

Jacobsen's 10-year agreement with the PGA comes as the organization completed renovation of its two courses at the PGA Village.

Jake's Stake

SUPERINTENDENTS WILL SEE JACOBSEN BECOME 'MORE ENGAGED IN THE BUSINESS OF GOLF'

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

The response so far has been positive. Superintendents are happy that Jacobsen sold its commercial grounds product lines in August to heighten its focus on golf and professional turf-related markets, the company's leaders say.

Superintendents have told Jacobsen, "We're glad you're focusing on your core competency."

But Jacobsen's leaders realize that savvy superintendents ultimately will judge the company's business decision over a longer period of time. They will expect the company to prove itself in regard to the business decision.

Jacobsen, a business unit of Textron, has battled back from a few problems it endured the past few years, such as customer service issues. Jacobsen's leaders, who believe the company is much better off, know it will take time to broadcast that message.

Last year, Jacobsen named Dan Wilkinson to replace Dan Carlson as its president. Wilkinson, who spent 17 years at General Electric and worked under Jack Welch, was hired for his customer service expertise.

Jacobsen had problems filling part orders with its dealers. That dilemma was not helped when Jacobsen decided to move its headquarters to Charlotte, N.C., and consolidated operations there. The moving of people and processes were challenging.

But the sale of the commercial grounds care product lines to Commercial Grounds Care, an affiliate of Schiller-Pfeiffer, allows Jacobsen to concentrate on the golf and professional turf markets with equipment manufactured in Charlotte and Ipswich, England.

Karla Cuculi, Jacobsen's marketing director, also points out that Jacobsen has maintained a parts-fill rate in the upper 90s percentile for more than a year.

Textron and Jacobsen decision makers decided to sell the businesses after looking at the matter systematically. They said they looked at the value of the businesses from all angles. And as they went through that process, they identi-

fied strategic issues that needed to be massaged. In the end, they said they needed to focus on the core of the business — golf and professional turf — and put all of their resources into the segment of the market where they have the most equity.

When and how will superintendents and others begin to notice Jacobsen's increased focus on golf? Company leaders say they will see that through "accelerated product development," which will be heavily researched through the company's customers. Superintendents will see Jacobsen become "more engaged in the business of golf."

An example of the latter is Jacobsen's recent announcement that it has become "The Official Turf Equipment Supplier to The PGA of America" and "The Exclusive Turf Equipment Supplier to PGA Golf Properties." The 10-year agreement comes as The PGA of America completed renovation of its two courses at the PGA Village in Port St. Lucie, Fla., and began renovation at Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Ky., host of the 2008 Ryder Cup.

Jacobsen leaders believe the 90-year-old PGA and their 85-year-old company are a good match because of their combined longevity in the market.

In March, Jacobsen also plans to open a new facility in Charlotte, which will house a training center as well as its corporate headquarters, Cuculi said.

"It's one of the more tangible outcomes of this new focus," she added.

Dale Miller, director of agronomy for the PGA Golf Club, said he noticed that Jacobsen had its "ups and downs" the last 10 years, but he believes the company is "back up to standards." Miller uses Jacobsen equipment at the PGA's two golf courses.

"The most efficient operations are the strongest equipment operations," he said. ■

Quotable

"We used to run an alternate-shot couples tournament. We started calling it the divorce open."

— Frank Jemsek, owner, Cog Hill Golf & Country Club in Lemont, Ill.

"Golf is like politics; it's very local."

— Joe Louis Barrow, Executive Director of The First Tee

PHOTO BY: LARRY AYLWARD

Off The Fringe



Business briefs

Briefs continued from page 10

Thompson, Steinke Win Musser Awards

Dr. Sarah R. (Devereux) Thompson, a recent graduate from North Carolina State University in entomology, and Dr. Kurt Steinke, a recent graduate from the University of Wisconsin in horticulture and soil science, earned the Musser Foundation Award of Excellence for significant and innovative contributions to turfgrass science research. They each received \$20,000.

Thompson is a senior research scientist at BASF Corp. in Research Triangle Park, N.C. Steinke is an assistant professor of turfgrass ecology at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas.

Andersons Unveils Web Site

The Andersons' Turf & Specialty Group unveiled a Web site that explores the benefits of granular fertilizer and pesticide technology. The site explores subjects such as costs, safety, environmental, efficacy and the many types of granules available on the market.

"Our industry may experience a transformation in product innovations in the next several years due to new technology development of granules as well as environmental and regulatory pressures," says Chuck Anderson, technical development manager of The Andersons.

The Web site is located at www.GranuleTechnology.com. ■

Continued from page 10

gauge of success for the company, and it will trickle down eventually. The proof came in the Nov. 1 announcement that Beckert will move over to KSL as its senior advisor (they might as well call him the transaction hunter) and Eric Affeldt, a founding member and principal of KSL Capital Partners, will replace Beckert at ClubCorp.

"John Beckert has a diverse background and a valuable skill set which will help us accelerate our growth in the travel and leisure industry," KSL Managing Director Michael S. Shannon said in a prepared statement. "As ClubCorp's new CEO, Eric Affeldt will employ KSL's successful hands-on methods of managing and expanding enterprises in order to increase both member and shareholder value."

Yikes. Still think your budget is safe? In case you missed it, "hands-on methods of increasing shareholder value" means you'll be having a budget meeting with someone you've never met before some time very soon.

These lawsuit-dodging, analyst-impressing, employee-confounding press releases are tough to decipher, so I thought I'd look at a couple recent company announcements to polish up on what's really being said in corporate communications.

"The pace of change over the next five years is going to dwarf the pace of change over the last 50 years, and we're going to have to get out in front of it."

—Jeff Zucker, chief executive of NBC Universal's television group, on news of a major restructuring that will eliminate 700 jobs (10/20/2006).

Note to self: be very wary of the phrases "get out in front of change" as well as, "We're experiencing a sea of change in the industry."

Let's try another:

"We are working aggressively on a detailed analysis of the company, top to bottom."

—Chrysler Group President and Chief Executive Tom LaSorda said this during an earnings conference call in October after revealing Chrysler lost \$1.5 billion in the third quarter of 2006.

Between the lines: Please don't dump your shares yet ... our share price will bound once we disclose how many plants we're closing and how many people we'll be sending to the unemployment line.

Also be alert to "Dynamic markets require good companies to adapt," or "We're going to concentrate on our core competencies."

Does that mean companies actively pursue noncore competencies? You'll know they do when you read something about "developing markets that required a heavy front-end commitment that didn't materialize on the back end." That means they gambled and lost.

Reading the tea leaves might not be as easy as it used to be, but exercises like this one might enable you to see what's coming before it renders you "unable to adapt to current market conditions due to ubiquitous external factors that forced a more streamlined property so the core customer could better leverage all the synergies provided in this unique facility."

That one probably means you're fired because you're too expensive, and that's a message that seldom gets lost in translation. ■

Editor's note: This column originally appeared in the Nov. 2 edition of *Golfdom Insider*, our biweekly e-newsletter. To sign up or view newsletter archives, visit www.golfdom.com.

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Off The Fringe

Blown Away

MOUNTAIN WINDS BLAST SAND AROUND THREE CROWNS

By Curt Harler

More than weeds or diseases, it's the blowing sand that causes headaches for Bob Brownlow, superintendent of Three Crowns Golf Course in Casper, Wyo. Winters mean Brownlow gets sand blasted along with the snow. Summertime means he gets sand blasted without snow.

The winds off the Rocky Mountains are so strong and consistent that they blow the expensive, imported sand right out of Three Crowns's bunkers. Casper is a very windy place, and wind plays a large role in both the golf and Brownlow's maintenance practices.

There are 86 bunkers at Three Crowns, each stocked with eye-catching white sand imported from Idaho. It's painful — in more ways than one — to stand downwind of a bunker and watch the sand get blown up and out across the green it was meant to protect.

Brownlow has a couple of simple but effective remedies he uses to keep the sand in place, including placing snow fence around affected areas to encourage snow to accumulate and cover the bunkers.

"Our main strategy was to use covers as we do on the greens," he says.

While tarps are the ready answer to the situation, encouraging and keeping snow in the bunkers works just as well as a mechanism for holding the sand in place, Brownlow says.

One handy, inexpensive tactic is to put snow fence in the bunkers. The snow fence is positioned just like snow fence would be along a highway — to encourage the snow to pile up next to the fence and in the bunker.

The course uses a flexible, plastic snow fence that is inexpensive, easy to install and easy to remove. The orange color might not be the most aesthetic feature to hit a golf course, but it does the job.

Three Crowns began its first full year of operation this past season. Brownlow, who was an assistant under Chris Condon during the building of Three Crowns, is blown away by the wind problems.

"We just didn't know what a problem the wind would be," he says. Brownlow has worked at other courses in the Mountain region. He took over as superintendent at Three Crowns last year when the course opened in May.

The constant wind isn't good for the grass, either. Because of the harsh, desiccating effect of the wind, greens must be irrigated through the winter.

The wind is a problem whether the grass is mature or still at seedling stage. "They tried to seed six holes in October (2004) to get a jump on things," Brownlow recalls. "The wind just blew it all away."

His solution on greens is to keep

Sweeping sand back into the bunkers is a time-consuming task. Snow fences help keep sand in the bunkers.

things moist and growing all year. That might sound counter-intuitive in an area where 18-inch snowfalls are common. But the instant the snow melts, Brownlow knows the turf on his greens will be in trouble.

Trees, too, must be protected from the wind. Young Ponderosa pines that



Superintendent Bob Brownlow uses snow fences and covers to help keep sand in place.

border the fairways are sheltered by wooden forms that block the wind as it howls in along the North Platte River, which runs just above Three Crowns.

All trees are on drip irrigation to assure the water stays where it should.

Brownlow continues to research ways to combat the wind's impact on Three Crowns bunkers and grasses.

"It's just one of those problems that nature throws at you," he says. "You have to learn to put up with it." ■

Project EverGreen-2007 Report to Stakeholders

Join Us in Telling Millions of Americans about the Benefits of Green Spaces



By Den Gardner

It's critical for our industry to educate Americans about the value of your company and the benefits you provide.

As the green industry equivalent of the "Got Milk?" campaign, Project EverGreen's very existence is based on a mission to raise awareness among consumers. The message is simple: the promotion of the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of green spaces.

Project EverGreen was founded two years ago by an alliance of large and small companies, associations, contractors and others who provide services and products for green spaces and the people who work in them. Our purpose is to promote the significance of those who preserve and enhance green spaces at home, work and



play and to bring an alternative voice from those criticizing these areas. By doing so, we support the thousands of American landscapers, lawn care operators, sod producers, arborists, nursery and greenhouse growers, golf course superintendents, sports turf managers, irrigation contractors, professional grounds managers and others.

But we don't lobby or represent any one segment or product category. Project EverGreen encompasses all the people, products and services used for green spaces and the benefits of maintaining them.

Project EverGreen Tells the Green Industry Story

Midway through 2006, we had already touched more than 115 million Americans through exposure in the news media.

We have told your story in hundreds of newspapers and radio stations, from the weekly paper in the *Parkersville, W. Va. Sentinel* to *New York Newsday*. Here is a small sampling of the national media that have covered Project EverGreen nationwide:

- *New York Newsday*
- *The Tennessean*
- *The Cincinnati Enquirer*
- *The Daily Oklahoman*
- *The Denver Post*
- *The Minneapolis Star Tribune*
- *Detroit News*

Partnering with Like-Minded People

We've created partnerships with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and America in Bloom that give us a solid story to tell consumers, while simultaneously working directly with the public.



ALL RIGHT AMERICA: Show Us Your Green Spaces

In 2006, Project EverGreen went in search of the best photos of well-maintained green spaces with a contest awarding publication in our *Because Green Matters* Calendar.

The photography contest was inspired by our *Because Green Matters* Award, which recognized the University of Akron (Ohio) and Southern Land Company (Tennessee) for their efforts to develop green spaces.

Your Support is Crucial

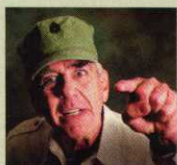
As a non-profit organization, Project EverGreen relies on contributions to relay our message to consumers and your help is needed! Volunteer, contribute and get involved! Sign up online at www.projectevergreen.com. Or call toll-free at 1-877-758-4835.

(Editor's Note: Den Gardner serves as executive director of Project EverGreen and helped found its current mission and strategies just two years ago.)

Do the Right Thing

Our highest profile campaign to date is GreenCare for Troops. This public service initiative provides free lawn care for families of armed forces personnel serving in the Middle East.

How does that help the green industry? GreenCare for Troops' slogan is "Serving You While You Serve Us." It puts a face on the green industry, and identifies us as people who care, by matching affected families with local lawn and landscape contractors who have volunteered their services. Are you a volunteer yet?



Project EverGreen enlisted former Marine Gunnery Sergeant, R. Lee "Gunny" Erney, as its spokesperson. Well-known for his roles on screen and TV, Gunny supports the program because, "The lawn and landscape industry recognizes the financial and emotional sacrifices being made by our men and women serving overseas."

Word about GreenCare for Troops spread like wildfire through the international military community by our media relations. We give daily interviews about the program, and connect the media with local contractors and families for a truly personal perspective. A soldier in Iraq even asked that we send a Project EverGreen banner to him. It is now displayed in Saddam Hussein's former palace.



Hole of the

▶ Hole #18 | The Club at Olde Stone | Bowling Green, Kentucky

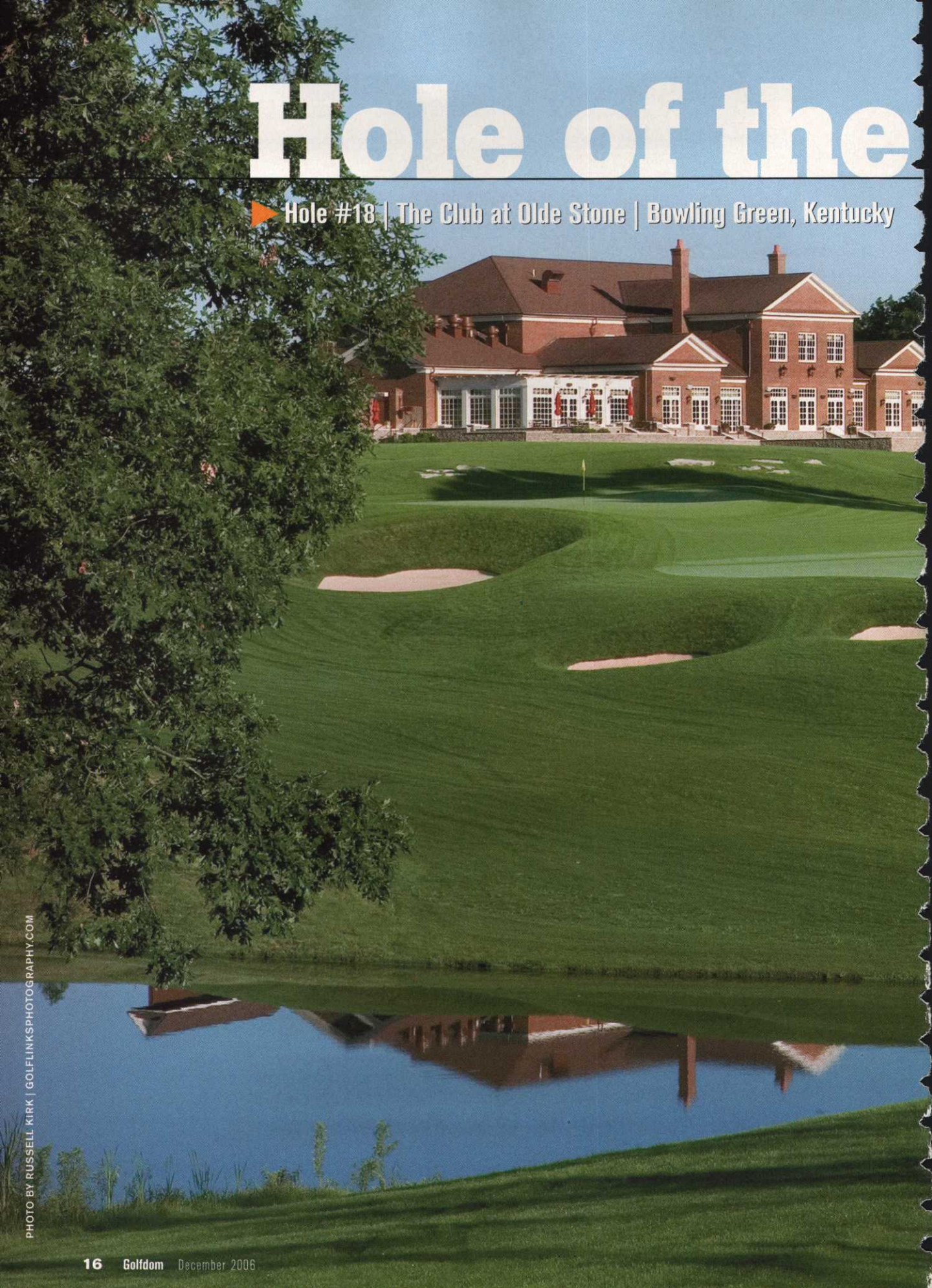


PHOTO BY RUSSELL KIRK | GOLFLINKSPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Month

Hole Stats

Distance: 574 yards

Par 5

The Turf

Green: A1/A4 Bentgrass

Fairway: L93 Bentgrass

Nestled in the rolling hills of Kentucky, The Course at Olde Stone is an Arthur Hills and Drew Rogers-designed championship golf course destined to be a classic. Opened in June 2006, the par-72 course is artfully woven into the landscape, which is a combination of hills, flatlands, trees, grassland and water.

The eighteenth hole — a 574 yard par 5 named "Eminence" — is perhaps one of the most difficult. Tee shots that win the battle against the fairway bunker in the

right hillside slope are rewarded with a carom down the fairway. The tiny "punch bowl" green is positioned at the top of the hill with closely mown turf falling away on three sides.

Using bentgrass turf is unique for the region as the cool-season grass requires additional maintenance in the southern part of the transition zone.

The turf is more susceptible to disease pressure than the native bermudagrass, and golf course superintendent Wyatt Warfel is challenged to keep diseases such as pythium, dollar spot and brown patch in check.

Warfel rotates Insignia® and Emerald® fungicides in his pest-management program, applying the products on fairways, tees and greens. A single application of Insignia over 40 acres of bentgrass in mid-July provides a consistent 21 days of control against a range of turf diseases. Emerald is applied preventively in the spring and fall for dollar spot control.

"We've used Insignia during the hottest and most stressful times of the year for our bentgrass and we know it's going to perform well," said Warfel. "It's a good product and is our 'gold' application — a product we know will give us coverage when we need it"

To see past Holes of the Month, download a desktop image and more, visit www.turffacts.com.

Better innovation from BASF is giving courses like Olde Stone better solutions, including Insignia® for broad spectrum disease control with long-term results. To find out more about Insignia, contact your distributor or BASF at www.turffacts.com



GOLFDOM'S HOLE OF THE MONTH IS MADE POSSIBLE BY:

BASF

The Chemical Company

The weather has been miserable here at the Lake Omigosh Golf Club in central Florida. One course nearby reported 60 inches of rain this summer, and we've been setting record-high temperatures in October. Superintendent Duffy McDuffy joked in the 19th Hole Grill & Whine Bar the other day that golf course maintenance can be like a reality TV show. For example:

Survivor: Bentgrass in Florida

Lake Omigosh and 10 to 12 other golf courses were planted with Penn-cross bentgrass in the mid-1980s. None of the turf survived. The Penn-cross also caused poor health. The first superintendent at Lake Omigosh collapsed one summer, and the second one had a heart attack. They wisely converted to bermudagrass shortly thereafter, following the old adage: right plant, right place. Only one course on the East Coast that closes from June to October grows a mono-stand of one of the new L-series bentgrasses year-round.

Fear Factor: Seeds of Doubt

When it comes time to renovate, there is often a lot of pressure to select one of the new varieties of ultradwarf bermudagrass and/or seashore paspalum. Each grass at each location has its own particular requirements, including mowing equipment, mowing frequency, verticutting frequency, topdressing, liquid fertilizer, fungicide applications, growth regulator applications, aeration frequency, spiking and rolling. These learning curves might take a superintendent out of his comfort zone. McDuffy acknowledged that peers in the Frostbelt faced the similar unknowns when converting to the new bentgrass varieties or going from bent to *Poa* and vice versa. I think McDuffy also mumbled something like "kikuyu," and I said, "God bless you!"

The Amazing Race: Special Events

Like runners in a marathon, superintendents must pace themselves or face burnout when dealing with everything from a grow-in and grand opening or a special event like a member-guest, club championship, state or local amateur championship or a PGA Tour event. Like a good run-

Finally, Some TV Worth Watching

BY JOEL JACKSON



SUPERINTENDENT
OR REALITY SHOW
CONTESTANT?
TOO CLOSE TO CALL

ner, a good superintendent knows how the course is laid out. The big unknown is the weather. A runner can win with the relative fastest time compared with others. A superintendent only has one shot at victory, which is measured by the fulfillment of expectations and specifications on a given day. When weather disasters strike, the resourcefulness and adaptability of superintendents and their crews are tested to the max.

The Iron Chef: Sharpen your Blades

In keeping with the current trend of supporting equipment technician associations around the state, 12 equipment managers will be given a disassembled Toro Flex Mower in a box and have a timed competition to assemble it blindfolded. Part two will be a contest to see who can sharpen an 11-bladed Jacobsen reel with a hand-held file. That contest will not be done blindfolded.

Cops: The Links Edition

The men and women of golf course maintenance filmed on location grooming the turf. Various episodes include: Golfers violating cart path rules; golfers hunting golf balls in protected environmental areas; failure to fix ball marks, divots or rake bunkers; golfers using the foot mashie; golfers hitting into maintenance workers; and maintenance workers hitting on cart girls.

The Apprentice, Again

McDuffy said a lot of superintendents already have appeared on that show and heard the words, "You're Fired!"

So long from Lake Omigosh, where the superintendent is talented, the crew is hard working and the members are about par for the course.

Certified superintendent Joel Jackson is director of communications for the Florida GCSA.

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You must balance minerals and carbon to have the best nutrition solution for fine turfgrass. Our new EarthWorks® nutrition solution is the best combination of minerals and carbon for golf course maintenance.

This year we are introducing an important new source of carbon—EarthWorks® Mycorrhiza Formula, a 50 lb bag of compost and other carbons with 250,000 spores of endoMycorrhiza.

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Joel Simmons
President
EarthWorks

Since golf's powerbrokers will be meeting during the next few months to discuss ways to improve the sport, why not ask for a few little holiday gifts for the industry?

These gifts are designed to alleviate just a little pain on industry professionals while bringing unexpected zest to recreational golf.

They are not gifts per se; they're more like holidays scattered around the golf season. Well, they're not exactly holidays either. More like celebratory weeks.

You know, something like, "Love Your Neighbor Even Though He Parks His Car On His Lawn Week."

Now I'm not suggesting any kind of "Love Your Pro" or "Don't Complain To Your Superintendent Week" (you wish!). These aspire to make golfers "Fall In Love With The Game and Help The Golf Industry While We're At It."

That said, here are my suggestions:

National No Scorecard Week: A month would be nice, but the addiction to card and pencil is so great that anything more than a week might be pushing it. During No Scorecard Week, all forms of paper and pencil are locked in storage. The scorecard pad on golf cars will somehow be disarmed to eliminate further fuel for the card-keeping compulsion.

Golfers will be asked to enjoy their rounds without documenting every stroke taken. Oh, they can still play a simple match, but nothing more while scorekeeping is eliminated for a whopping seven days.

Because someone invariably will argue that this might suggest the handicap system is a guilty party in making the card and pencil more important than life itself (where would they get that idea?), a USGA endorsement of National No Scorecard Week would be helpful. I know, six subcommittees, three legal reviews and several golf outings later, we'll still be waiting for an answer. But consider the seed planted.

National Tees Forward Day: Architect Tom Doak has actually begun serious discussions on GolfClubAtlas.com about the idea of courses around the world — in conjunction with some sort of informational campaign — moving

A Little Bit of Holiday Fantasy

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



HERE'S TO NO
SCORECARDS, NO
BUNKER RAKING,
MOVING TEES
FORWARD AND ...
YEAH, RIGHT

their tees up for a day to give golfers a fresh look and new perspective. And this is not just geared toward men who shouldn't be playing the back tees, but also for those courses that still have not adjusted their forward tees to more accurately reflect the play of those who use them. (Yes, this means moving forward tees up to fairways in some cases).

National Tees Forward Day would introduce different shots and ask golfers fresh questions, something that theoretically will liven up their golf experiences. Oh, and probably speed up play.

Come to think of it, let's make this a week-long holiday from the one-foot-in-the-rough mentality that is so mysteriously deemed necessary to protect the integrity of the game. But that might also require some sort of USGA endorsement because slope will not be accurately reflected. There goes another subcommittee.

National No Bunker Raking Week: Bunkers will be raked, just not by anyone on the maintenance staff. This week, the raking is up to the golfers.

Let them see how bad their fellow players are at raking. However, with the burden on themselves, it's likely that golfers will rake bunkers with more care. The hope here is to show that daily raking is an excessive and unnecessary expense, and it also would return a little more uncertainty to those hazards that are all too often expected to provide a certain lie.

It would be nice if this were done in conjunction with a PGA Tour event where raking ends the Sunday before a tournament begins and is then left up to the players. I know, more fantasy.

But who says you can't initiate these holidays at your own course?

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