

## Off The Fringe

# Ramsay Says Yea to Yale

BUT HIS MOVE COMES AS A SURPRISE

By Anthony Pioppi

**T**he Course at Yale has hired a superintendent and again not without raising a few eyebrows.

Scott Ramsay, the former certified superintendent at the Orchards Golf Club in South Hadley, Mass., has accepted the position. But Ramsay's move came as a surprise considering the Orchards is hosting the 2004 U.S. Women's Open. Ramsay had been at the Orchards for about 18 months.

Late last year, Yale University in New Haven, Conn., ended its national search after a two-year vacancy with the naming of acting superintendent Mike Moran to the position. Earlier this year, Moran returned to his previous post of assistant superintendent because he said he missed being on the golf course. Union rules forbid the superintendent from working on the layout.

Ramsay was one of the finalists in the previous search and was contacted by Yale director of golf Peter Polaski when Moran stepped down.

According to Ramsay, the school came to him with a tantalizing offer.

"They just made it a dream come true," he said.

Ramsay's first day coincided with a university-wide strike by Yale employees, including course workers. He had a four-hour briefing from Moran on his first day before the walkout.

"He said, 'There's your phone. That's your desk. Good luck, sucker. You are on your own,'" Ramsay said, chuckling.

During the three-week strike, nonunion members staffed the golf course.

It is the union situation at the school and golf course that kept many superintendents from applying for the Yale position.

Strict union rules forbid the superintendent from operating machinery other than for demonstration or teaching purposes. Also, the superintendent cannot hire his own staff. The school through the athletic department does the hiring.

Ramsay said three factors led him to take the job: the school offered a

good salary package, upped the maintenance budget and decided to out-source some work.

Since Ramsay's arrival in early September, the course has been aerified, seeded and fertilized by outside companies which complemented a talented and hardworking staff, he said.

"The university has made a huge investment in the golf course," Ramsay said. "A rising tide raises all boats, and this is one tide I intend to ride."

According to Ramsay, he left the Orchards on good terms. Arnold Palmer Golf Management, which runs the course, named Matt Manzi to fill the void.

"The last line of my letter of resignation said I'd be happy to volunteer for the Open," Ramsay said.

According to Tim Moraghan, USGA championship agronomist, the Orchards will be ready for the Women's Open next July. He also said Ramsay's move did not come as a shock.

"After all these years, I'm not surprised by anything," Moraghan said.



## Quotable

**"I used to go to all the superintendent meetings, and I'd look around the room and say, 'Look at all of these old guys.' I went to a meeting not long ago and I said, 'Look at all of these young guys.'"**

— Tom Alex, superintendent of Grand Cypress Golf Club in Orlando, on getting older. Alex celebrated 20 years at Grand Cypress earlier this year

**"As soon as you put 'golf' in front of anything, you can immediately double the price."**

— Craig Cassaday, turf equipment manager for Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pa., remarking on the disparity of pricing for shop tools that are nothing more than modified automotive tools.

**"Trees are wonderful. Where else would we get furniture?"**

— Dave Oatis, director of the USGA Green Section's Northeast Region