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Real-Life Solutions

■ BARONA CREEK GC, LAKESIDE, CALIF.

Bermuda On Target

Superintendent praises Bull's-Eye for surviving an extreme, unforeseen water shortage

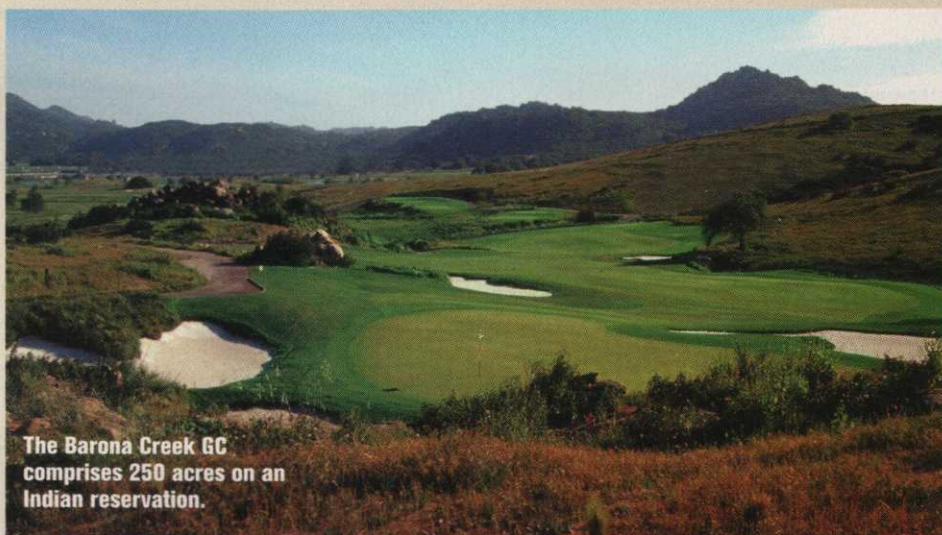
Open since last January, Barona Creek GC is a 250-acre course nestled among the rolling terrain, natural rock ledges and hundreds of oak trees on the Barona Indian Reservation in Lakeside, Calif. Since the club shares its water supply with the tribal community and a casino — both of which get first priority — a conservation-minded design plus a tight water budget were planned to keep the championship course within a safe yield of the aquifer. But no one foresaw the kind of water shortage that would occur during construction, leaving acres of newly installed sod high and dry.

Problem

Restriction in irrigation pipelines caused a severe water shortage during Barona Creek GC's construction and threatened to damage new sod.

Solution

A drought-tolerant bermudagrass that also withstands heavy foot traffic and poor water quality.



The Barona Creek GC comprises 250 acres on an Indian reservation.

The problem

The water shortage began during construction in the spring of 2000. Installation crews had already finished several large lakes, small ponds, recirculating artificial creeks and 12 holes of sod when they realized the water lines were becoming restricted. The distribution network, some of which included 40-year-old piping, could not supply water to the community and casino, fill the needed 31 million gallons of water features and irrigate the newly laid sod all at the same time.

"No one anticipated this amount of restriction in the lines," says superintendent Sandy Clark. "As we were filling the lakes and irrigating more and more turf, it became evident very quickly that this water distribution system was not going to work."

By August, the catastro-

phe hit critical mass. Clark and his team were forced to ration water to the turf — first to the more established sod and then to the newer, more vulnerable areas. The sod received about 50 percent of the water it was supposed to receive during 60 hot days in September and October.

The solution

Aside from postponing the course's opening from October to January for renovation to the pipelines, Clark says the solution to his water shortage was the improved bermudagrass specified for the course.

"If you're constructing a new golf course, it all comes back to the superintendent working with the architect to make sure the grasses are specified to fit the area," Clark says.

Clark and designer Todd Eckenrode, then with Gary

Roger Baird Design International, knew the course called for drought-tolerant grasses that also perform well and look beautiful. While they chose an old standby for the fairways, Tifway 419, they selected a new bermuda called Bull's-Eye for the roughs. Introduced in 1999 by West Coast Turf, Bull's-Eye bermuda comes highly ranked in quality studies conducted by the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program. It ranks well in its tolerance of drought, heat, heavy foot traffic and poor water quality, including effluent water. "We put Bull's-Eye through stresses that I would never recommend any superintendent consider," Clark says.

Along with its high-stress tolerance, Bull's-Eye is valued for its look, which includes a course texture and a deeper blue-green color.

"Bull's-Eye really creates a

nice contrast between the roughs and fairways, which is what we were going for," Clark notes.

Bull's-Eye also has a compact growth habit, featuring tightly packed leaves near the soil's surface. The ball doesn't sink down in it for good playability, Clark says.

Outcome

"After an initial shock response of going a little off color, Bull's-Eye recovered," Clark says. "We've seen recovery virtually every place." Clark says he was also happy with the turf's transition last spring.

Eckenrode, now a principal of Origins Golf Design, says Bull's-Eye proved its



Superintendent Sandy Clark eyeballs a handful of Bull's-Eye bermudagrass.

drought tolerance.

"It's capable of handling the stress and is an excellent grass for low-water use," he says. "Sandy has been able

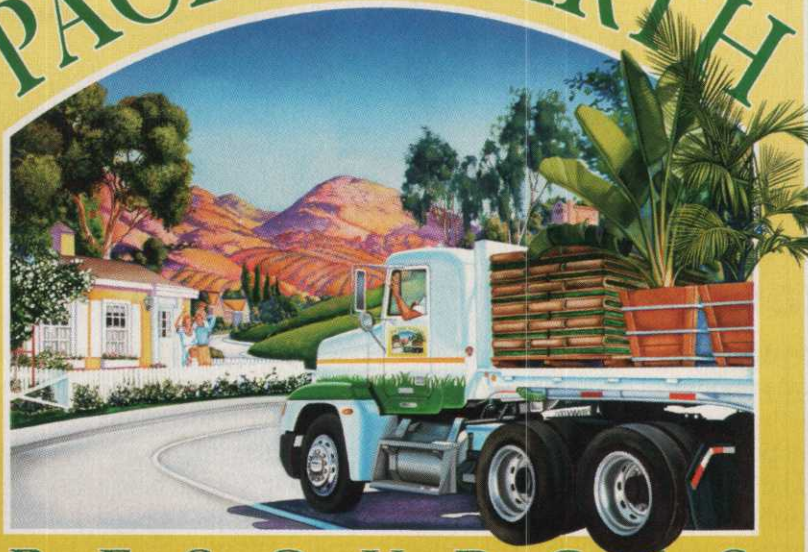
to produce a playing surface that is high in quality despite the obstacles. In addition, the course is playing fast and firm, which is a classic design trait we wanted from the beginning as it allows the strategies and many alternate routes of play to come to life."

A multi-million dollar expansion is planned for the reservation, including another casino and a resort hotel. Mindful of community concerns regarding the course's water usage, plus the possibility of another drain on the water distribution network, Clark continues strict water management. "We've got to make sure we don't take more than

our share," he says.

The design, which includes only 90 acres of sod, helps, too. Clark estimates the course will only use between 200 to 310 acre-feet of water per year, depending on rainfall. About 15 percent is currently recycled effluent from the casino's waste-treatment plant and the rest is from the reservation's wells. However, as future development on the reservation grows, Clark estimates he'll have nearly 750,000 gallons of recycled effluent water available per day for irrigating. "This will be more than enough water for our needs, and Bull's-Eye has a high-tolerance for effluent water," he says. ■

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Owner of 2000 model.

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SEPTEMBER 2001

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- 01 10 Daily Fee/Public
- 02 20 Semi-Private
- 03 30 Private
- 04 40 Resort
- 05 50 City/State/Municipal
- 06 55 Other Golf Courses (please specify) _____
- 07 60 Golf Course Architect
- 08 70 Golf Course Developer
- 09 90 Golf Course Builder
- 10 105 University/College
- 11 100 Others Allied to the Field (please specify) _____

2. Which of the following best describes your title? (fill in ONE only)

- 12 10 Golf Course Superintendent
- 13 15 Assistant Superintendent
- 14 25 Owner/Management Company Executive
- 15 30 General Manager
- 16 35 Director of Golf
- 17 70 Green Chairman
- 18 45 Club President
- 19 75 Builder/Developer
- 20 55 Architect/Engineer
- 21 60 Research Professional
- 22 65 Other Titled Personnel (please specify) _____

3. What is your facility's annual maintenance budget?

- 23 A More than \$2 Million
- 24 B \$1,000,001-\$2 Million
- 25 C \$750,001-\$1 Million
- 26 D \$500,001-\$750,000
- 27 E \$300,001-\$500,000
- 28 F \$150,001-\$300,000
- 29 G Less than \$150,000

4. If you work for a golf course, how many holes are on your course?

- 30 A 9
- 31 B 18
- 32 C 27
- 33 D 36+
- 34 E Other (please specify) _____

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102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	198	210	222	234	246	258	270	282	294	306
103	115	127	139	151	163	175	187	199	211	223	235	247	259	271	283	295	307
104	116	128	140	152	164	176	188	200	212	224	236	248	260	272	284	296	308
105	117	129	141	153	165	177	189	201	213	225	237	249	261	273	285	297	309
106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
107	119	131	143	155	167	179	191	203	215	227	239	251	263	275	287	299	311
108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
110	122	134	146	158	170	182	194	206	218	230	242	254	266	278	290	302	314
111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
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 03 30 Private
 04 40 Resort
 05 50 City/State/Municipal
 06 55 Other Golf Courses (please specify) _____
 07 60 Golf Course Architect
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108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
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112	124	136	148	160	172	184	196	208	220	232	244	256	268	280	292	304	316

The summer of 2001, with the usual manic activity of the season, has made me realize there are things vital to make my life and the lives of other turfheads easier. I'm a nonlist person, but I had to assemble this list of can't-do-without-items for you. The items are in no particular order, and brand names are not being changed to protect the brilliant.

An e-mail address – While communication is critical, it's also time consuming. Nothing can take away more time and yield nothing than using the phone. E-mail gives one the ability to communicate more effectively. It's really great for superintendents, who are known to work strange hours.

Write messages, return messages, keep in touch, speak clearly and effectively, have the ability to edit your thoughts before the temperature of the day gets to your head — all of this is improved with e-mail.

A digital camera – This item goes along nicely with the item above. I can't tell you the number of times people have called me to describe their problems with their best intentions, but they fail to create accurate pictures in my mind. Later, if I do get to see the problem, it is almost never what I expected.

Imagine being able to e-mail a picture just taken. Then all the parties involved have the true scene of the crime in their heads. A quick shot of the new bunker project sent to your architect could keep you from being in the crosshairs on his next visit to the facility. A good printer and some easy-to-use software lets you edit the photo you took and show green committee members just how bad that new planter they want on the tee will look.

A large area spreader – If anything has ever made me want to return to growing grass, these babies are it. The Ty-Crop and the Dakota spreaders have made material-handling issues a thing of the past. Spread sand, fill bunkers, spread soil amendments — and be cooler than the fire engines at the local parade with one of these units.

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A dedicated verticut unit – For years, I've been

The Things We Can't Live Without

BY DAVE WILBER



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saying that the standard triplex-mounted verticut heads are great grooming tools, but they are not good thatch-removal tools. But along came the Graden Verticutter, and now we have a powered surgical thatch-control device. Fill up three or four utility vehicles with 12 percent to 15 percent of the thatch from a 5,000-square-foot green, keep from freaking out and joining the circus for four days while things heal, and understand how you can't live without one.

A Turfnet subscription – It doesn't matter to me that a competing magazine owns Turfnet (www.turfnet.com). Peter McCormick is the brains behind this amazing subscription service which includes a monthly print newsletter. The Web site provides access to the best Internet discussion forum in golf, as well as many amazing extras. McCormick takes no prisoners with his tell-it-like-it-is writing and hosting style. If you're selling something, stay away and let the turfheads talk. They'll invite you if they need you.

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The Smart Level – If you don't know and have to ask, then you need to just go buy one of these laser-guided wonders, which for under \$300 will have you never doing anything that won't drain again. Hold it right, roll the ball and it will even double as a Stimpmeter.

I probably missed a few things to put on the list. If I did, drop me a line with your ideas. But when you're all about cool stuff, the stuff above is freezingly good.

Dave Wilber, a Sacramento, Calif.-based independent agronomist, can be reached at dave@soil.com.

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Tips

Increasing Pace of Play

Hustlin' Without Rushin'

Frank Dobie will never be accused of not looking out for his fellow superintendents. The superintendent and general manager of Sharon GC in Sharon Center, Ohio, sent us a list of ways “for golfers to increase their pace of play without rushing” so we could pass it on to you. Dobie and his crew compiled the list, which includes tips for golf course maintenance, and mailed it to members. He thinks you might want to do the same.

“I know these techniques work, and many players do not use them,” Dobie says. “Most are common sense and are things faster players do without thinking. They can help you keep your pace of play under four hours.”

Without further ado, here's Dobie's list:

1. Tell your foursome at the first tee to hit when ready. The first player that is ready should be the first to tee off and so on. If your fairway and approach shots are about the same distance from the green, the player who is ready should go first. If you insist on playing honors, then make sure you're the first person to be ready.

2. Put a ball mark repair tool and two ball markers in your pocket at the first tee.

3. Carry a spare ball in your pocket so you don't have to go back to the cart if you need to hit a provisional ball.

4. Do not start a conversation with another player if either of you are up.

5. Have an idea of what club you'll need even before you get to your ball.

6. If you're the car driver, drop off the passenger at his ball and immediately go to your ball. Do not wait for him to hit his shot before going to your ball.

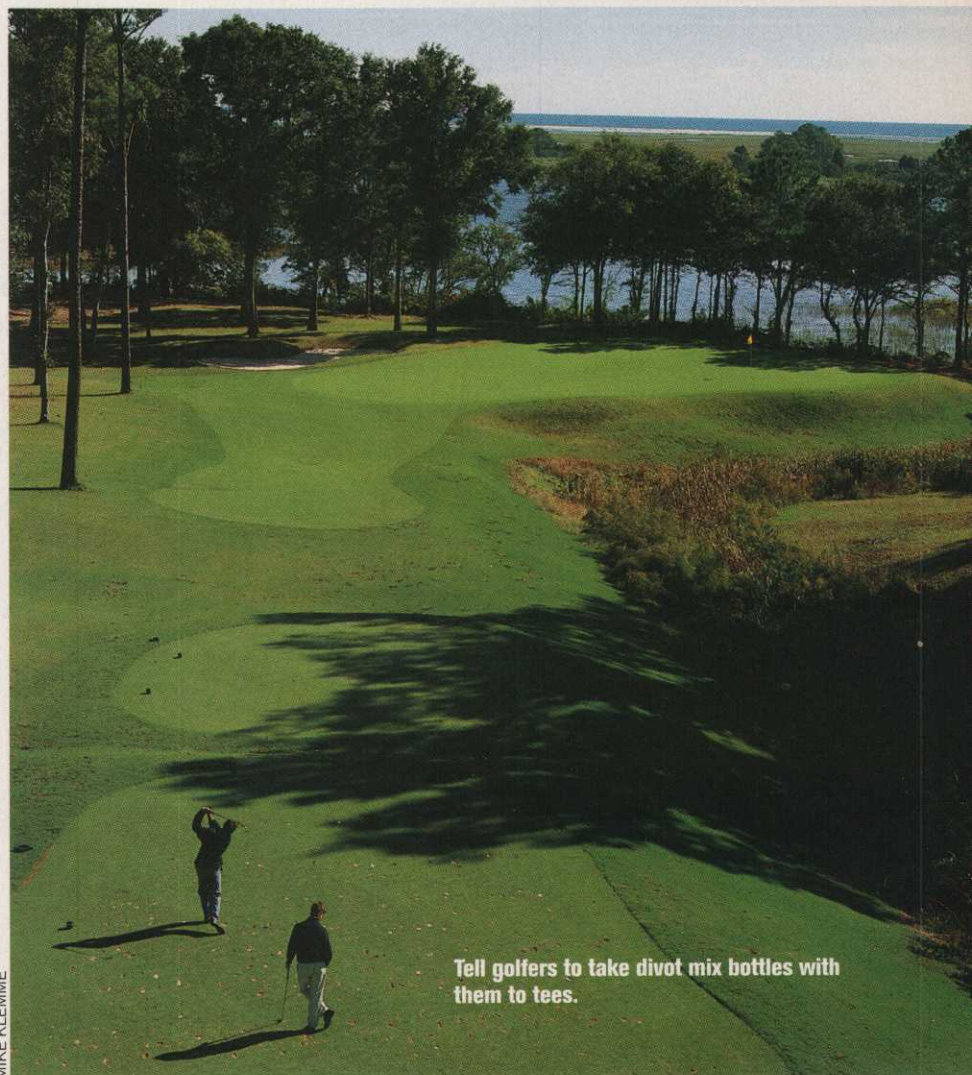
7. If you're the passenger and the car driver is “away,” take your club selection and walk to your ball. After your shot, walk to the cart or down the fairway. Do not wait for the driver to pick you up.

8. When you finish a shot and go to the car, do not put your club in the bag.

Get in the car with club in hand and wait to put it away until you hit your next shot or have to wait for another player to hit.

9. Take a divot mix bottle with you to the tee so you don't have to go back to the cart and get it after everyone has teed off. The same holds true when you're hitting a short iron that normally causes a divot. Filling divots with sand takes less time than replacing them.

Continued on page 60



Tell golfers to take divot mix bottles with them to tees.

MIKE KLEMM

Tips

Continued from page 59

- 10.** Simplify your set-up routine. It's important, but it doesn't need to be so elaborate that it's time consuming.
- 11.** Take only one practice swing. If you take multiple practice swings, do it before your turn so you can just hit the ball when it's your turn.
- 12.** If you're the passenger and are unsure of which club to hit, take several clubs and send the cart driver to his ball.
- 13.** Locate your yardage to the hole before it's your turn.
- 14.** If your next shot is a wedge or pitch shot, automatically take your putter with you and tell the driver to go on without you.
- 15.** If you're ready to putt and the person who's away is not, then putt first.
- 16.** Line up your putt before it's your turn so when it is, you're ready to putt.
- 17.** Use the continuous putting rule whenever possible.
- 18.** Fix ball marks on the green before or after it is your turn to putt.
- 19.** If you're the first one in the hole, pick up the flag pole so you can replace it after the last person has putted.
- 20.** Never record scores at the green. Do it at the next tee.
- 21.** If you have a bunker shot, take the rake with you into the bunker before your shot.
- 22.** Never place a rake near another rake in a bunker. After raking, place the rake with the head in the bunker and the handle out. This saves time for the next player.
- 23.** Park your car on the path between the green and closest distance to the next tee.
- 24.** Always be aware of the gap between you and the group ahead. There shouldn't be more than a half a hole open between you. If you fall behind, announce to your group, "We need to pick up the pace." Do not be concerned about the group behind you as long as you are keeping pace with the group ahead.
- 25.** After your round is completed, do not add up scores until you've left the green with your cart. ■

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