

GCSAA Full Steam Ahead in Promoting PDI

By Thomas Skernivitz

Thirty months after being ratified, the Professional Development Initiative (PDI) is still an evolving issue between the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and its members.

Steve Mona, the CEO of the GCSAA, updated a few hundred of his constituents on the topic in December at the annual meeting of the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation in Columbus.

Foremost, Mona said the intent of the PDI is not to disenfranchise superintendent members. However, the GCSAA will not hold back in its promotion of the initiative, which requires certain competencies of a superintendent in order to attain or maintain class A status.

"We have people that we know will choose not to do class A for whatever reason, and that's their choice. They will still be a member and still have all the rights and privileges, with this exception," Mona said. "What we're going to say is (that) the GCSAA member is better than a nonmember. We're not going to really put it that way, but we are going to promote GCSAA membership as being valuable to your superintendent at your facility."

The promotional efforts will be directed at three groups: employers of superintendents; influential golfers or non-employers who have some influence at a club; and avid golfers, those who play more than 25 rounds per year.

Identifying those groups is essential, Mona said. And accomplishing that is possible only with the help of GCSAA members. "We have to know who they are. We have to know their addresses," Mona said. "We're asking our members to help us with that because we're not going to communicate with their employees or their influencers or their avid golfers unless they give us permission."

Once granted that "permission," the

GCSAA will emphasize that the efforts of the superintendent benefit the economic success of the facility and the enjoyment of the game.

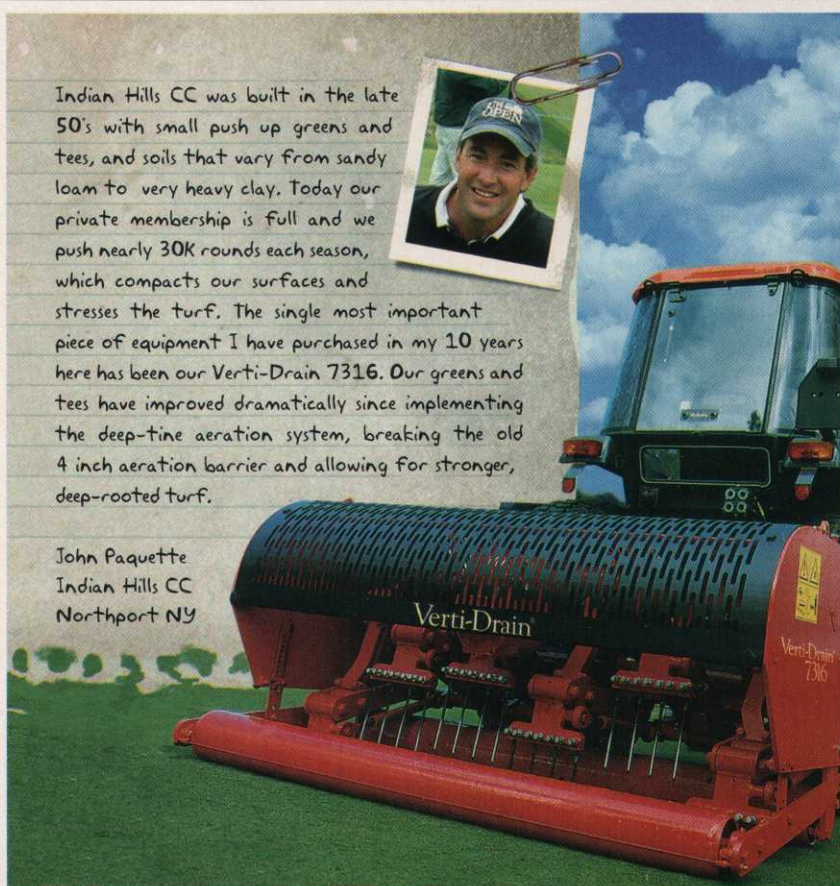
"At the end of the day what we hope to have are our members feeling like there is benefit and value in becoming a

class A member and keeping that class A," Mona said. "And then we as an association proving that by communicating effectively to employers, and employers starting to actually ask for GCSAA class A members."

The PDI took effect July 1, 2003.

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