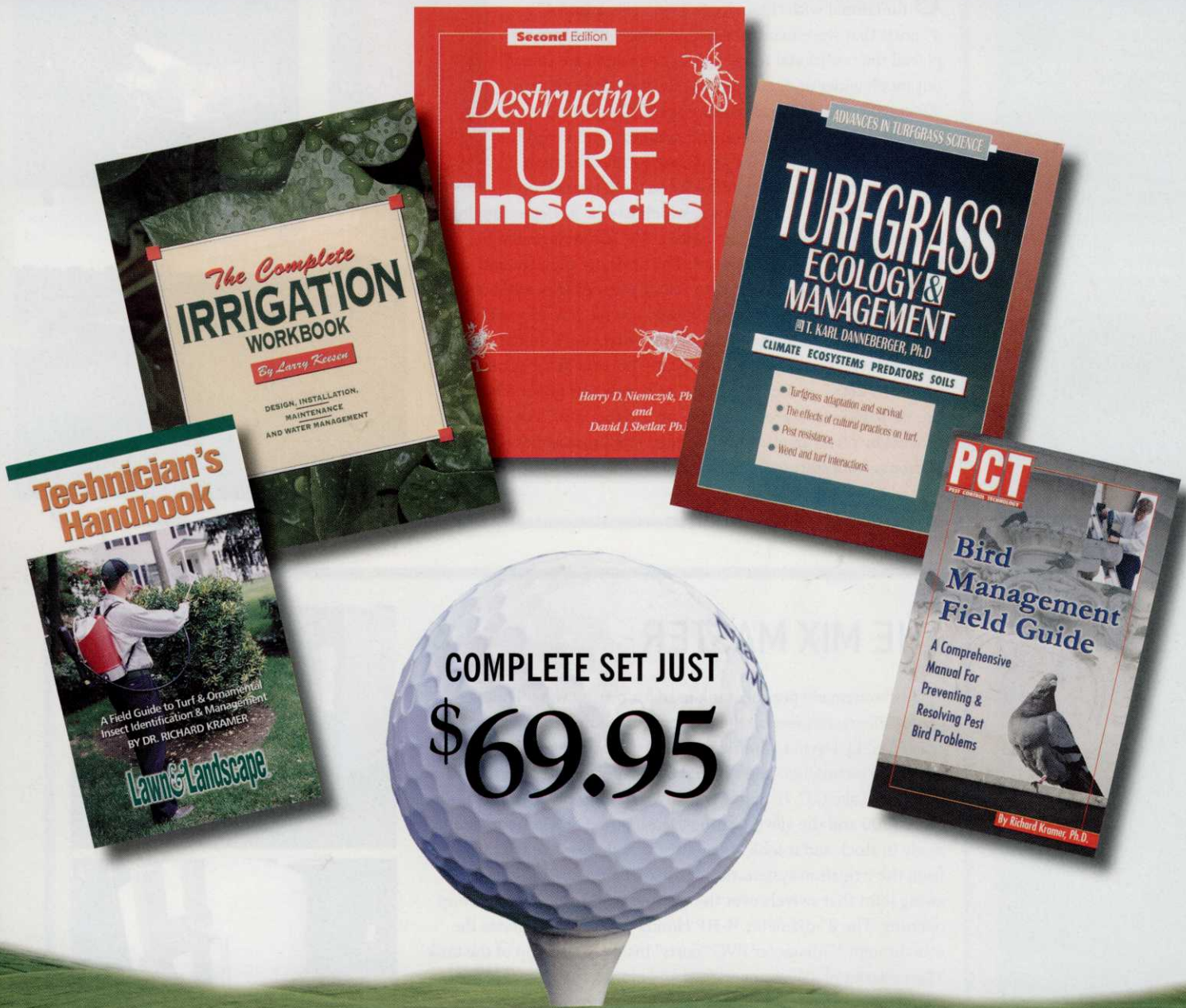
bers, daily fee guests and even local and national golf media has been outstanding. Even Arthur Hills sent us a wonderful email thanking us for restoring the Ocean Course to its intended design pedigree and agronomic condition. Courses and clubs that have been hesitant to transition to faster, firmer conditions might find the rewards greatly outweigh the risks. **GCI**

Dan Miller is director of golf course maintenance at Half Moon Bay Golf Links.

The primary agronomic objective of the project was to create decidedly firmer and faster fairways.



GOLF COURSE[®] INDUSTRY TECH LIBRARY SALE!



COMPLETE SET JUST
\$69.95

ORDER TODAY!

Call 800.456.0707 or visit www.golfcourseindustry.com/store



Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, is president of Golf Agronomy International. He's a 41-year, life member of the GCSAA. He can be reached at 757-561-7777 or terrybuchen@earthlink.net.

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.

CART CONTROL

Golf cart traffic control has been made a lot more functional with these decorative, customized 4" x 4" posts that were manufactured in-house. This idea replaced the traditional ropes and stakes, which are spread out much wider and they provide the same cart control affect with impressive aesthetic appeal. Greg Goecker, 1st assistant; Chris Hedberg, 2nd assistant; and David J. Soltvedt, CGCS, of The Ridge at Castle Pines North in Castle Rock, Colo., managed by Troon Golf, teamed up to design the 4" x 4" x 12" posts, which have a 30-degree angle cut on each side's top portion, with a 3/8"-diameter rebar for holding it vertically into the turf. The posts are then stained and sealed with a wood preservative, which ensures they will hold-up extremely well to irrigation cycles and last for several years. The Brand-First Branding Iron (www.brand-first.com), which puts the club's customized logo onto the top portion of the posts, is a Model BF200-L that costs \$300. The wood costs about \$80 and the stain and wood preservatives cost another \$80. The initial process involved an efficient assembly line process that took about 40 hours from start to finish.



THE MIX MASTER

This homemade pre-mix tank used for mixing water soluble fertilizers, to speedup the mixing and loading process, was conceived by David L. Smith, superintendent; built by James Lee, irrigation technician; and assisted by Alan Brissette, foreman, at the Fawn Lake C.C. in Spotsylvania, Va. The used 500-gallon tank costs \$300 and the valves, fittings, trash pump and lumber were already in stock and it took about one day to build. The tank is filled from the irrigation system through a 2"-diameter PVC irrigation swing joint that swivels over the top of the 500-gallon tank fill-up opening. The 2"-diameter, 4-HP Honda trash pump agitates the mix through 1"-diameter PVC "ports" inside and on top of the tank. Then a series of valves are opened and closed as it transfers the chemical to the sprayer fill-opening through the same swing arm. Another unique feature is that quick-connect couplers are hooked-up to the hoses and pipes so the trash pump can be easily removed to be used on the course. **GCI**



Let us help you get the WORD OUT.

Golf Course Industry provides a cost-effective, high impact way to promote your company's products and services.

Our professionally designed article reprints can be used as direct mail pieces, sales literature, training aids or trade show handouts.

For even more targeted marketing, add your customized advertising message, logo, mission statement or other valuable company information.

ARTICLE REPRINT SERVICE
800-456-0707 to learn more.

GOLF COURSE
INDUSTRY.

FOR SALE

Discount Small Engines & Parts

Small engines & parts from Briggs & Stratton, Kohler, Tecumseh, Robin and more.
www.smallenginesuppliers.com

Also, look up your own parts and buy online at
www.smallenginepartsuppliers.com

Winter Problems? Get the IMPERMEABLE barrier!



Minimizes temperature fluctuations • Protects from ice damage, crown hydration and desiccation
Lightweight and durable for years of easy installation & storage.
GreenJacket.com/gci 888-786-2683

Golf Course Industry PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD TODAY

Call Bonnie Velikonya at 800-456-0707 or email her at bvelikonya@gie.net.

FOR SALE

How to Outsmart Mother Nature...

Use EVERGREEN™ The Turf Blanket the World Relies On

- Earlier spring green-up
- Faster seed germination
- Deeper root development
- Delays dormancy in fall
- Ideal winter blanket
- Best for quick turf repairs
- Available in any size
- 3 or 7 year warranty covers

For details call 1-800-387-5808 today!

covermaster.com
E-MAIL: info@covermaster.com

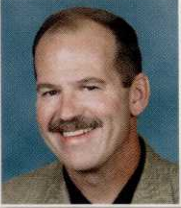
COVERMASTER™
COVERMASTER™
COVERMASTER™
MASTERS IN THE ART OF SPORTS SURFACE COVERS

COVERMASTER INC., TEL 416-745-1811 FAX 416-742-6837

AD INDEX

COMPANY	WEBSITE	PAGE	RS	COMPANY	WEBSITE	PAGE	RS
BASF	www.betterturf.basf.us	15	17	New England Grows	www.newenglandgrows.org	32	26
Bioverse	www.bioverse.com	30	23	Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association	www.onla.org	17	18
Champion Turf	www.championturffarms.com	12-13*	15*	PBI/Gordon	www.pbigordon.com	9, 34	14, 28
Clivus Multrum	www.clivusmultrum.com	21	20	Quali-Pro	www.quali-pro.com	47	31
First Products	www.1stproducts.com	21	21	STEC	www.stecequipment.com	8	13
Hustler Turf Equipment	www.hustlerturf.com	33	27	Stens	www.stens.com	31	25
Irrigation Consulting	www.irrigationconsulting.com	45	24	Syngenta Professional Products	www.syngentaprofessionalproducts.com	5	11
Jacobsen	www.jacobsengolf.com	51	29	Tee-2-Green	www.tee-2-green.com	52	30
John Deere Golf	www.deere.com	2-3	10	WeatherBug	www.weatherbug.com	20	19
JRM	www.jrmonline.com	22	22				
Kalo	www.kalo.com	12-13*	16*				
Liquid Fence Co., The	www.liquidfence.com	7	12				

*denotes regional advertising



Pat Jones is editorial director and publisher of Golf Course Industry. He can be reached at pjones@gie.net or 330-523-5384.

CAROLINA ON MY MIND

People often marvel about how much I travel for business. I probably hear “I bet you get to travel a lot with your job” almost as often as “Do you know you look like Bill Cowher?”

(Column Interruption: I got a short break from hearing the Cowher thing recently. Last month, to inspire the hapless little-league football team I coach, I bet them that I'd shave my mustache off if they won a game. The little ragamuffins promptly pulled together and stomped a rival team for their only win. So off came the 'stache that I'd worn for pretty much my entire adult life. Not only did I not look like Bill Cowher, I looked like an alien. My lip weasel has since returned.)

Anyway, the outward glamour of business travel disguises the grind of standing in airport security lines, eating cruddy food, dealing with rental car morons and never knowing what to expect when you check into a hotel.

(Column Interruption: My all-time favorite hotel horror story occurred when I checked into a Marriott in Miami a few years ago. I noticed the carpet in part of my room was soaking wet and the place smelled like cleaning solvent. I looked behind a curtain and there was an ominous red substance splattered on the wall. Turns out some guy had blown his brains out in the room the night before and the Marriott guest suicide clean-up crew had not exactly done a thorough job.)

Yet, despite my whining, I cannot deny that I get to go some nice places as part of this job. Nor can I deny that Pinehurst is one of my favorites.

There is an aura about the entire Pinehurst experience that is hard to describe. The Carolina Hotel – one of the grandest old places in golf – drips with history and ambience. The people are fabulously friendly and interesting. It's like they jam an IV drip of Southern hospitality in your arm the moment you walk in the door.

But, there's far more to Pinehurst than fantastic golf and idiosyncratic antebellum charm. Look underneath the gorgeous veneer and you'll find a steely modern business model that should be the envy of everyone in golf.

I was reminded of that when I interviewed Bob Farren, Pinehurst's director of grounds and golf course management, for this month's Q&A (page 18). I've known Bob for 20 years but I think this was the first extended conversation I've had with him. Over the years, whenever I've talked with someone from Pinehurst's management team – from Bob Dedman Sr.

hurst gets branding better than just about anyone else. Everything they do supports the brand: Quiet, casual yet elegant, historic but fun. Changing the look and playability of No. 2 is not a renovation or restoration... it's a rebranding of the entire facility. The bottom line is that after redoing No. 4, building No. 8 and playing around elsewhere, the place was in danger of becoming homogeneous. Why would you want eight courses that were kind of all the same?

As ROI-focused as they are, this was a “gut” decision. Neither Mr. Dedman or his father ever shied away from tak-

“There is an aura about the entire Pinehurst experience that is hard to describe.”

and Jr. to Brad Kocher to Paul Jett to Bob Farren – I was blown away at how smart and focused they are.

(Column Interruption: No, I did not ask Bob Farren about Paul Jett's departure. Nor did I ask Paul. None of my damned business, thank you very much.)

Here's what I was reminded of about Pinehurst's philosophy in my conversation with Bob:

They measure the right things. Beneath the casual Southern gentility beats the heart of a ruthless Yankee accountant. They know to the penny their revenue and profit per guest and what their maintenance cost per round and per hole is on each course. As Bob pointed out, return on investment and economic sustainability should be the primary metric used in deciding how every dollar is spent.

They understand branding – not just marketing. As much as I love the aggressive advertising and promotion done by the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail and the Myrtle Beach folks, Pine-

ing calculated risks when their heart tells them it's the right thing to do to profitably steward Pinehurst. Personally, the decision to turn back the clock, leverage the trend toward minimalist/naturalist design and retake the attention of the golf world is nothing short of brilliant. Do you seriously believe any of their core customers will refuse to play No. 2 because it looks “messy” compared to a year ago? Can you imagine the buzz this will create in the run-up to back-to-back Mens/Womens U.S. Opens in 2014?

(Final Column Interruption: No one has ever hosted back-to-back majors before. This is borderline crazy. But, if anyone can do it, it's Bob and his team.)

As much as business travel grates on me, you will never hear me bitch about a chance to head to the Sand Hills and point my rental car toward the Village of Pinehurst where beauty, elegance and great golf blend with a savvy and sophisticated business approach everyone should study. **GCI**