

NOTHING'S TOUGHER.

A Difference by Design.

Who could get passionate about molecular strength? Floratine does. Our scientists' passion is why products like Turgor, ProteSyn, and Perk Up deliver real turf strength, one molecule at a time. Floratine products are different by design and performance. Your turf will know the difference.



Field & University Tested. Patented Chemistry.

Hole of the



■ **No. 14**

**The Snead Course at The Greenbrier Sporting Club
White Sulphur Springs, W.V.**

Month

A Fine Tribute

The Greenbrier Sporting Club's "The Snead" course is named after what famous golfer? We hope your answer isn't Ben Hogan. Of course, the White Sulphur Springs, W.V.-based course is named after none other than the wondrous Sam Snead, who grew up in the area.

Lee A. Hancock, superintendent of the Tom Fazio-designed Snead Course, says the 447-yard 14th hole (pictured here) is one of his favorite holes on the course, which opened in the spring. "The fairway is contoured to favor a right to left tee shot to maximize length so that a player can avoid the bunkers," Hancock explains.

The shot into the green is straight up the center but can be tricky depending on pin placements. An errant second shot could wind up in Howard's Creek in the back of the green.

The maintenance issues on the 14th hole include the obvious creekside dilemmas, Hancock says. "Recently, during the remnants of Hurricane Jeanne, we had waters up and into the fairway, and washed silt and debris onto the course and bunkers."

Overall, the hole stands up for itself well, Hancock says. "It satisfies all the requirements of a great golf hole."

It's safe to say that Snead, who had a record 81 PGA Tour wins, would love the hole and the course.

Golfdom's Hole of the Month is presented in partnership with:

www.johndeere.com



JOHN DEERE

JOHN DEERE

Shades Of Green

■ OPINION

Florida gets hit by hurricanes, but who could have predicted we'd have four within six weeks this year? The city of Lake Wales in Polk County has the distinction of being the geographical center of the Florida peninsula. It also marks the spot where the paths of Hurricanes Charley and Frances crisscrossed the state this year within three weeks of each other. That's the kind of déjà vu nobody needs.

After the first two knockout blows, Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Jeanne kept everyone on pins and needles until they landed their own left hooks and scored two more major blows to Florida. Even areas not affected by wind damage were impacted by large amounts of rainfall from the storms. As those systems moved inland they spawned hundreds of tornados and flooding in states up and down the eastern half of the United States. While Florida was grabbing headlines as the point of landfall, many other states were being devastated by flooding from the slow-moving storms. There's enough misery to share for everyone east of the Mississippi.

Several lessons have been learned or relearned:

- Native trees fared better in the storms than imported specimen trees.
- Beach erosion is a natural process. Living on barrier islands is a gamble.
- Shortcuts in construction lead to lots of structural damage.
- Trees and power lines do not make good neighbors.
- A house sitting in a grove of trees is a sitting duck.
- Waterfront and low-lying property is prone to flooding.
- People should learn to be more self-sufficient instead of depending on the government.
- Florida would never have been developed if not for air conditioning.

Debris cleanup has become a cottage industry. I saw dozens of trucks from other states parked at motels because the county doesn't have enough manpower or vehicles to get the job done. It took more than a month before the piles of debris along our street were picked up, and they're still far from finished.

Trying to Reason with 'Cane Season

BY JOEL JACKSON



SUPERINTENDENTS

FIND THERE'S MORE

THAN ONE 'EYE' IN

F-L-O-R-I-D-A.

All the debris generated from golf course tree damage is sitting in piles with nowhere to go unless someone invests in a heavy-duty chipper. Some courses won't have to buy mulch for a long time. Insurance companies and course owners are going toe-to-toe over how much course damage will be covered after which deductible is paid on which hurricane. The loss of revenue from courses being closed is staggering.

But there must be some silver linings behind the storm clouds. I may be reaching, but here are a few:

- A lot of big trees causing thin turfgrass are now firewood or mulch.
- People might believe us now when we say, "Mother Nature rules."
- Not having a phone for a few days wasn't always a bad thing.
- Those with old irrigation systems didn't have to water very much.
- Club members appreciated the staff efforts and helped clean up or cooked meals for the crew.
- Clubs and vendors loaned, shared or hauled equipment to those in need.
- Everyone will now have a hurricane plan, and that includes utility companies.
- People got to know their neighbors.
- There is something that can limit the use of cell phones.

People are measured by how they handle adversity, and I'm betting that superintendents will prevail at the end of this struggle to get their courses back in shape. The real test will be for owners and members as they grapple with the reality that nature is a force beyond their control.

Meanwhile, my windows are still boarded up and I'm keeping my television tuned to The Weather Channel.

Certified superintendent Joel Jackson retired from Disney's golf division in 1997 and is director of communications for the Florida GCSA.

A Rolling Stone Gathers No Moss, Neither Should Your Greens.

Cure and prevent putting green moss infestations with Junction* Fungicide/Bactericide.

Changes in turf maintenance practices have made moss encroachment one of the major problems that golf course superintendents face today.

Left unchecked, moss can out-compete desired turf species and literally choke the life out of your greens. But, there is a proven and simple answer to this prolific problem.

Research has shown that Junction Fungicide/Bactericide, used in a control program, can both cure and prevent moss infestations. And, while dealing with moss, Junction also provides cost-effective control of a wide spectrum of fungal and bacterial diseases.

So, don't let moss suffocate your greens. Take back control of your greens with the Junction Moss Management Program. For more information about Junction call **1-800-419-7779** or visit our web site at www.sepro.com.



SePRO Corporation 11550 North Meridian Street, Suite 600, Carmel, IN 46032

*Trademark of SePRO Corporation. Always read and follow label directions. ©Copyright 2004 SePRO Corporation.

Junction*
Fungicide/Bactericide



HEAT STRESS

WINTER KILL

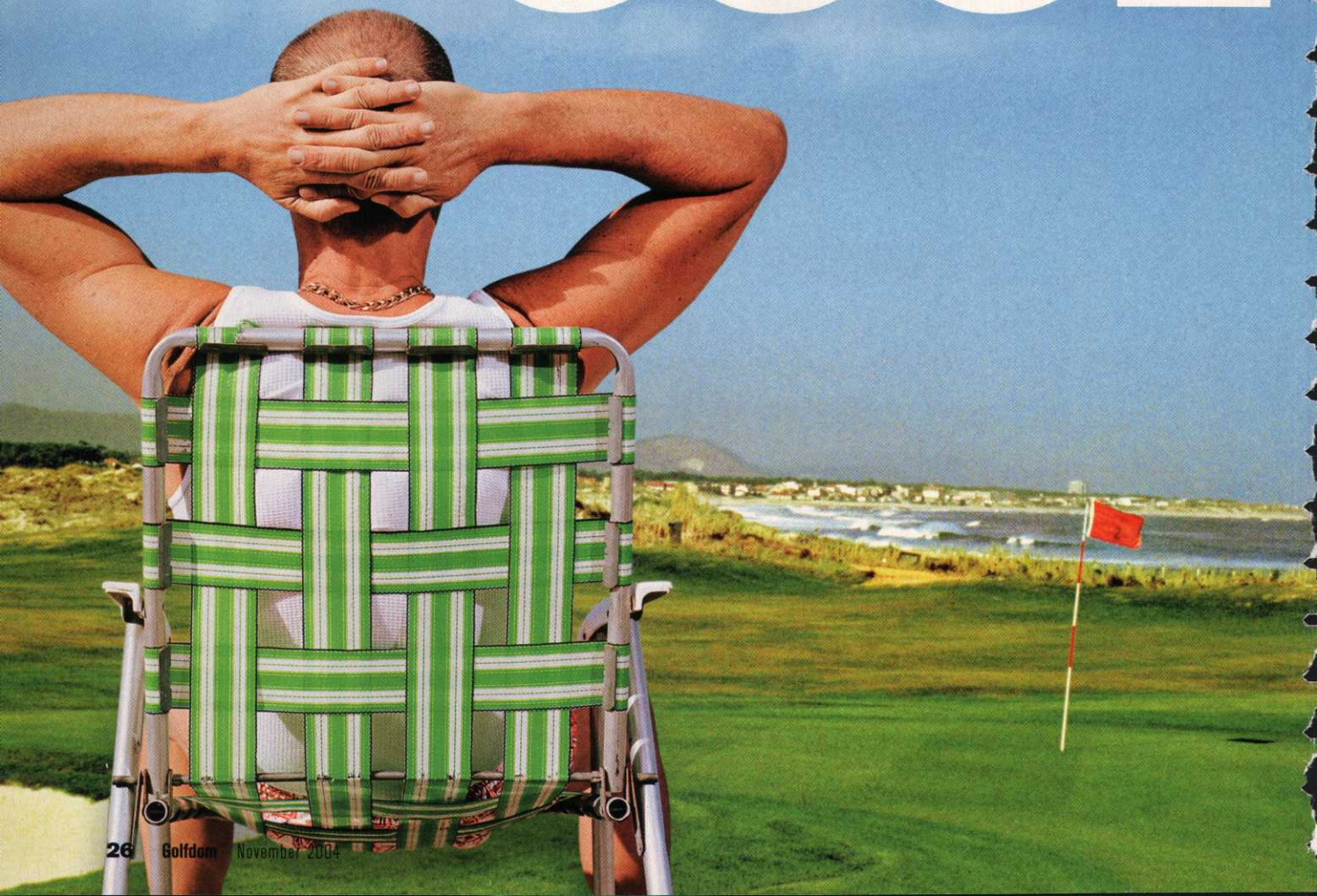
DEMANDING OWNERS

LAZY CREW MEMBERS

LONG HOURS

SHORT FUSES

KEEP YOUR COOL



Here's how some superintendents overcome the burdens of their often-onerous jobs and remain creative in the face of difficult daily maintenance obligations

BY BRUCE ALLAR

Chuck DeCerce had an entire winter to prepare for what he feared would hit him last spring, but that didn't make things any less stressful for the superintendent at Mechanicville (N.Y.) Country Club. As the 2003 golfing season — DeCerce's first at the club located near Albany — wound down last fall, he had plans to fertilize the greens and build temporaries for the late-autumn players.

However, pressure from the club's members to play an extra few weeks on the regular greens forced him to delay his plans, and he got caught: A significant early snow, followed by an early onset to winter, froze over his unfertilized putting surfaces. Then, like a plague, snow mold left its mark on the greens at the beginning of this year.

And DeCerce took the heat. "It all comes back on me," he says, of the criticism leveled this spring when the greens looked awful. Not until mid-June, when the grass

finally returned to form, did the complaints completely end. And DeCerce, who already knew from past experiences at other courses the potential perils of delaying fertilization, had to endure a tough stretch while his crew members learned the lesson for the first time. "I had to go through it again so they could see it," he says.

DeCerce calls that experience the most stressful of his career. But when things spiral beyond your control, he observes, you still have to go out and do the rest of your job. "You have to put it aside," he says of the problems.

The superintendent is able to persevere because he carries with him the attitude that no goals for his course should remain unaccomplished — that every day is a march toward perfection. But he and other superintendents also employ specific strategies for overcoming the burdens of their often-onerous jobs and for remaining creative in the face of tremendous day-to-day maintenance obligations.

Comparing notes

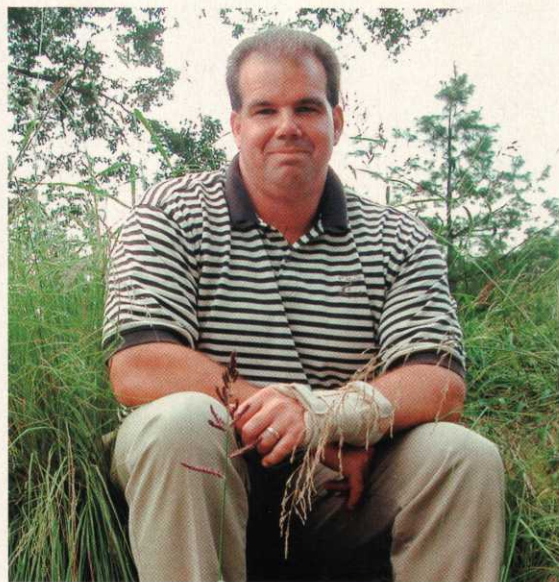
During the long March-through-October grind, DeCerce tries to decompress by fitting in a couple of long weekends with his wife and two daughters. To keep his creative juices flowing, he makes it a point to visit other golf courses — particularly those designed by Devereaux Emmet, who laid out Mechanicville — and compare notes and share inspirations with their superintendents.

In addition, he'll play his own course from every tee, from the ladies' to the tips ("which I have no business doing") to see it from every golfer's perspective.

"I come back with a 4-inch notebook filled with things that have to be changed," DeCerce says. "My crew hates it when I play our course. They try to get me passes to other places."

DeCerce also makes a point to have lunch once or twice a month in the clubhouse, so he can pick up the buzz about issues affecting the golfers. At one such session, he overheard a group of women complaining about poor access to one of their tee boxes, which was cut off by a small fence. DeCerce went out with a chainsaw the next day, cut a hole in the fence board, put up two

Continued on page 28



Superintendent Paul Dotti stays stimulated in his job at Edgewood Country Club by taking on major projects. "It's very relaxing for me to be out there on a bulldozer," he says.

Keep Your Cool

Continued from page 27

stakes to border the gap, and made the course's female players a happier group.

Paul Dotti, now in his ninth year at Edgewood Country Club in River Vale, N.J., also likes to play other courses. "We're all in the same boat," he says.

His favorite way to rethink the possibilities for his own track, however, is to leave work early on some days, then come back near sunset for a ride around the grounds.

"The members aren't bothering you," he says. "There are no cell phone calls. Things start to jump out at you."

Dotti's creative flashes have led to big-impact projects at Edgewood, a private course with three nines. His par-4 No. 6 on the White nine lacked excitement until the superintendent spotted an unused hillside behind the tee — it actually had become a dump area — and thought it would make a great vista for a par 5. To make others share his vision, he cleaned up the spot, took some dirt up the hill,

Most Stressful Jobs

High demands plus little control equals serious stress at work. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the top 10 most stressful occupations are:

1. Office clerk
2. Lawyer
3. Restaurant or hotel manager
4. Ticket agent
5. Secretary
6. Claims investigator
7. Messenger
8. Bookkeeper
9. Truck driver
10. Cashier

(List is based on the average number of days workers spent away from their jobs recovering from neurotic reactions to job stress.)

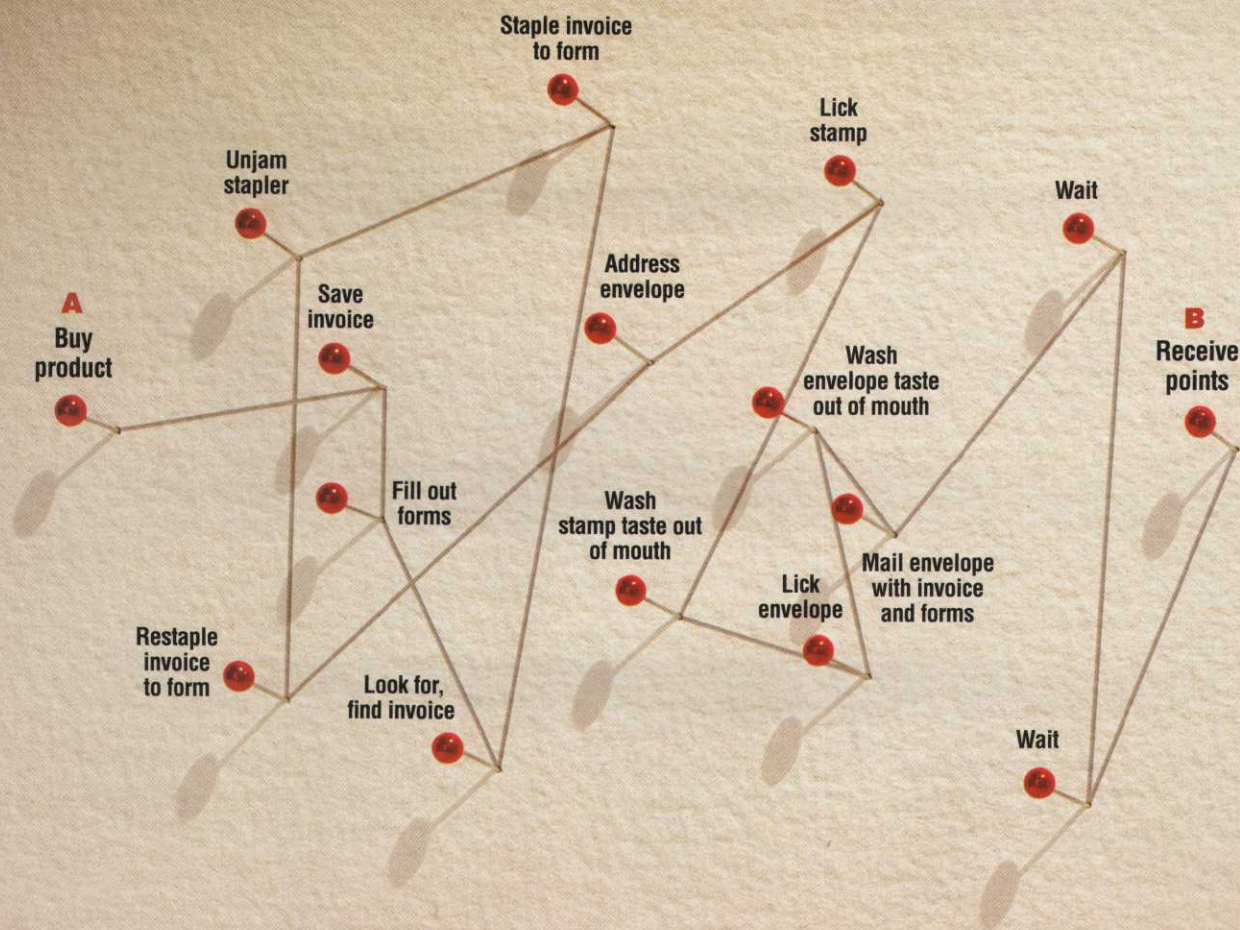
flattened out several square feet and then brought Edgewood members and pros up to stand on the elevated potential tee. "I got it approved," he says. And now it's become a signature hole at Edgewood.

Rallying the troops

Projects like this one relieve the maintenance grind for both Dotti and his crew, who do most of their major renovations themselves, including waterfalls, stone bridges, new greens and irrigation improvements. The big jobs provide a morale boost to the staff.

"If they know they're going to rake bunkers and mow greens every day, there's not a lot of incentive," Dotti says. But at Edgewood, "they don't know what to expect when they come into work each week."

Dotti tries to stay in project mode as much as possible from September through May, realizing the summer months will always be maintenance-intensive. The big projects save Edgewood money — Dotti says he can sometimes do them for 25 percent of what outsiders bid for the contracts — but they also keep the superintendent stimulated. "It's very relaxing for me to be out there on a bulldozer shaping stuff," he says.



Having a five-year plan for his course gives Joe Boe, a nine-year veteran at Coral Oaks Golf Course in Cape Coral, Fla., a way to see beyond the day-to-day stresses. Each year, he lays out all of the things he hopes to accomplish and assigns them dates on a calendar.

When he's feeling worn down, Boe says, "I try to look forward to the next project." The fun stuff — driving skid steer loaders and other equipment — gives him needed breaks from growing grass.

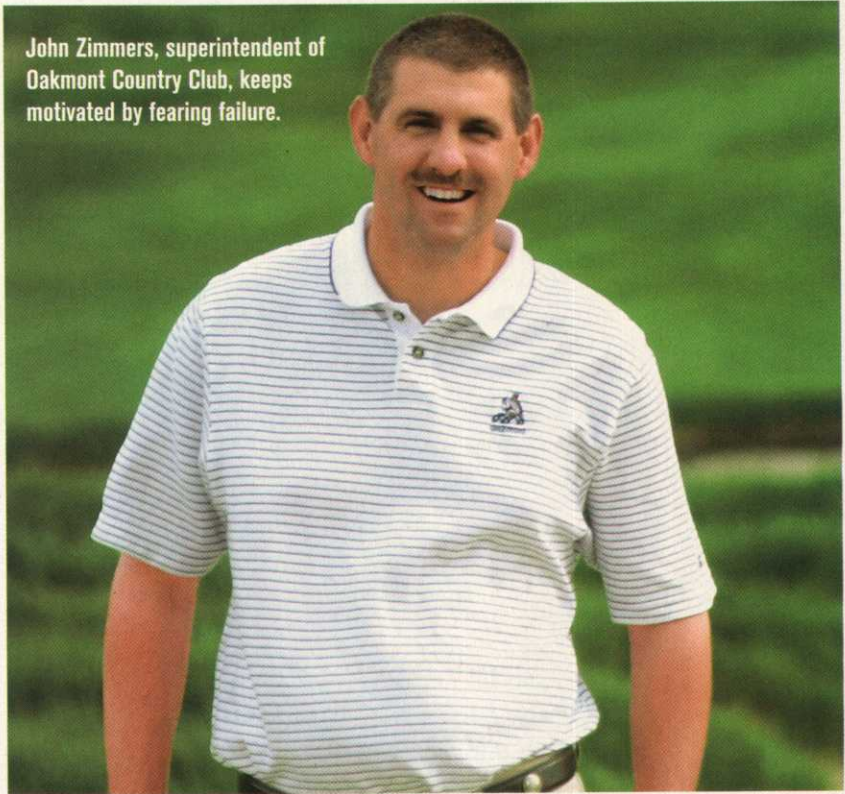
"When I find that I want to snap back at stuff, little stuff that doesn't normally bug me, I know it's time to take a break," Boe says.

Boe says many of his best solutions occur to him when he's driving his car and able to turn things over in his mind. Others come when he's driving his bike.

Boe cycles regularly with his wife, often through areas of great natural beauty. There are obvious destressing benefits from the

Continued on page 30

John Zimmers, superintendent of Oakmont Country Club, keeps motivated by fearing failure.



DOUG OSTER

A
Buy Bayer
product

B
Receive
Accolades points



Paperless Points. The shortest distance between Products and Points.

They're automatic, effortless, and one more reason Accolades is the industry's top rewards program. Paperless Points.™ Just buy Bayer products through a participating distributor and Accolades points are deposited into your account. With no paperwork, it's the shortest distance between products and points.

For 1,000 free Accolades points, visit AccoladesRewards.com/PaperlessPoints.



Bayer Environmental Science

**BACKED
by BAYER.**

Keep Your Cool

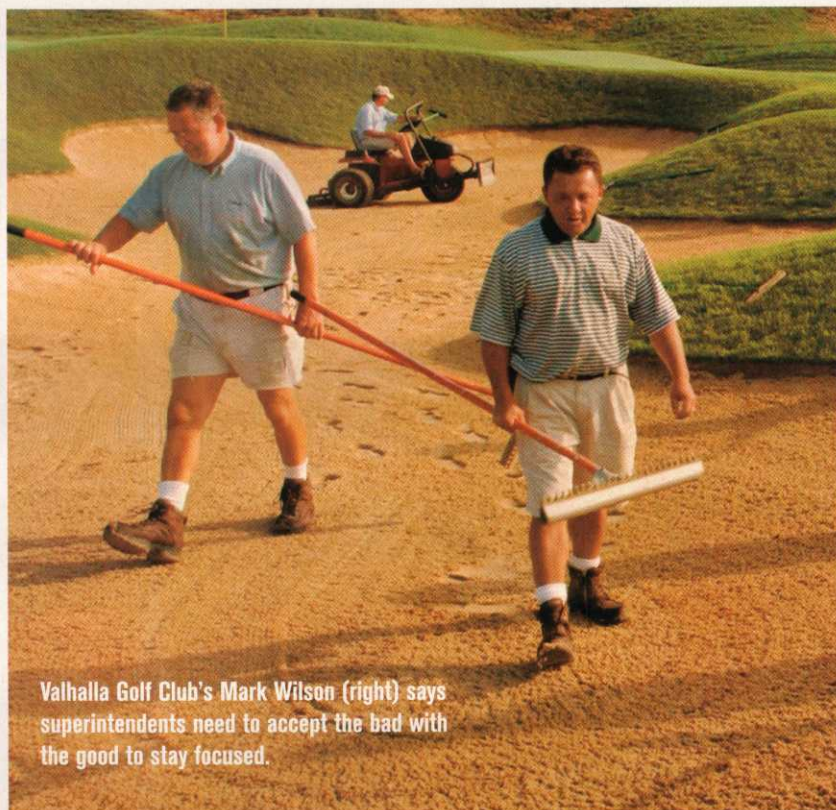
Continued from page 29

exercise, and he'll notice how homeowners landscape their properties in ways he had not observed previously. Or he'll see a new example of nature at her best in a noncultivated area. Says Boe, "I'll think, 'Hmm, I could do that at the course.'"

Boe is given enough license at the Arthur Hills-designed Coral Oaks to keep his creative juices flowing. He keeps up with the best ideas in his area by attending local superintendent meetings, which are moved from course to course. Participants play a round of golf, swap "horror stories" and listen to a speaker offering expert advice.

Maintaining composure

Oakmont Country Club's John Zimmers derives much of his incentive from fear of failure. The fifth-year superintendent at the championship course near Pittsburgh realizes there will be some difficult stretches no matter how good you are



Valhalla Golf Club's Mark Wilson (right) says superintendents need to accept the bad with the good to stay focused.

JOHN NATION

Turf and irrigation solutions for all your needs

FEATURING:

- Hunter[®] GOLF Products
- Seed / Fertilizer / Pesticide
- Drainage Pipe & Fittings
- Irrigation Supplies & Equipment
- Moisture Sensors
- Erosion Control
- Water Features

135 BRANCH LOCATIONS

from the Golden Gate
... to the Sunshine State

EWING
Irrigation ♦ Golf ♦ Industrial

complete online catalog at:
www.ewing1.com
800.343.9464

or how hard you work. He also tries to remember who's watching him.

"When you have a young staff or a lot of interns, they keep you motivated because you think you owe those guys," Zimmers says. "You have such an impact on what they'll do with their futures."

Sometimes it can be a good thing to let your staff know when you're down, he says, because they'll rally to help you out. But that's only if the stress lasts for a brief period. If the boss withdraws for the better part of a week, or longer, it's a problem for everyone.

While Zimmers admits that he doesn't have enough hobbies (he does find time in the fall to attend Pittsburgh Steelers and Penn State football games), he's found ways through experience to stay on an even keel, often by getting out with his staff and immersing himself in a variety of tasks. "The longer you do this," he says, "the more you try to balance things because you never want to take things out on the staff."

Mark Wilson, in his 15th year at Valhalla Golf Club, the Louisville, Ky., course that hosted this May's Senior PGA Cham-