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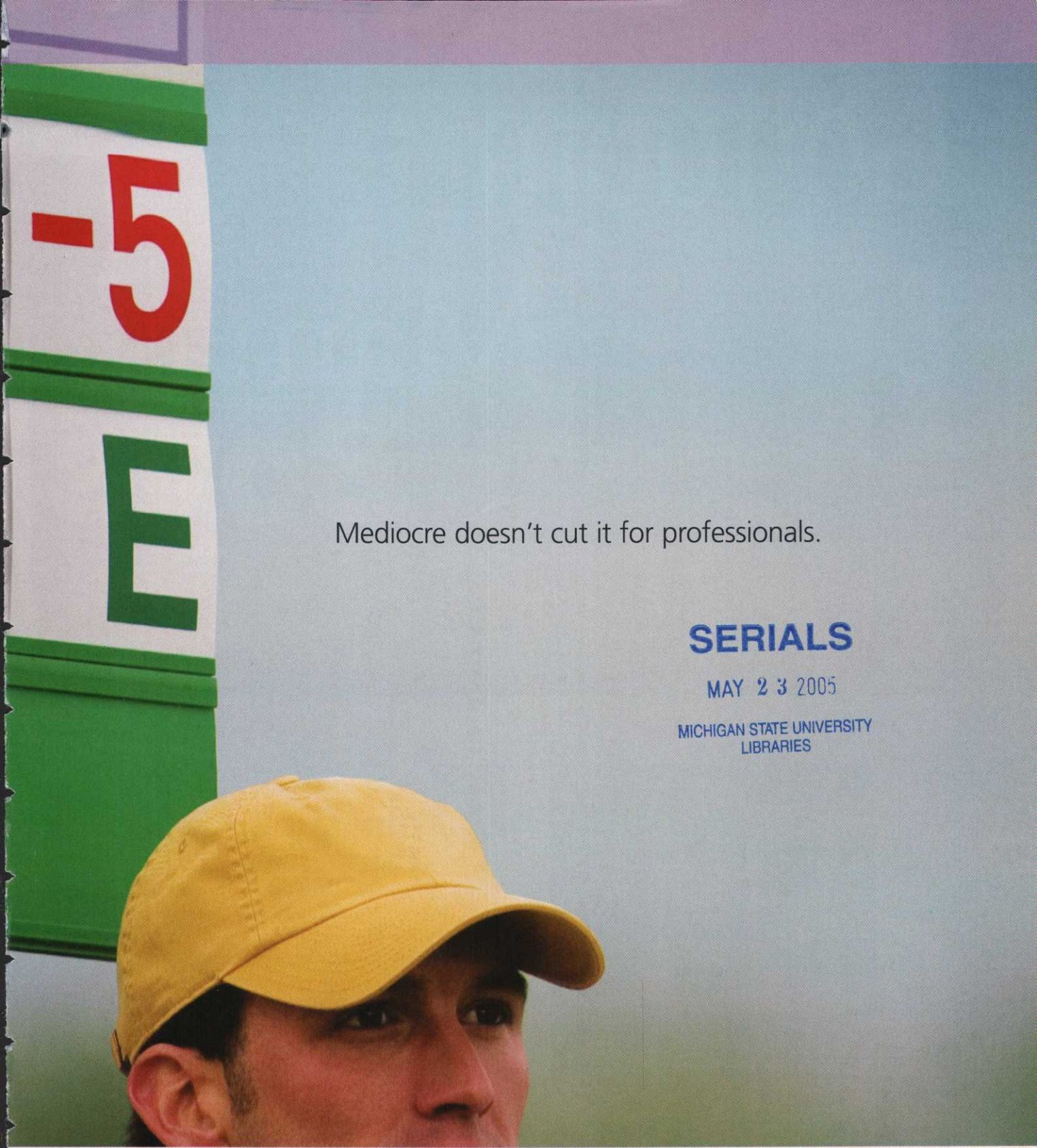


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# Golfdom

MAY 2005 • VOLUME 61 • NO. 5

## Mamas' Boys

**T**here's an old Jewish proverb that says, *"God could not be everywhere, so he therefore made mothers."*

In honor of Mother's Day on May 8, *Golfdom* salutes the moms of the many individuals — from superintendents to owners — who comprise the golf industry.



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. . . on its way up thanks to a new nine-hole First Tee Golf Course in Cleveland.

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By Thomas Skernivitz

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*Matt Shaffer & Miriam Shaffer*

*Tim O'Neill & Joan O'Neill*

*Jim Nicol & Marguerite Nicol*

*Michael, Vinny Iacono & Pat Iacono*

*Tom Marzolf & Rita Marzolf*

*Bill Leeke & Meriam Leeke*

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Six industry men pay tribute to the mothers who helped them shape their lives.

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Matt Shaffer, superintendent of Merion Golf Club, is very fond of his mother Miriam. We think photographer Gerald T. Leidy did a good job of capturing Shaffer's appreciation for his mom.

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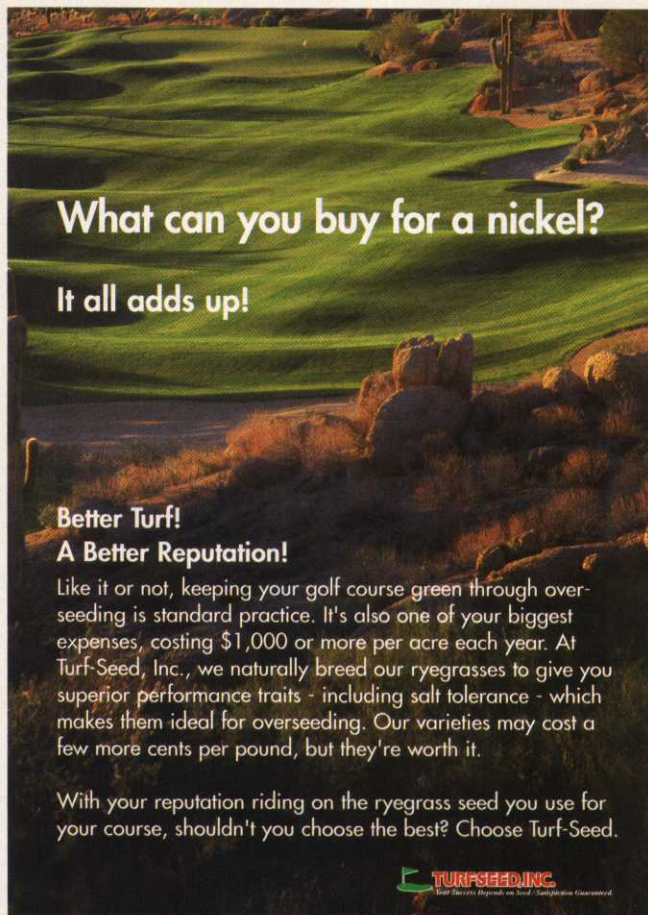
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This month *Golfdom's* practical research digest for turf managers discusses insects that are posing problems for turf managers throughout the country. See pages 69-84.








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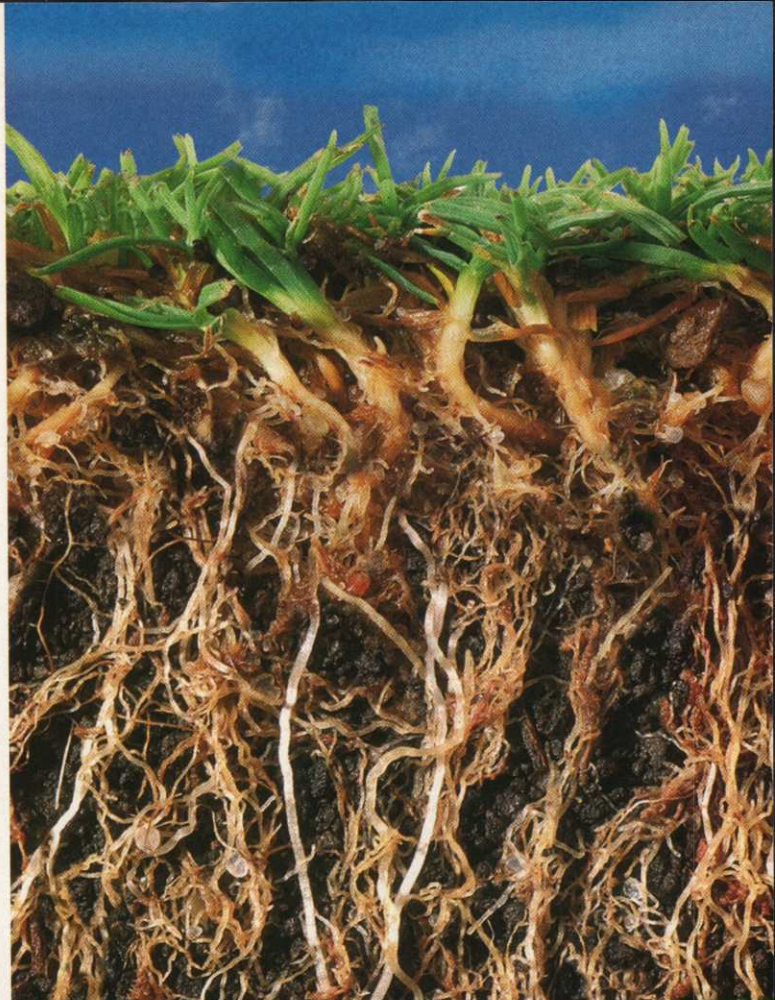


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# We've Got Mail

LETTERS FROM THE FIELD

## Rebel Yale

I was both interested and upset by Anthony Pioppi's analysis, "Yale Returns to Yesterday," in the March 2005 issue of *Golfdom*.

Wherever your peripatetic editor Anthony Pioppi turns up, it is apparent he really likes the Yale Golf Course. But like the best of friends who dare to point out your faults, this is what he attempts to do in this latest article.

and a lot of research was done using construction photos and aerials taken throughout the ensuing years.

The characteristics of Raynor's design, with steep grass banks, flat sand and sometimes rectilinear configurations, were retained. The depths and steep banks of the existing bunkers were always left intact and undisturbed. We kept these features when we reinstituted those that had been lost.

The principal's nose was a bunkering feature often used by C.B. Macdonald and Raynor in their designs. Only the "nose" of this feature on the 17th hole, without the three small bunkers, remained as a landmark, even in the '50s. This has been left intact, and the older aerials showed us the location, size and shape of the bunkers we looked to put back. To say it was "decimated" is a gross

exaggeration! It was the simplest reconstruction of any of the original bunkers, removing turf only where the bunkers themselves were located. If one of them looks like a "litter box," he better complain to the original architect.

Maybe I should consider Pioppi one of those good friends who is unafraid to point out my faults.

Maybe not!

**Roger Rulewich**  
Chief Golf Course Architect, Principal  
The Roger Rulewich Group  
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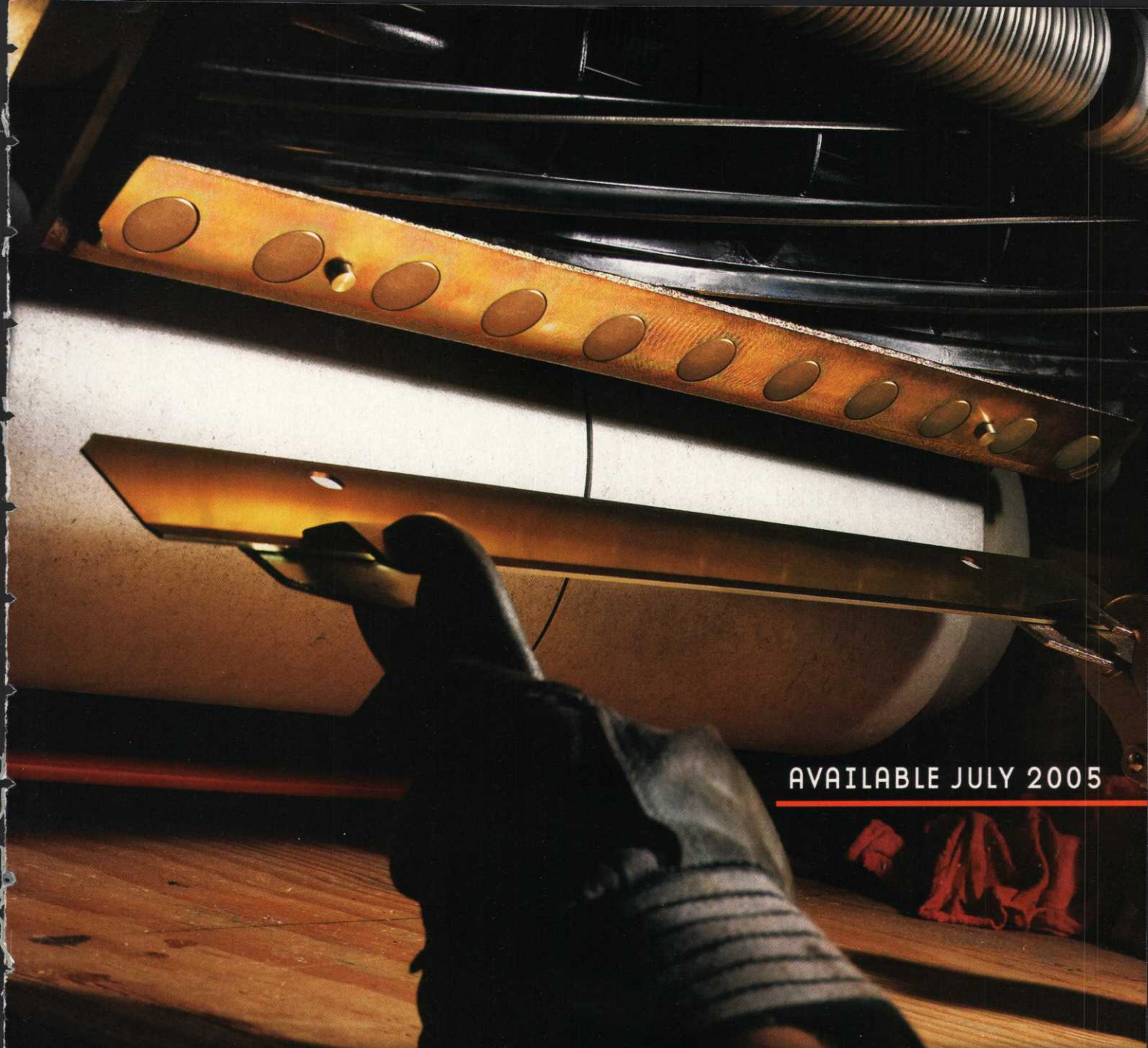
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**L**udwig Boerne, an 18th-century political philosopher, once said, "Pain is the father, and love the mother of wisdom." Paul Jamrog, a 21st-century golf course superintendent, can relate to Boerne's observation.

The 47-year-old Jamrog, who has been in the golf course maintenance business for 26 years, is the wise ol' superintendent of Metacomet Country Club, a sensational, old design in East Providence, R.I. It has taken Jamrog several years of experiencing the highs and lows brought on by the "love" and "pain" for his vocation to become enlightened to some important aspects of the business. Funny thing, though, Jamrog's enlightenment has little to do with growing healthy turf and everything to do with keeping members happy.

As most any superintendent at any private course will tell you, keeping members happy can be difficult. It can be especially trying when a superintendent thinks he's doing the right things for the golf course but most of the members think otherwise. This brings to mind Jamrog's "love" and "pain."

Jamrog is a student of golf course architecture. He knows enough about Donald Ross, who designed Metacomet in 1921, that he could come back as Ross in his next life.

Unfortunately, most members don't know Ross the way Jamrog knows him. So they don't understand why Jamrog wants to apply certain maintenance philosophies to Metacomet — from topdressing fairways and approaches to maintain their firmness to re-establishing old native grasses to bring back the course's original look — that hark back to the way the course was played in its early days.

"My love of architecture drives me in the way I maintain a golf course," Jamrog says with pride. "I don't think there's enough of that in this business."

But through the years Jamrog has learned that being right doesn't really mean that you're . . . well . . . right. He's learned that he has to think less like a superintendent and more like a service provider. Metacomet's members, after all, are in charge of the course.

## Got to Give Them What They Want

BY LARRY AYLWARD



IT'S HARD TO HAVE  
YOUR HIGH-FLYING  
IDEAS GROUNDED,  
BUT THAT'S LIFE IN  
THE REAL WORLD  
OF GOLF COURSE  
MAINTENANCE. JUST  
ASK PAUL JAMROG

And as Jamrog says, you have to give them what they want, even if it means biting your tongue to the point of pain.

"Let's face it, they're there to play a game — golf — and that's all they're interested in," Jamrog says, the understanding evident in his voice.

While it stings Jamrog to know that most of Metacomet's members don't appreciate the fact that he's a student of Ross' design, he doesn't dwell on their lack of gratitude. In fact, Jamrog realizes he's the one who must adapt to the situation because he could be out of a job if he doesn't.

It's hard to have your high-flying ideas grounded like a misbehaving teenager, especially when you've spent time and effort to form a detailed plan on the way you think the golf course should play. But that's life in the real world of golf course maintenance.

"You go about your business under the radar, do what you can and hope the members appreciate it," Jamrog says. "You have to give them what they want."

Jamrog has worked for 22 years on Ross-designed courses — 12 years at Metacomet and 10 years previously at the Orchards Golf Club in South Hadley, Mass. He wasn't even 30 when he began at the Orchards, and says he brought a "gung-ho" attitude to the club, for better or worse. Some things he wanted to do to the course were well received. Others weren't.

"I used to butt heads with everybody all the time, and it got me into trouble," Jamrog admits.

Jamrog doesn't apologize for his ways. He shouldn't. Hey, he's just been doing what he thought were the best things to do maintenance-wise for two Ross-designed

*Continued on page 10*



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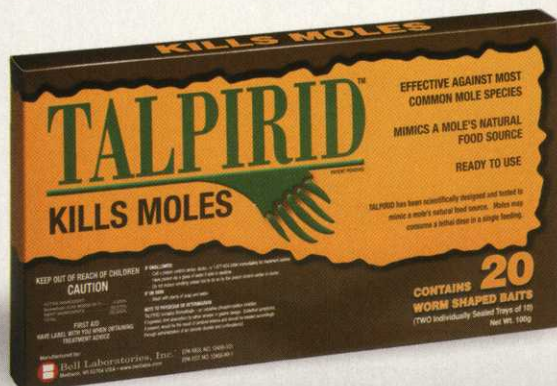
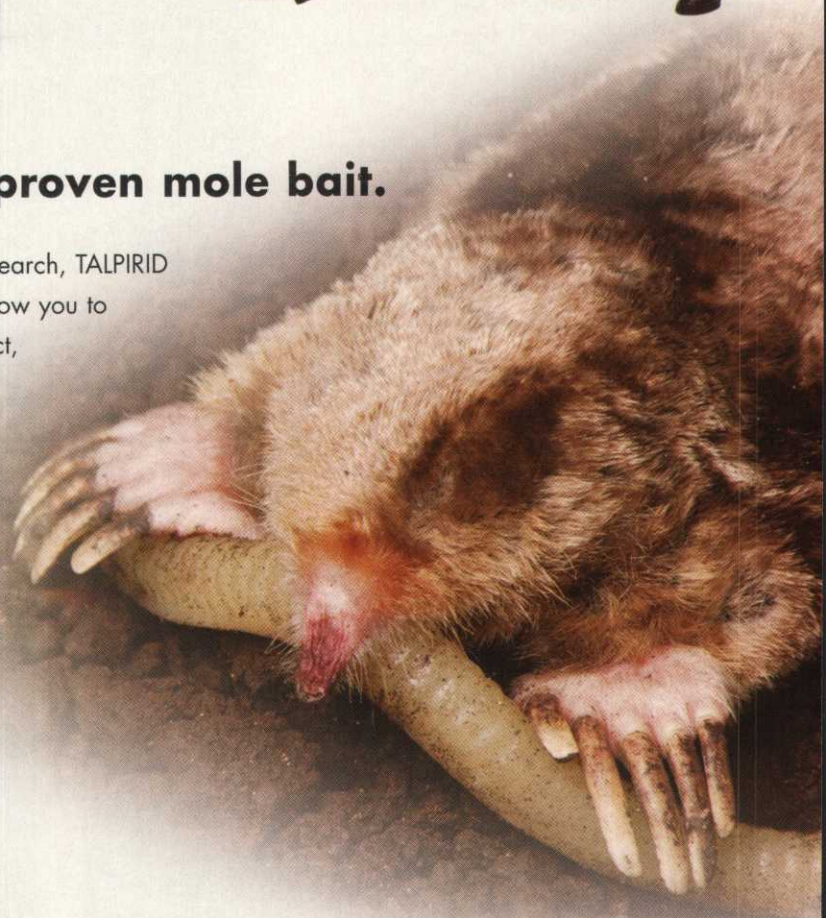


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## Pin High

*Continued from page 8*  
golf courses. He should be commended for that.

But through it all, Jamrog has learned that his job as a superintendent isn't just about him and what he brings to the table. It's about the members and their wants and needs.

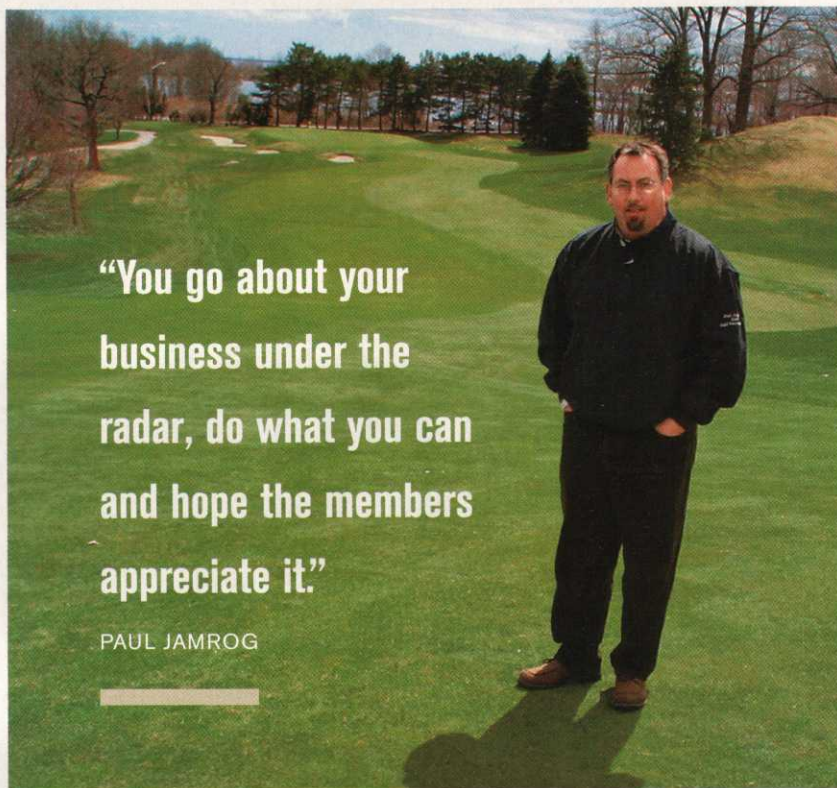
Jamrog also realizes his job as a superintendent is about making a living and providing for his family.

As he looks back on his career and forward to what's left of it, Jamrog realizes the golf course maintenance business, like many professions, is about making concessions.

It's a lot like living everyday life.

Says Jamrog, "You just have to suck it up and take it."

*Aylward, editor in chief, can be reached at 440-891-2770 or laylward@advanstar.com.*




**"You go about your business under the radar, do what you can and hope the members appreciate it."**

PAUL JAMROG

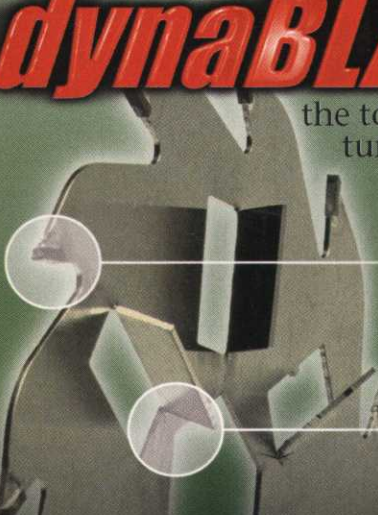
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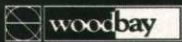
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