

Being *Golfdom's* 10th year of publishing, I decided to take a trip down memory fairway to revisit some of the people, places and things I've written about in this space.

My golf game was the topic for one of the first columns I wrote for the magazine in 1999. It was titled, "What Will You Do to Bring Back the Hacks?"

While the column was about my game, it was also about a lot of people's lousy games. And my aim in the column was to stress that the golf industry needs us hacks to create more rounds in a flat market. Problem is, while we love the game, we sometimes tend to hide our clubs and rebuff the game rather than play. Alas, the challenge for golf owners and operators is to make us feel welcome at their golf courses because they need duffers like me.

It was one of the few times I've written about myself in this space. Often, I like to reserve it for you.

In August 2006, I wrote about Bruce Williams, who was glad to get back to his stressful job as certified superintendent of the Los Angeles Country Club after undergoing a seven-way heart bypass operation (yes, seven) a year before. When I heard Williams had the bypass, I figured the stress of this pressure-packed profession had caught up to him. But, boy, was I wrong. In fact, Williams says he felt more relaxed to get back to work than he felt during the six weeks — the minimum time required by his doctor — he took off to rest after the surgery.

"It was a lot more relaxing for me to be back to see my golf courses and push through the paperwork that had piled up," he said.

Williams loves to work and thrives on the stress his job brings. Nothing wrong with that.

I profiled another superintendent in this space a few months later. He was from Augusta, but not the Augusta you're thinking. Larry Guy is the superintendent of Augusta Municipal Golf Course, a city course located in a city made famous by that other course.

While Augusta Municipal doesn't flaunt flawless-looking fairways or boast perfectly manicured greens, it's *not* a golf course with an

A Trip Down Memory Fairway

BY LARRY AYLWARD



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identity problem. This Augusta knows what it is, it's proud of what it does, and its superintendent seems as passionate about what he does as any superintendent in the business. "I just love it," Guy said. "I plan to stay here until I retire."

Back to the other Augusta. I've wanted to interview its superintendent Brad Owen for years. But my requests have been dismissed several times because of Augusta's "long-standing policy to not give interviews" to the press.

I wrote a column about this in July 2003. I pleaded with Augusta's communications director that all I wanted to do was talk turfgrass maintenance with Owen. I wanted to ask him about what it's like to tend turf at such a revered track. I wanted him to wax about his agronomic challenges on the course. I wanted our readers to learn from his responses. We're a business magazine, for cryin' out loud, not *The National Enquirer!* But, still, I wasn't allowed to talk to Owen. What a crock.

One of the classiest guys I wrote about in this space was Danny Quast, back in May 2004. Quast, who spent 12 years at the Medinah Country Club, received the GCSAA's 2004 Distinguished Service Award. During his three-minute acceptance speech for the award, Quast didn't talk about the 12 years he spent at one of the nation's great courses. He talked about his mom, Hazel, who had died weeks before. "She was the most influential person in my life," Quast said.

He said his mother lived a noble life without much recognition. So Quast made his time in the spotlight his mother's time. His action said a lot about how he was raised.

I hope there are more Danny Quasts to write about in the next 10 years. It has been my pleasure.

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