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Welcome to Boot Camp

Continued from page 80

the next generation. We do a tremendous job of training superintendents, but we don't do a good job of training assistants."

During his two seminars that focused on climbing the career ladder, Williams emphasized the importance of trying to get along with others. When you're a superintendent, you need to be a team player, Williams stressed. "There are a lot of superintendents out there that grow grass real well, but [aren't good] when it comes to getting along with their pros and general managers."

Throughout the boot camp, the assistants heard presentations focusing on a mixture of subjects — from maintaining turf equipment to using growth regulators and biostimulants for improved summer turf performance, and from taking a tour of the Pebble Beach Golf Links maintenance facility (see sidebar below) to gaining tips for getting their next jobs.

Regarding the latter, the assistants heard stories from former assistants who had recently gained first head superintendent jobs. One was Mat Dunmyer, superintendent of Sonoma (Calif.) Golf Club. Dunmyer, a Buffalo native, told assistants that sometimes you have to move around to get what you want — and be patient. Dunmyer attended school at Lake City Community College in Florida before moving to California and taking a job as a spray technician at Lahontan Golf Club in Truckee, Calif. Soon, Dunmyer moved up to second assistant at the course. Two years later, he took an assistant's job — but a superintendent-in-training position — at Stone Tree Golf Club in Novato, Calif. He was there for 14 months before getting his first superintendent job at Moraga (Calif.) Country Club.

Dunmyer advised the assistants not to rush in their quests to become superintendents.

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Dream Maintenance Facility

One of the field trips offered during boot camp was a trip to Pebble Beach Golf Links to tour the course's highly touted maintenance facility. The segment was titled, "Maintenance Facility to Die For."

Indeed, Pebble Beach's building, which recently celebrated its first birthday, is the Taj Mahal of maintenance facilities, as it has been described. It fits in well among the million-dollar mansions that dot the course.

It was sorely needed, too. Pebble Beach had badly outgrown its previous maintenance facility, like a 10-year-old in a 6-year-old's clothes.

Tom Huesgen, superintendent at Pebble Beach, says the course's former tiny maintenance facility, which featured a 65-square-foot office for the superintendent, was functional. But there's no comparing the two buildings. Check out the numbers detailing the new facility (right).

"It worked for a number of years, and it hosted a number of successful events," Huesgen says. "A lot of great people from the industry came through it."

— Larry Aylward, Editor



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Welcome to Boot Camp

“Word is out that we’re trying to provide a first-class operation. Maybe this could be a national event.”

MIKE MCCULLOUGH

Continued from page 82

“I wanted to know how to do everybody’s job before I sat on the other side of the desk,” he said. “I wanted to learn all that I could.”

Dunmyer said it’s important for assistants to set goals for themselves and recognize what they need to work on — personally and professionally — to get to the next level.

The boot camp ended with an assistant superintendent golf tournament at Del Monte Golf Course on Tuesday afternoon. Then it was back to work.

Speaking of work, all of the assistants were thankful to their bosses for letting them attend the boot camp and miss a few days of work. And that brings to mind an interesting point. How many bosses in other professions would allow the people they manage to attend an event that could ultimately lead them to leave their current jobs?

Amsler, who says he feels privileged to work

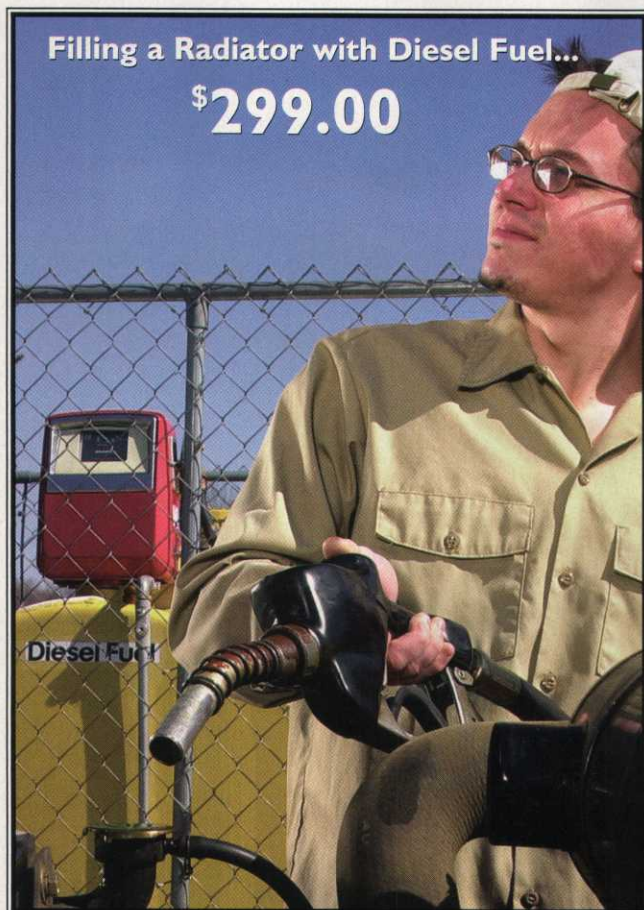
at Cypress Point Club, says his boss, certified superintendent Jeff Markow, understands he has to do what’s best for his career and wanted him to attend the boot camp.

“A good superintendent is not going to hold you back from something he sees as a good opportunity for you,” Amsler says. “I’ve heard [Markow] say that to a number of guys who’ve gone through here.”

“Sergeant” McCullough, who has been with the NCGA for about four years and has a master’s degree in horticulture from Oklahoma State University, is satisfied with the direction his boot camp has taken, but he plans to improve it. McCullough, who says he doesn’t know of any other national turf organizations that offer formal programs for assistants, says the boot camp is gaining a name for itself.

“Word is out that we’re trying to provide a first-class operation,” he says. “Maybe this could be a national event. We’re a ways from that, but if we keep it going. . . .”

Ten-hut! ■

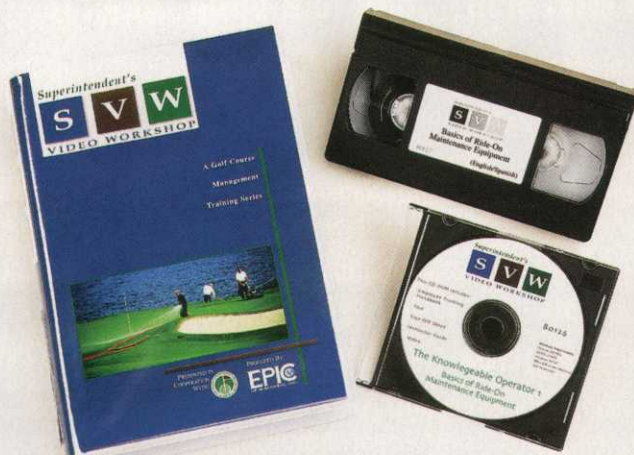


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I'm tired of hearing the term "old school." Once reserved as a descriptive for rap and hip-hop music, "old school" is now a verbal decal for anything that has just a slight bend toward the past.

I thought that we Turfheads might slide by with immunity from citing trendy label makers until just a few weeks ago when I committed the sin myself.

OK, maybe someone else has done it, but this doesn't take away the level of disturbance I now have with myself for attempting a fusion of words combining turf and pop culture.

Where did it happen? How did it happen? I can hear your mind asking the important questions. It came as I described my favorite fairway turf sward.

Instead of using the usual combination of descriptive words like firm, dry, fast, fescue, browntop, lean and mean, I simply said, "old-school surface." The person I was talking to knew exactly what I meant.

And then I started thinking about what common ground "old school" and turfgrass might have. Plenty, it turns out, especially in this day of returning to tradition.

(Wait, "tradition" and "old school" kind of have a link. Maybe I'm on to something!)

Perhaps the next round of top-100 course ratings will simply have an "old-school" category. Why not? After all, isn't the golf that so many of us now admire so publicly really old "old school?"

But wait! "There's a catch," says the client. There's always a catch with clients and this one isn't unlike them all.

This one wants that "old-school" surface, but he wants it with a "degree of sophistication." And I just realized that my fancy use of a catch phrase has caused a problem.

Like the guys from the Discovery Channel's *American Chopper* who are building an "old-school chopper with new-school parts," I'm being asked to help someone create something new that's supposed to be old looking.

Unlike custom motorcycle builders Paul

The Good and Bad When It Comes to 'Old School'

BY DAVE WILBER



NOW MORE THAN
EVER, THE IDEAS
OF TRADITION
COME TO US
IN A GOOD WAY
TO BE STUDIED,
ACCEPTED AND
ADAPTED

Teutel Sr. and Paul Teutel Jr., we in golf construction don't really do "theme bikes." (Well, maybe some people have.) I'm pretty sure that if I came to a client and told him that my turfgrass paint job is going to be just like a vintage hot-rod paint job, I'd be finished with a capital "F."

You see, it seems absurd when you look at it like that, but the truth is we are being asked more and more to do things or re-do things in a new way and make them look old.

It's a level of sophistication that not many people can appreciate, and I'm not always sure we make the mark as well as we should. For instance, I cringe every time I see a new facility compared to some great old facility.

Sorry, but the Royal Dornoch Golf Club is the Royal Dornoch Golf Club because it's the Royal Dornoch Golf Club. We just don't go to some ugly piece of ground in anywhere U.S.A. and say we're building the Royal Dornoch Golf Club.

That's the bad use of "old school." The good use comes in the fact that we can recognize that the old ways shouldn't just be thrown out because they have some age on them.

Now more than ever, the ideas of tradition come to us in a good way to be studied, accepted and adapted.

Maybe all of us can look forward to one day being called "old school," and everyone will understand how cool it really is.

Dave Wilber, a Sacramento, Calif.-based independent agronomist who's in the field daily, can be reached at davewilber@soil.com.

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Tending to Two-Cycle Engines

Problem

Today's leaner burning two-cycle engines are built for lower emission levels. That said, the engines are not as forgiving as older units.

Solution

It's crucial to take care of this high-performance equipment to keep it running longer and efficiently. That means using the right oil and keeping the equipment clean, among other things.

Make sure to use the proper oil, among other things, for less-forgiving units

BY CURT HARLER

Today's leaner burning two-cycle engines are designed and built for dramatically lower emission levels and are simply not as forgiving as older units. Using the correct oil not only will extend engine life, it will also benefit the environment.

For that reason, the use of proper oil is vitally important to prolonging the life of high-performance equipment, says Jay Larsen, product marketing manager for Shindaiwa in Tualatin, Ore.

"Be sure to use the manufacturer's or a major brand of two-cycle oil," says Kent Hall, product manager of power tools for Stihl in Virginia Beach, Va.

Even in a pickup truck, if forced to choose between matching viscosity (say 10W-30) and matching brand, mechanics will recommend using a different weight (10W-40) but sticking with the same brand so the additives are the same.

It's important to mix fuel with a name-brand two-cycle engine oil at either 40:1 or 50:1, depending on the manufacturer's recommendation which can be found in the owner's manual. Avoid the generic, multipurpose oils and high-ratio oils. These mixing oils are really not suitable for today's leaner running, high-performance two-cycle engines.

Be sure to mix only enough fuel for your immediate needs. If fuel must be stored longer than 30 days, it should first be treated with a good quality fuel stabilizer.

Under certain conditions, alcohol-based fuels in a two-cycle engine can reduce the lubricating qualities of some mixing oils. Never use any fuel containing more than 10 percent alcohol by volume, Larsen says. An octane rating of 87 or higher is always preferred.

Check out lubricating practices, too, for two-cycle engines. Doug Cobb, instructional designer with Kawasaki in Irvine, Calif., warns against overgreasing machines. If grease breaks a seal, dirt is getting in.

Speaking of contamination, check fuel storage containers for contaminants and rust (especially if using

Continued on page 90



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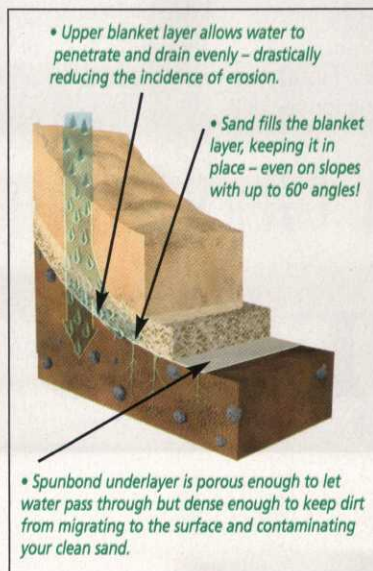
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Two-Cycle Engine Maintenance

Continued from page 88 metal cans). Keep the power head fuel tank clean. Rinse and clean the fuel tank if signs of contaminants are present.

Always clean off any dirt or debris around the fuel tank before removing the fuel cap. Check to see that the fuel cap is sealing properly and not leaking.

The typical two-cycle engine is air-cooled and relies on its air passages to be clear of any restrictions. Dirt and debris collect in these areas, particularly if spilled fuel residue is present. This is also true for cooling surfaces like flywheel and cylinder fins. It's important that fins on the flywheel and cylinder are clean and free of any foreign material that can restrict airflow.

Inspect, clean or replace the fuel filter every 10 hours to 15 hours of use,



Most two-cycle engines are air-cooled and rely on air passages to be free of any restrictions.

Larsen says. Debris in the fuel tank will necessitate more frequent filter replacement. A fuel filter that's semiplugged with debris will affect engine performance. Speaking of filters, a partially clogged air filter can cause an engine to run too rich.

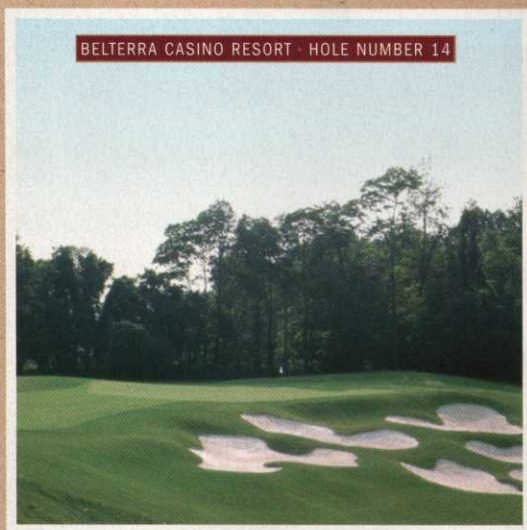
Maintain the muffler and the spark arrester. A plugged muffler or spark arrester screen will dramatically change the way an engine operates and per-

forms. Never let debris accumulate around the muffler. Debris may prevent proper engine cooling and become a fire hazard.

In most areas, mufflers must be equipped with a spark arrester. Larsen warns that a muffler without a properly installed (and clean) spark arrester is a potential fire hazard.

Always use the recommended spark plug with the correct heat range for a particular unit. Again, refer to the operator's manual for each model to verify the correct spark plug, Larsen advises. Spark plugs considered "hotter" may take a unit past its heat limits and cause major engine damage. ■

Harler is managing editor for Golfdom's TurfGrass Trends.



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