

boy was pronounced dead at the hospital.

At the 86-year-old country club, 30 of its 130 summer workers typically were under the age of 18. The country club's handbook had general written procedures for each position but did not include specific techniques on how required tasks should be completed. There was also no designated safety representative at the club.

Although federal law and Massachusetts state law prohibit minors from operating motorized vehicles on the job, 17-year-olds are allowed to do "incidental and occasional" driving (no more than one-third of a work day or no more than 20 percent of a work week). No criminal charges were filed in the case, but the federal occupational safety agency fined the country club \$1,000 for not reporting the death within eight hours. A civil case is pending.

The Massachusetts teen was one of 73 teens killed on the job in 2000 (a teen worker died every fifth day that year).

Although teens are barred from the most dangerous occupations, they're nearly twice more likely to be injured than adults. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a research arm of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, estimates that 200,000 of the 5.5 million adolescents with jobs are injured in the work place each year.

Teens are killed at work most often while driving or traveling as passengers in vehicles, according to NIOSH.

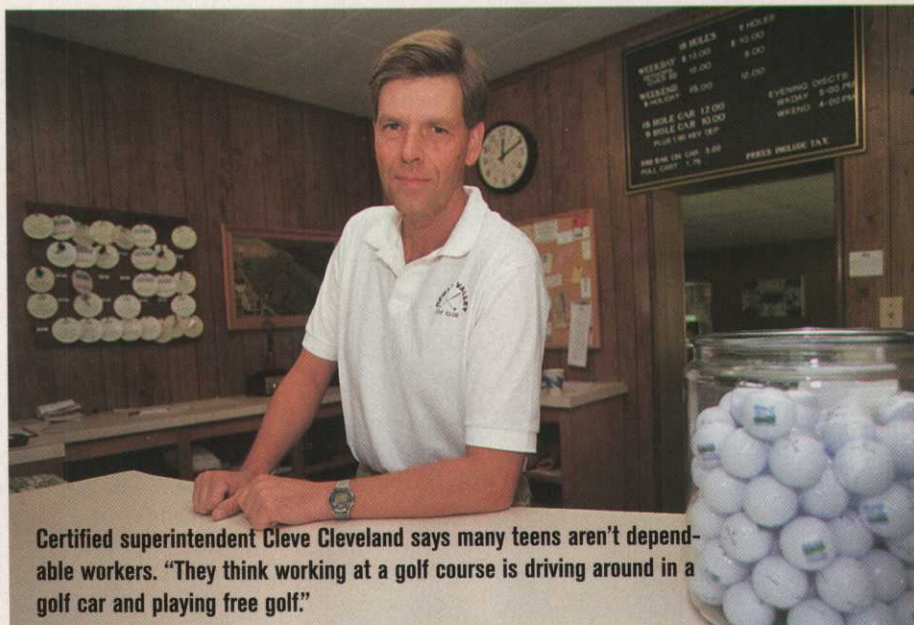
"One of the reasons I avoid hiring teens is because of the safety issues and the age requirements for riding carts," Sosik says. "You can't have someone working for you, certainly in the maintenance department, and not have them drive a vehicle. It's just a tough situation. There have been so many safety issues lately with kids and golf cars."

Most teens have been trained in how to do their jobs, but training on issues such as dealing with angry customers and avoiding injury is less common. In one study, more than half of 14- to 16-year-olds injured on the job said they had not received any training on how to prevent the injuries they sustained. A supervisor was present at the time of the injury in only about 20 percent of the cases.

Take action

Preventing injury and death is the employer's responsibility as much as (or more than) the worker's, especially with underage employees.

Federal and state laws on child work-place safety can be con-



Certified superintendent Cleve Cleveland says many teens aren't dependable workers. "They think working at a golf course is driving around in a golf car and playing free golf."

WILL WALDRON

fusing but if you hire anyone under the age of 18, it's your responsibility to understand them. Basically, adolescent workers are protected by two federal laws (the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Occupational Safety and Health Act), as well as the child labor laws in the states. (You can pick up a copy of the child labor statutes at your local state labor office.)

Many teens are injured when trying to please their bosses, according to NIOSH research. If you choose to employ teens, take these steps to protect them:

- Assess teens' tasks and revise them as needed to eliminate the potential for injury or illness. Likewise, make the work site as safe as possible.
- Evaluate the equipment adolescents operate to be sure it is legal and safe. Label the equipment young workers cannot operate.
- Train young workers to recognize hazards and to be competent in safe work practices. Training should include what to do if they get injured.
- Provide appropriate supervision of teen workers.
- Implement a mentoring or buddy system for young workers.
- Develop a safety and health program that involves workers and management. Evaluate the program each year.

Bad attitude

Although work-place injuries are the most serious problem employers must worry about when hiring teens, there is another that is far more rampant.

"Many teens have no work ethic," says Cleve Cleveland, certified superintendent of Newark Valley GC in New York.

More than just a boss' gripe, lazy and whiny teen workers are a big deal, Cleveland says. If a teen doesn't show up (because

Continued on page 92

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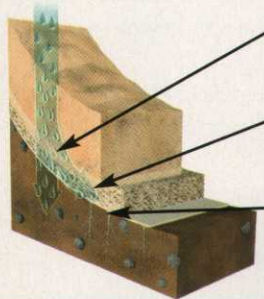
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Teens

Continued from page 91

he was up too late partying or because he'd rather go swimming), it's Cleveland who has to get the work done.

The change in attitude has been swift and significant, Cleveland says. Just 15 years ago, a teen would work every summer throughout high school and college.

“Now I never have the same one back, and I'm lucky to get the same one all summer,” he says. In fact, Cleveland typically goes through six teens each summer to keep just two positions filled. “They aren't dependable. They think working at a golf course is driving around in a golf car and playing free golf.”

Protecting Teens

If you hire teens, keep these points in mind:

- Assess teens' tasks and revise them as needed to eliminate the potential for injury or illness.
- Evaluate the equipment adolescents operate to be sure it is legal and safe.
- Train young workers to recognize hazards.
- Provide appropriate supervision.
- Implement a mentoring or buddy system.
- Develop a safety and health program that involves workers and management.

John McClaren worked at a golf course all through high school and college and loved the job. Now as superintendent of the Madison (Pa.) Club, he hires few teens because of their attitudes. “They end up costing more in the long run by not showing up or not doing things right the first time,” he says.

When superintendents hire young workers, it is typically to do odds-and-ends that would otherwise tie up the more skilled full-time crew. The problem is, most teens are less than enthusiastic about sorting for recycling, emptying garbage or trim mowing.

“They realize it's real work — manual labor — and some of them start thinking it isn't what they signed up for,” Sosik says. “Maybe they thought it was going to be leaning on a rake and then going out and playing free golf after work. It's when you ask them to actually use the rake that you have problems.”

“They realize it's real work — manual labor — and some of them start thinking it isn't what they signed up for,” Sosik says. “Maybe they thought it was going to be leaning on a rake and then going out and playing free golf after work. It's when you ask them to actually use the rake that you have problems.”

Older is better

Given the potential hazards (both injury and attitude), many employers simply steer clear of hiring teens. Instead, they opt for slightly more expensive — but much more reliable — college students.

Once a child turns 18, of course, he or she can work any job for any number of hours and in any type of job because child labor rules no longer apply. Also, college workers tend to work harder and whine less.

“They are more mature,” Sosik says. “They are starting to realize that someday they are going to have to work for a living.” ■

Mollenkamp is a free-lance writer from Des Moines, Iowa.



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Hangin' Out **WITH** Mike Hughes

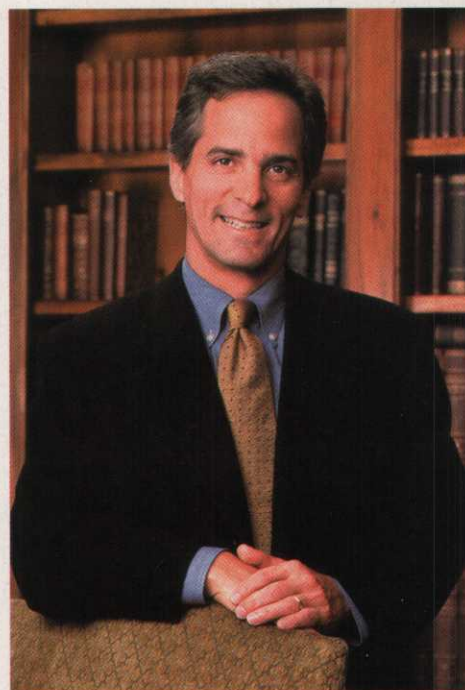
The National Golf Course Owners Association leader sat down with *Golfdom* to discuss why the number of golfers remains flat, what the uneven economy means for golf, and how the NGCOA and the GCSAA came together to merge their shows

BY FRANK H. ANDORKA JR., MANAGING EDITOR

It's never easy to pin down Mike Hughes, executive director of the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) because he's a popular leader with whom everyone wants to talk. But during the NGCOA conference and show in February, I was lucky to get a little face time with him.

As he made his way to a lunch table for an interview, coffee cup clasped tightly in his right hand, Hughes was stopped no fewer than four times from people who wanted to thank him for the job he's done at the association, bend his ear about a pet project or two, or just provide feedback on the show's educational programs. It was clear his time was in short supply with all the duties he has during the show.

When he finally reached the round lunch table, it was already populated with people taking a break from a tour of the trade show. They (naturally) spent a few minutes hobnobbing



Mike Hughes, executive director of the NGCOA, believes the merger between his organization and the GCSAA will benefit show attendees of both groups.

with Hughes. He apologized for the delay. "There's just a lot going on," Hughes said sheepishly.

And is there ever. Between the merger in 2005 between the NGCOA and GCSAA trade shows to continuing reports that the number of golfers remains distressingly flat to a struggling economy, Hughes has a lot on his plate. He took time out of his schedule to answer a few questions about these issues.

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On the merger

One of the big announcements from the GCSAA show was the impending merger in 2005 of its trade show with NGCOA's. What was the motivating factor for getting together, and what does the merger bring to NGCOA?

Hughes: The primary motivation was that we thought it would serve the members. That was one of the first line of inquiries: Were the members going to get more out of the combined show than two separate shows? We know that it's true.

In what ways will they get more out of it?

Hughes: It'll just be more for them to see and more education if they want to take care of that angle. The trade show itself will be a much broader offering and larger. The agronomic side of the business is important to the owners, and a combined show will give them the opportunity to see [its components] up close and personal. Most owners will attend with their superintendents to make a team effort.

So you think most owners will attend with their superintendents? One of the concerns superintendents have is that with a combined show only one person per course will be able to attend. Many superintendents assume that will be the owner. You don't feel that way?

Hughes: It's not going to be like that. They're two different roles. The superintendent's role is a far more technical role, so both will have to come down because they'll each get something different out of it.

How are the educational sessions going to work? Will superintendents be able to attend the owners' sessions, and will owners be able to attend the superintendents' sessions?

Hughes: Right now, we're planning to handle the educational tracks the way we're doing them right now [i.e., separately]. As we move closer, we'll be developing joint opportunities that will run both ways so owners can understand what the superintendents know and vice versa.

We think that [the joint sessions] will benefit both parties. I'm convinced the superintendent always benefits when the owner knows more about his side of the business because it helps the owner understand what the

"There's a general feeling of uncertainty that is holding down [revenue] numbers in some areas of the country, but people will come back when the uncertainty goes away."

MIKE HUGHES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
NGCOA

superintendent is responsible for and what the superintendent has little control over.

Given the fact the NGCOA moved its show into February to be more amenable to the GCSAA's traditional schedule and that the show sites will be more in line with traditional GCSAA sites, there is some talk that the GCSAA drove this. Is that how it worked out?

Hughes: We perceived it to be the coming together of equals. It was just logical because of the size of the superintendents' trade show that we'd need to go where they'd need to go. The GCSAA also has contractual obligations much further out than we do [with host sites]. We had more flexibility.

On the player development initiatives

Every year we hear that the golf industry needs to bring in more players and retain those it currently has. You have been instrumental in pushing player development programs during your 13-year tenure at NGCOA, with programs like Get Linked, Play Golf. Yet every time the numbers of players get studied (by the National Golf Foundation, for example), they remain flat nationwide. Do you feel the current programs are working? If you feel they are working, what accounts for the flat numbers year after year?

Hughes: The programs are working. The problem is [that] they haven't been revved up to a large enough scale to have an impact on the overall numbers. Once that happens, then you'll see the numbers change. The stages we've been in are learning and piloting. Once we have a

more national footprint, we'll all be able to see the difference in numbers.

Has progress been made on that national footprint?

Hughes: Yeah, very much so. One of the natural outgrowths of [our national programs] is not only the activities we engage in directly, but also the spin-off effect and the way we influence individual operators, individual programs and individual behaviors.

Even if we don't bring an organized program into the area, [owners] can see what it is that we do and take it on themselves without having to wait for an official program to come to them. We're leading by example and letting others come along with their own ideas.

Are you planning any new programs to roll out or are you happy with the ones in place?

Hughes: We've got most of the bases covered. It's just a matter of scaling them up and getting more people aware of them and adopting them.

Do you have a timeline on when you might expect to see the effects of these programs on the national numbers?

Hughes: We don't have a date, but we believe they're having an effect even now. You don't know that the programs aren't working [if the numbers are flat]. Without the programs, the numbers might be down.

On the economy

As the United States continues to experience a sluggish economy, which courses have been hurt most by the economic downturn?

Hughes: The courses that have been the most deeply affected have been the ones who have depended on corporate-outing business. We've also seen lower revenues for destination resorts as well. But for the bread-and-butter courses, they seem to be holding their own.

There's a general feeling of uncertainty that is holding down numbers in some areas of the country, but people will come back once that uncertainty goes away.

What can the industry do to help itself come back?

Hughes: You're already seeing a positive trend in golf course building statistics. The number of courses that are being built is falling, and that will help bring supply back in line with demand. I expect that trend to continue.

What's your read on the overall economy?

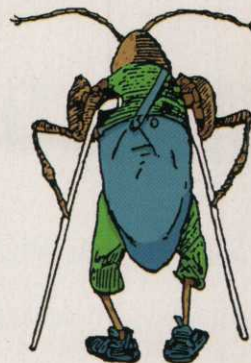
Hughes: It's going to take a little while for consumers to catch up to the fact that the underlying economic indicators are good and show a strengthening economy. When times are uncertain, people are conservative with how they spend their discretionary income. ■

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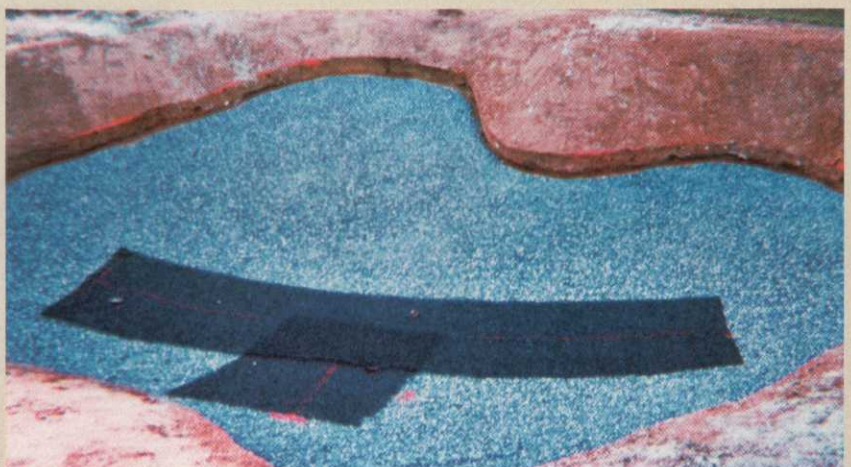
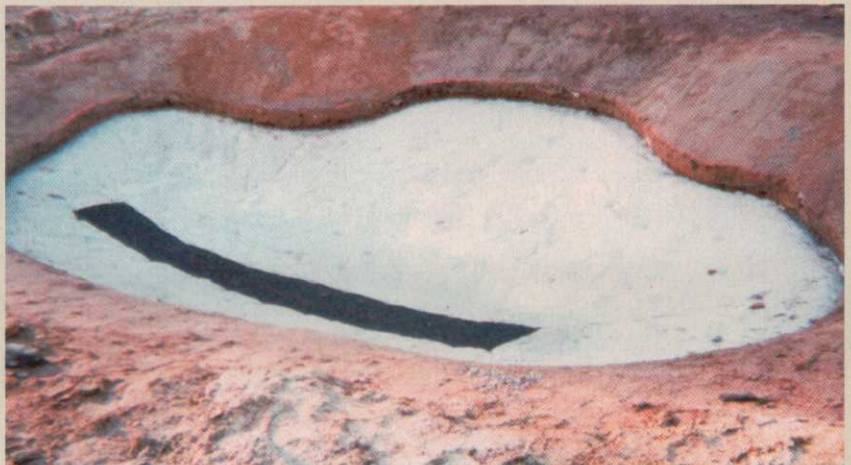
BY HAL PHILLIPS

At bottom, rainfall is a superintendent's ally. But there are subclimates where too much of a good thing can wreak havoc on bunker-maintenance budgets and crew scheduling.

"I've witnessed as much as 130 inches in a single year and as 'little' as 56 inches, which we consider a drought around here," says Bo Alexander, superintendent at Wade Hampton GC in Cashiers, a North Carolina community nestled high in the verdant Blue Ridge Mountains.

They're verdant for a reason. As Alexander notes, this is one of the wettest corners of the country and even well-built bunkers can't reasonably drain away that sort of inundation. Instead, they wash out — over and over again — at a great cost and inconvenience to clubs.

After spending a fortune and untold manhours rebuilding his bunkers year



(Top) The Billy Bunker's white Trevira liner prevents the bunker sand from migrating into the native soil, and vice versa. **(Below)** Note how the liners are specially cut out to reveal (and promote water passage to) the bunker's drainage pattern.

after year, Alexander embarked on a "radical" renovation of Wade Hampton's 38 greenside bunkers. During the winter of 2001-02, he watched closely as the course contractor employed a hot technique in renovation today: the Billy Bunker method.

Eighteen months later, Alexander can't say enough about his Billy Bunkers or the construction firm, Gainesville, Ga.-based Course Crafters, which has worked at Wade Hampton, tackling an assortment of projects alongside Alexander since 1993.

"These bunkers get the water into the tile so fast, the sand doesn't have time to wash," Alexander says. "Course Crafters did all 38 [greenside] bunkers in one three-month period. It involved a lot of hand-work, which is something you need to understand about the Billy Bunkers. But the folks at Course

Crafters got it done, and they get high marks from me."

Alexander emphasizes that while Wade Hampton is one of the most decorated courses in America — the 1987 Tom Fazio design ranks 37th on *Golf Digest's* Top 100, 52nd on *Golf Magazine's* list — it's also one of the dampest, receiving an average annual rainfall of 85 inches.

"So you can see why we brought in Course Crafters to address the bunker situation," Alexander says. "They shelled them all out and redrained

Problem

The bunkers at two clubs, both in high rainfall regions, were continually washing out, sapping maintenance funds and manpower, and irking the clubs' members.

Solution

Rebuild the hazards using the Billy Bunker Method, a drainage-intensive technique that provides cost-effectiveness through long-term durability.

them in the Billy method. They also removed and replaced 400,000 square feet of sod around the greens.”

Course Crafters has plenty of renovation experience when it comes to Billy Bunkers — so named because the method was invented by Billy Fuller, former superintendent of Augusta (Ga.) National GC, where Course Crafters has been handling renovations for the past decade, including the latest round of changes supervised by Fazio. But Course Crafters President Bob Pinson says his crews didn't learn the Billy Bunker Method in Augusta.

“We first executed the Billy Bunkers up at Charlotte (N.C.) CC,” Pinson explains. “I learned the method from Mark Stoddard, who was superintendent in Charlotte at that time. Billy Fuller sent the specs to me, and we did them as part of architect Brian Silva's restoration at Charlotte in 1995. I don't know of anyone who was doing Billy Bunkers, other than Billy himself, as early as 1995. We've done hundreds of them since.”

The Billy Bunker Method allows for excellent drainage because, as Pinson explains, each lateral drainage arm runs straight into an outfall pipe — or into individual “smiley” drains located at the terminus of each lateral. Once all this base drainage capability has been established, a 1.5-inch layer of gravel is laid over the entire bunker floor, capped by a Trevira liner, which is specially cut to reveal the herringbone drainage pattern. Then the entire drain-line scheme is further overlaid with Enkamat, a fiberglass mesh material which keeps the gravel from resurfacing in the sand layer.

“Then you put your 4 inches of sand over it and you're done, with that bunker at least,” Pinson says. “The hand-work required [to lay the gravel and custom-fit the liners] is where this process gets labor-intensive and expensive. But in the long run, with all the repairs you end up doing to a regular bunker and all the wash-out repair, a

new Billy Bunker ends up costing less. In my view, the Billy Bunkers ultimately reduce maintenance costs. The upfront cost is considerable, but you'll pay for your bunker renovation within five years.”

It's a trade-off, but one that many superintendents in the soggy Southeast are increasingly willing to make. Superintendent Tim Kennelly oversaw the Billy Bunkering of all 82 bunkers at The Farm GC in 1999. This is another Fazio design, located in Rocky Face, Ga., which receives close to 70 inches of rainfall a year.

“Our bunkers washed out constantly, and we weren't meeting the expectations of our members,” says Kennelly, superintendent at The Farm from 1994-2002 (he left in April 2002 to become superintendent at Baltimore CC in Timonium, Md.) “We were spend-

ing so much time shoveling bunkers, it was ridiculous. Course Crafters suggested the Billy Bunkers, and it turned out to be a great solution. It's not cheap, but it's an excellent, long-term solution.”

So Billy Bunkers are not for the penny-wise and pound foolish. Pinson also warns that superintendents should check their sand depths in each Billy Bunker at least once a month because “players splash the sand out and if you don't keep your depths consistent, someone will tear the Trevira.”

“Also, you can't mechanically rake the Billy Bunkers or they will rip the Trevira and Enkamat to pieces,” Pinson says. “You have to hand-rake them, but not nearly as often as regular bunkers.” ■

Phillips is president of Phillips Golf Media in New Gloucester, Maine. His company represents Course Crafters.

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