

> You've heard all the clichés about how time goes so fast. They might be trite, but they're true.

It's hard to believe that *Golfdom* is in its 10th year of publishing. It just seems like the other day we were putting to bed our first issue.

But enough talk about the clock ticking and the gray hairs popping. Our purpose here is to provide you with a quick and enjoyable walk down Memory Lane to revisit the people we've met, the places we've been and the points we've made since January 1999. We want to provide you with a synopsis of where we've been and why we went there.

Part one, which begins this page, highlights the people who have adorned *Golfdom's* covers. We figure this is apropos, considering you're the reason for our existence. Everybody has a story, and I know the people we've put on our cover over the years have had great stories to tell. Part one also features the best "Quotables" of the past decade. This "they-said-it" section has been popular with our readers.

Part two, coming in April, revisits some of the big stories we've covered over the years. Some of these stories, even though they were written several years ago, are still pertinent today. And some are completely outdated.

We hope you enjoy reminiscing with us. Then, it's time to move on. There's another 10 years on the horizon.

—Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

It's About You

BY LARRY AYLWARD AND DAVID FRABOTTA

We're firm believers that the audience makes the magazine. It's not about us; it's about you.

That's why we promote *Golfdom* as the magazine for golf course superintendents. Hence, we like to feature superintendents and their hard-working faces on our covers as often as we can.

We've had all sorts of superintendents on our covers since 1999 — from big-named courses called Winged Foot to little-named tracks called Angushire Golf Course.

Our aim is to give every type of superintendent his or her due, regardless of the name of the course where he or she works or the size of that course's maintenance budget. We also feel that superintendents, no matter from where they hail, enjoy reading about each other and learning from one another.

I know superintendents enjoyed reading about "Rusty" Tisdale, the superintendent of Cobb's Glen Country Club in Anderson, S.C., when we featured him on our cover in March 2003 for a story on superintendents who like to get down and dirty on the job. Tisdale exemplifies the superintendent who likes to dig ditches, mow greens, spray pesticides, whack weeds, grind reels — and loves it. He was the perfect choice for this cover.

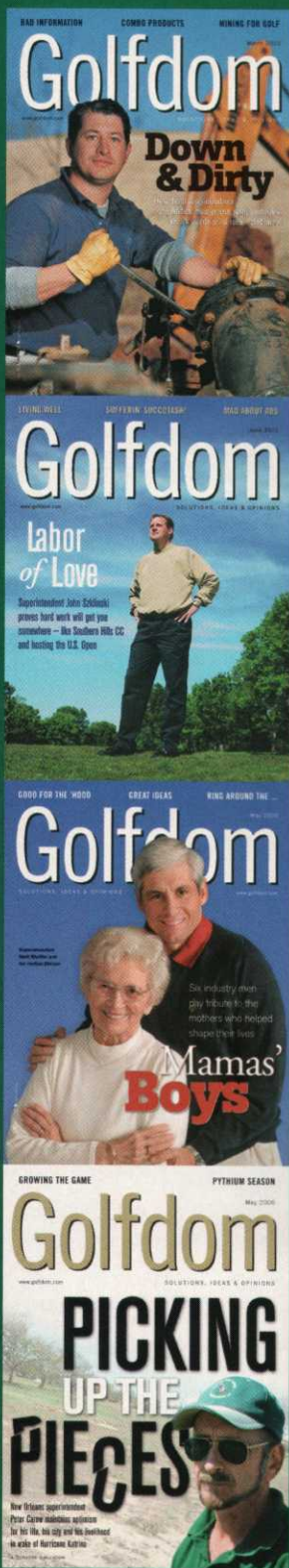
In the story we reported that these rugged superintendents like to get down and dirty because their job

descriptions call for it. Their courses don't sport big maintenance budgets, and their crews don't feature a slew of workers. But make no mistake: They are the type who feel it's their duty to work side by side with their crew members in 2 feet of muck.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, we've featured several superintendents from high-end clubs, such as John Szklinski of Southern Hills Country Club, who was on our cover in June 2001 as part of our U.S. Open preview. Szklinski, who's now the superintendent of the Charlotte (N.C.) Country Club, addressed his intense work ethic in the story titled "Labor of Love." Interestingly, Szklinski, even though he was at a high-end club with a big maintenance budget, said in the story that he likes to get down and dirty. "I look for opportunities to get in the trenches," he said. "I'm the muddiest guy on some days."

A cover for which we received tremendous feedback featured Matt Shaffer, superintendent of Merion Golf Club, cuddling next to his mother, Miriam, for a story on six golf industry men paying tribute to the mothers who helped shape their lives. The headline of the story was "Mamas' Boys," and it ran in May 2005. These "boys" talked openly about the people — their mothers in this instance — who greatly influenced so many facets of their lives. For instance, Shaffer said his mother provided him with a "life form" to live by.

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From top: Rusty Tisdale, John Szklinski, Matt Shaffer and his mother Miriam, and Peter Carew.

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Shaffer grew up in Martinsburg, Pa., population 2,500. There was nothing fancy about his upbringing. His mother, however, placed a major focus on living by the golden rule. "Treat people like you want to be treated," Shaffer said.

While Shaffer and his mother appeared on that cover with beaming smiles, superintendent Peter Carew wore a more forlorn look when he appeared on our May 2006 cover. His morose was understandable. Carew, superintendent of two municipal golf courses in New Orleans, was featured in the story "Picking Up the Pieces," which detailed how he maintained optimism for his life, his city and his livelihood in the wake of the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina.

The story reported how Carew did something that was nothing short of amazing. On Dec. 1, 2005, about three months after Katrina struck, he reopened the Brechtel Memorial Park Municipal Golf Course for play. The putting greens were dirt, but the people didn't care. Golfers came to play Brechtel to forget about their troubled lives, even if just for a few hours.

"People were coming up and thanking me and shaking my hand," Carew said. "And I had never seen a golf course that looked so bad."

> New Orleans superintendent Peter Carew wore a forlorn look when he appeared on our May 2006 cover.

Carew has worked hard to get that course back up to snuff. We've chronicled his efforts in a few stories.

Golfdom has also celebrated the success of women in this industry by featuring female superintendents on

our covers. In November/December 1999, Lynn Richert, superintendent of Angushire Golf Course in St. Cloud, Minn., appeared on our cover sans makeup and dressed in jeans and work boots. The headline for the story was "R-E-S-P-E-C-T!"

Incredibly, we had a few comments from male superintendents who said Richert, because of how she appeared, didn't represent the profession very well. I guess we should have had a make-up artist at the photo shoot.

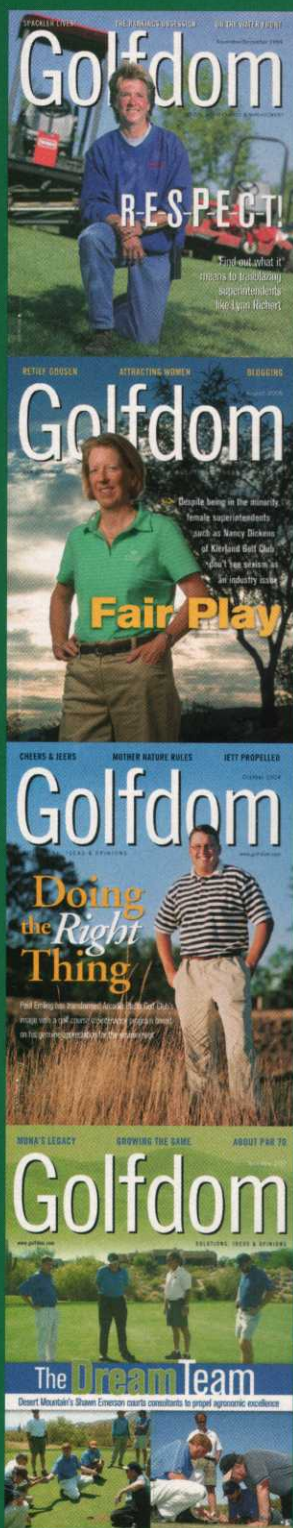
In August 2006, we featured another woman superintendent on the cover — Nancy Dickens of Kierland Golf Club in Scottsdale, Ariz. — and examined the issue of sexism among female superintendents. Thankfully, we learned that women — who comprise a small percentage of superintendents — don't feel looked down upon by their male counterparts. "If young girls were to call me, I'd tell them it's the greatest job around," Dickens said.

We get the feeling that most superintendents who've appeared on our cover feel that way about the profession. That would include Paul Emling, superintendent of Arcadia Bluffs Golf Club in Arcadia, Mich., who appeared on our October 2004 cover. But Emling had to go through hell before he could get to heaven. A lot of people would have left the profession after going through what he had to go through. Emling wouldn't wish what happened to him at Arcadia Bluffs on his worst enemy.

On Sept. 26, 1998, Emling was six months into his job at Arcadia Bluffs and growing in the course when a 100-year rainstorm caused thousands of tons of soil to erode from the tall bluff bordering the course into Lake Michigan.

The soil created a delta in the shimmering, blue water and formed an ugly, brown plume extending well beyond the shoreline. Environmentalists viewed the accident as an environmental catastrophe

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From top: Lynn Richert, Nancy Dickens, Paul Emling and the Dream Team, including Shawn Emerson.

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and sounded off on anybody having to do anything with Arcadia Bluffs.

Emling wondered what impact the calamity would have on his young career. The golf industry in Michigan had endured an environmental black eye, and Emling was labeled “guilty” by

> GCSAA CEO Steve Mona
was one of the most
approachable executives a
media person could ever meet.

association. Other area superintendents told Emling to quit the job.

“I was devastated,” Emling said.

But Emling remained at Arcadia Bluffs and through his environmental prowess has helped the club heal its neglect-for-natural-resources image by implementing an aggressive and impressive golf course maintenance program with an emphasis on environmental awareness and integrated pest management.

And getting back to the original point: Emling loves what he does.

It’s not often that we put a group of people on the cover. But we did so when we featured Shawn Emerson, director of agronomy at Desert Mountain Golf Club, on our November 2007 cover. The story was headlined “The Dream Team” and also featured three guys who have helped make Emerson’s job easier — Drs. James Beard, Fred Yelverton and Rick Brandenburg.

The story tells how Emerson has surrounded himself with the most prolific turf team he can find, that would be Beard, Yelverton and Brandenburg, who converge on Desert Mountain several times each year to iron out turf troubles at the Carefree, Ariz., facility. It’s a Dream Team of turfgrass consultants. Beard is a celebrated author

and researcher who barely needs introduction in turf circles, and Yelverton (weed science) and Brandenburg (entomology) are noted professors at North Carolina State University. Together with the 180-strong golf course crew at the upscale property, they keep Desert Mountain’s six Jack Nicklaus-designed golf courses conditioned as well as any cluster of courses in the country.

Why would Emerson, who has grown as much turfgrass as any superintendent in the country between his almost 70 overseeding projects and subsequent transitions back to bermudagrass, feel the need to assemble some of the most resourceful turfgrass personalities on the planet?

“Success is fleeting in this business,” he said. “That’s why I wanted my own turf council to keep an eye on me. We don’t always make good decisions, but a mistake doesn’t become an error unless you refuse to change it.”

While we have featured many superintendents on our cover, we have not excluded other golf industry people from that space.

Outgoing GCSAA CEO Steve Mona adorned our cover in January 2003 next to the headline, “Mona in the Middle.” The story detailed how Mona was facing an array of new challenges, from dealing with declining revenues to possibly moving the association to a new city.

For the record, Mona, who has a journalism degree, was one of the most approachable executives a media person could ever meet in the nearly 10 years we covered him. He never offered a “no comment,” and was always available to speak to reporters.

We’ve featured a few golf course architects on our cover over the years. One of our favorites is that of Bruce Matthews, a Michigan architect, who was photographed for our March 2001 cover while fly fishing in the trout-laden Maple River on the property of one of his designs.

The story was titled “A Hidden River Runs Through It.” The story tells

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From top: Steve Mona, Bruce Matthews, Arnold Palmer and Ed Seay and Jerry Palmer

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why Matthews purposely designed the course, which opened in 1998, with the river obscured from golfers' views.

In 1996, Matthews, co-president of East Lansing, Mich.-based Matthews & Nelhiebel, was asked by Roger Wilson, a Detroit entrepreneur, and his business partner, Darin Philport, to design an upscale golf course on 240 acres of untouched land in Brutus, Mich. They wanted the Maple River to play strategic and aesthetic roles on the course. They also planned to build bridges over the river at several junctions along the course. But when Matthews heard their plans, he cringed.

The locals were livid when they

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learned of the plan to build a golf course near the river. About 400 citizens signed a petition to prevent the course from being built.

"I knew it was going to be an environmentally touchy situation," Matthews said. "I'm a native of Michigan, and I've done a lot of work in the state. I know the natural resource rules and constraints of golf course development."

Matthews explained to Wilson and Philport why they shouldn't incorporate the river into their building plans. "I told them that we didn't want to cross the river with golf balls," he said. Wilson and Philport listened intently. "We were uneducated on golf course design and how it affects natural resources," Philport said. "Bruce quickly educated us on what's good, what's not good and what's risky."

In the end, they called Matthews' creation the Hidden River Golf & Casting Club. How appropriate.

We also featured a general manager on the cover in June 2005. That would

Columnist **Geoff Shackelford** looks back on 10 years of writing for *Golfdom*. He also takes a look forward. See page 22. Next month, Larry Aylward and Joel Jackson reflect on a decade of *Golfdom*.

be Jerry Palmer of Latrobe Country Club, which is owned by his brother Arnold. By the way, the headline of that other story read, "The Other Palmer."

If there's the slightest concern about being typecast as the brother of Arnold Palmer or the son of the superintendent who had taught Arnold how to play golf, Jerry didn't let on in this story about him. "I guess if I had a life's ambition, it was to work for Arnold," he said. "And that's where I am."

Arnold bought the course in 1971 as a gift to his father, Deacon, the club's longtime pro and superintendent. Jerry, who wound up succeeding their dad as superintendent, was promoted by his brother to general manager in 1989.

"We're a small-town club that just happens to be owned and operated by a big-time guy," Jerry said.

Speaking of that big-time guy, *Golfdom* also featured Arnold Palmer, along with the late Ed Seay, on its March 1999 cover for a story that detailed their roles in Palmer Course Design.

In the story the two gentlemen were asked, what makes a good golf course? Seay responded: "I think Arnold said it best. Somebody once asked him what makes a good golf course and his answer was, 'Because it is one.' I think it's one of the greatest things he has ever said about golf courses. He has an even better quote about golf. Boss, what were you saying about golf?"

Said Palmer, "Golf is a deceptively simple and endlessly complicated game."

Interestingly, Palmer's line seems an appropriate mantra for what superintendents do to keep the simple yet complicated golf course world spinning. Here's to another 10 years of your hard-working faces adorning *Golfdom* magazine. ■