

## Off The Fringe

*Continued from page 20*

phalt — a path in from the main road, and two driveways for the only two houses on the course. After three hours we call it a day. We deserve the rest just like the course. Tomorrow we'll be busy once again.

The turf management part of me is starting to feel impatient, but at the same time a wiser part of me knows that 14-hour days are again only a few short weeks away.

Friday greets the mid-Atlantic with an expected high temperature of 37 degrees. I'll have a two-thirds crew today to help with the grinding, oil changing, ball-washer painting and shop reorganizing. Luckily, there is enough of that right now to keep them all busy for an eight-hour day.

The busy work is plentiful right now, and once the weather breaks a little we can get outside and attend to the trees.

In the transition zone, we could have almost any kind of weather pattern, and we are at the mercy of whatever Mother Nature throws our way. One thing I do know is that on this particular Saturday morning, I am able to enjoy the luxury of sleeping in.

The opportunity to recharge your batteries is a rare gift for a greenkeeper. Accept that gift when you can.

---

*Black is superintendent of Twin Shields GC in Dunkirk, Md.*

## Un-Bear-Able

### CANADIAN SUPERINTENDENT BATTLES BRUINS

By James E. Guyette

**A** situation at the Sparwood GC in Sparwood, B.C., is creating a "grizzly" situation for superintendent Rod Uhll. During the spring and fall, ursine invaders make almost nightly forays onto the nine-hole course.

Weighing up to 1,000 pounds, the marauding grizzlies are particularly partial to the pins — frequently snapping them in two like toothpicks.

"They pick up the scents of everyone who grabs the flagsticks, and the bears are rubbing up against them to leave their own scents," Uhll says.

The bears make the rounds of other course features, too, targeting distance markers and anything else they can get their huge paws on.

"They dig the cups right out, and they also dig-up our irrigation heads," Uhll says. Recently, "the majority of the practice course mats were flipped over, and one of them was shredded." The mat mayhem is especially puzzling because they're made of synthetic materials.

It's hard to figure out why the



PHOTODISC

bears like the course. Insects aren't prevalent because of the rural region's rugged climate, and "we have a very stringent garbage control program" to eliminate other bear-type treats, Uhll adds.

A barking dog is no solution, as a canine could quickly become a snack. And applying typical bear repellents to the pins won't work because any product that the bears find foul is going to end-up on the hands of members lining up their putts. "I can't have my golfers getting *that* on themselves," Uhll says, noting that the bears' mischievous attraction to the links remains a vexing mystery.

Uhll seeks advice from those who've had bear problems. He can be reached at [sparwoodgolf@netscape.net](mailto:sparwoodgolf@netscape.net).

---

*Guyette is a free-lance writer from Cleveland.*

## The Major Challenge Is Back

Good news for you golf fanatics: The Major Challenge is back. If you have a hunch about which Tour players will dominate the Majors this year, here's a chance to play out that hunch and win prizes.

John Deere and *Golfdom* have again joined forces to present the second annual Major Challenge, an online fantasy golf competition for superintendents and other turfheads who want to test their luck against colleagues around the world.

The object of the contest is simple, says Mike Scaletta, advertising manager for Deere's golf/turf division. "You pick the six players you think will score best in each of the four Major tournaments and their combined stroke score is your score in the Challenge," he says. "You can change players and tinker with your team any time up to the day before each event. It's fun, and it's free."

The Major Challenge contest events are, of course, the Masters, U.S. Open,

British Open and PGA Championship. An all-expense paid trip to the John-Deere Classic to play in the Pro/Am awaits each winner of those events. The John Deere Classic will be held at the Tournament Players Club at Deere Run in September in Silvis, Ill.

You can register online now by visiting [www.majorchallenge.com/golf](http://www.majorchallenge.com/golf). Contest information, complete rules, eligibility, standings, stats and player information are also available on the site.

So log on, sign up, have fun and win.