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We aimed to illustrate how some superintendents have had to take a few punches during these tough economic times. This photo by iStock International and Carrie Parkhill's design hits the mark.



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Online Exclusive

Listen to this video podcast only at www.golfdom.com/podcasts:



The Tiger Effect – Much has been made of the impact The Tiger Woods Situation will have on the golf industry. Could Tiger's demise lead to less rounds and revenue for golf? Larry Aylward discusses the issue with Geoff Shackelford in this interview.



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I've heard all the clichés many times before from the run-of-the-mill motivational speakers who wax on about “chasing your dreams” and how “you should never give up.” But such clichés didn't seem so tired coming from the speaker I was hearing say them now.

In fact, those clichés seemed downright powerful and inspiring coming from the person standing at the podium with a cane by his side. The people in the packed audience were hanging on his every word.

When D.J. Gregory said, “With hard work, anything is possible” and “Never take ‘no’ for an answer,” you *really* believed him because you knew he was living what he was saying.

I heard Gregory speak late last year at the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association's annual conference, where he delivered the keynote address. Gregory received a standing ovation as he stepped off the stage after his speech.

Gregory's words resonated with the superintendents and others in attendance. They resonated because audience members knew what Gregory, who was born 31 years ago with cerebral palsy, had been through, such as the five surgeries on his legs he underwent by the time he was in the first grade.

Those people knew that with his hard work, something deemed impossible for Gregory — walking — was not only possible for him, but also real.

They also knew that Gregory's parents didn't take “no” for an answer when doctors told them their son, who was also born with entangled legs, would never walk and would be in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. Let me repeat what I said earlier: Gregory walked off the stage after his speech.

Let's get back to the cliché “chasing your dreams” for a moment. A lot of us chase our dreams, but never attain them. Gregory chased his and achieved it.

It's the reason he was asked to speak at the Carolinas show and at other events across the country. In 2007, Gregory, a huge golf fan, issued himself a personal challenge to walk every hole of every PGA Tournament in

Words That Mean So Much More

BY LARRY AYLWARD



WHEN D.J. GREGORY

SAID, 'WITH HARD

WORK, ANYTHING

IS POSSIBLE' AND

'NEVER TAKE

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YOU *REALLY*

BELIEVED HIM

2008. If you're counting, that's 3,256 holes or slightly less than 1,000 miles in 44 weeks.

Gregory wore out five pairs of FootJoys and endured more blisters than most of us do in our lifetimes in fulfilling the challenge.

“It was the greatest experience I could ever have,” he says.

The experience also came with much fanfare, which Gregory really didn't expect. While he set out to accomplish a personal feat, he quickly realized, by about the third tournament, he was being hailed as a hero by golf fans and PGA players. People came up to him and told him how awesome it was what he was doing. Two years later, people recognize Gregory in public after seeing his story on TV and the Internet and approach him to pay homage.

Gregory realized he was an inspiration to others and that others were using his story as a vehicle to chase their own dreams.

When all of this hit him, he felt a calling to do what he's doing — to make his rounds to share his story to motivate others.

And Gregory, who has endured more physical hardship than most of us will ever know, not to mention the mental anguish that goes with it, says he's fortunate to be able to do what's he doing.

Amazing.

“I'm a big believer that everything happens for a reason,” says Gregory, who also wrote a book about his journey. “If these are the cards I've been dealt, then these are the cards I'll play to the best of my ability.”

We've heard these clichés before. But in Gregory's case, they're words that mean so much more.

Aylward, editor in chief of Golfdom, can be reached at 216-706-3737 or laylward@questex.com.

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David Wienecke, Superintendent, Chambers Bay Golf Course
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Off The Fringe

Business briefs

November Rounds Soar

The weather was awesome in many parts of the country during November, so it's no surprise golf rounds rose 15.8 percent for the month compared to the same time in 2008, according to the National Rounds Played Report from Golf Datatech.

This makes up for a dismal October, when rounds sank a whopping 15.9 percent compared to October 2008. Incidentally, October had lousy weather throughout the country. It should also be noted that rounds in November 2008 were down 6.7 percent from 2007.

Rounds were up more than 100 percent in some states and cities, including North Dakota, South Dakota, Minneapolis, Cleveland and Milwaukee.

The findings in the November 2009 report represent 3,670 courses.

Rounds were down slightly through November 2009 — 0.2 percent — compared to 2008. Public course play is up 0.1 percent year to date. Private course activity is down 1.3 percent for the year.

Myers Joins L.A. Country Club

Russ Myers is the new golf course superintendent at the Los Angeles Country Club. He replaces Bruce Williams, who left the club last fall. Myers, formerly of Southern Hills Country Club, joins Los Angeles Country Club at a time when the 99-year-old club is undergoing a major renovation.

Myers came to Southern Hills in 2006 and hosted the PGA Championship in 2007. The Los Angeles Country Club job is heralded by some as one of the top jobs in the industry. Myers is heralded as one of the nation's top young superintendents. ■

Aline de Costa Faé says golf is already growing in Brazil.

Golf Joins The Games

TURFGRASS EXPERT EXPECTS OLYMPICS TO BOLSTER POPULARITY OF THE SPORT IN HER NATIVE COUNTRY

By Aline de Costa Faé

For the first time in the history of the Olympiad, a country in Latin America will host the Olympic Games. Brazil, represented by Rio de Janeiro, won the race to host the event in 2016, beating out Chicago, Madrid and Tokyo.

Also, golf will be included in the 2016 Olympics — the first time the sport has ever participated in the storied event.

Rio is Brazil's largest economy and the 10th biggest in the world. Some say it will be the fifth-biggest economy by 2016. Forbes magazine selected Rio de Janeiro as the "happiest city in the world." Newsweek printed that Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is the most

popular president in the world.

Rio's citizens, by more than 80 percent, supported the city's candidacy to host the games. For the entire country, the Olympics will represent a boost of money and jobs.

Brazil is a large and diverse country. It's the fifth-largest country in the world and occupies almost half of South America. Brazil is the fifth-most populated country (about 180 millions). Sports play a very important role in Brazilians' lives.

Soccer is by far the most popular sport with about 30 million participants, followed by volleyball, table tennis and swimming. About 25,000 Brazilians play golf. However, the number of players increases every year — in 1990, there were about 7,000 players.

Continued on page 8

'It's Not About Growing Grass'

VETERAN DOBIE REAFFIRMS THE IMPORTANCE OF EVERYTHING NOT ASSOCIATED WITH TENDING TURF

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

Frank Dobie has been in the golf business for 49 years. So it's easily assumed that Dobie, general manager and superintendent of the Sharon Golf Club in Sharon Center, Ohio, knows a thing or two or three or five thousand about running a golf facility -- in addition to growing turfgrass.

That's why Dobie gave a presentation titled, "It's Not About Growing Grass," at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation's annual conference and trade show in December in Columbus. Dobie talked about everything from dealing with others to dealing with a budget.

Dobie said his mentor -- the late su-

perintendent Bob Williams -- told him many years ago, "Ninety percent of what we need to know to be successful in this business is not about growing grass."

Dobie took Williams' advice to heart. And he told a packed room of superintendents who came to hear him speak that Williams' statement is just as true today as it was when Williams told him that in 1959.

Dobie reminded superintendents the importance of common courtesy and proper etiquette when dealing with others. We've heard these things many times before, but you can never be reminded of them enough.

Ironically, just as Dobie was waxing about common courtesy, a late attendee entered the meeting room and let the door slam with a crash. Dobie didn't bat an eyelash, but the late attendee's action was the epitome of bad manners.

"We've always tried to control costs so we don't have to cut costs."

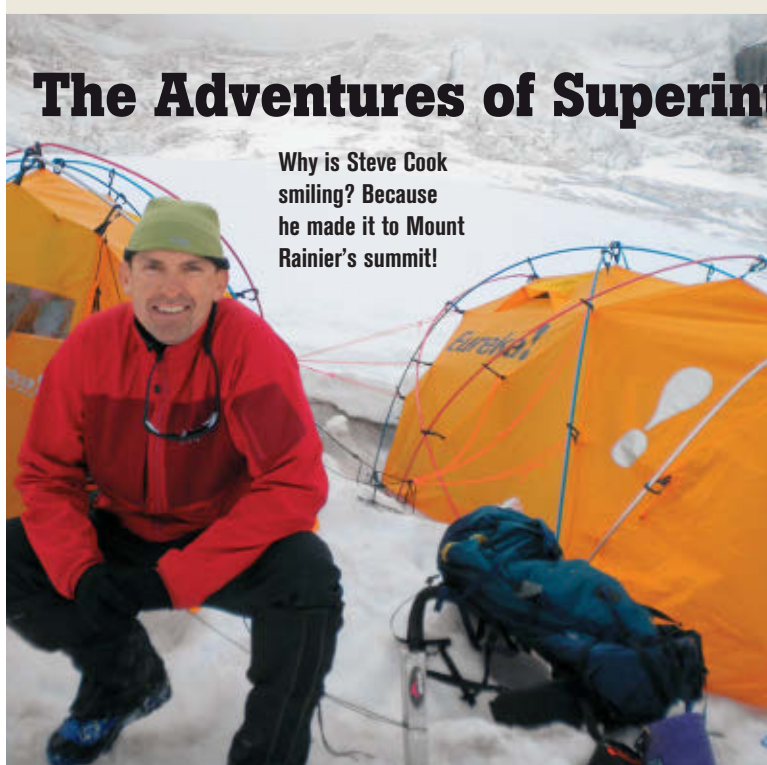
Dobie pointed out how important it is for superintendents to listen intently to their staff members and others, who can end up suggesting some good ideas on how to get things done.

"You need to listen to everyone," Dobie says. "Even a jerk has a good idea once in awhile."

Dobie also spoke about managing the golf course budget. Two of his rules are:

1. Spend what you need to get the job done right.
2. Don't spend what you don't have.

"We've always tried to control costs so we don't have to cut costs," Dobie says. ■



The Adventures of Superintendent Steve Cook

Why is Steve Cook smiling? Because he made it to Mount Rainier's summit!

Steve Cook not only can tend turfgrass with the best of 'em, he can climb mountains with the best of 'em. Late last summer, Cook, the golf course manager for Oakland Hills Country Club near Detroit, which hosted the PGA Championship in 2008, took a vacation to the Seattle area in Washington. Yeah, Cook probably spent some downtime in one of Seattle's coffee shops, but he also spent some "up" time scaling the 14,411-foot Mount Rainier. We don't think Cook found any dollar spot on Mount Rainier's summit, though.

"Climbing Mount Rainier was a wonderful learning experience," Cook says. "I had done a lot of backpacking in the mountains, but this was my first attempt at 'Mountaineering 101.'"

"The whole experience was very exciting -- and physically very difficult. I was the oldest in our group to summit. So there's something to celebrate for a 50-year-old!" -- Larry Aylward



DEEP THOUGHTS

WITH Rick Slattery

We Must Reduce Our Dependence on Water

Editor's note: Rick Slattery, longtime superintendent of Locust Hill Country Club in Rochester, N.Y., is an astute person who not only keeps up with the latest in golf course maintenance agronomics, but is well-versed in what's going on in his world, from politics to the economy to world events. *Golfdom* asked Slattery, who is on the magazine's editorial advisory board, to share some of his thoughts with readers. Slattery's column will run randomly in *Golfdom*.

The availability of water remains our most critical challenge. At last year's Golf Industry Show, professional golfer Paul Azinger's comment during his keynote address that most tournament courses are too wet was starkly revealing about the state of our industry. That message is alarming when you consider that most mainstream golf courses aspire to be like tournament courses.

We must reduce our dependence on water, and eventu-

ally eliminate any reliance on community water supplies for irrigation — and that includes businesses and homeowners. It can be done; there are already proactive golf course superintendents who aren't affected when water rationing is mandated, because they already use less than what is allocated to them. It's increasingly imperative that, as an industry, we start turning down the water on a mass scale. One solution may simply be for everyone to install a basic GPM (gallons per minute) gauge on their courses' irrigation systems, and just try to use less water than the previous year.

The future will dictate to us, for environmental and economic reasons, that we must manage golf courses with less agronomic input. The days of high maintenance and high input are coming to a close, even for the elite golf clubs that will still be able to afford it.

Without sacrificing job security, superintendents must continue to search for ways to reduce input but not quality. In the 40 years I've been involved in golf course maintenance, we absorbed the loss of a countless number of chemicals that became considered unsafe for the environment, while overall playing conditions actually improved during the same time period.

Going forward, should we only focus on defending our way of life, or increase our attention to removing the barriers for new research and innovation that's targeted to discover alternative methods of safer, less costly and more available means of agriculture? If the new political spotlight is on "Rebuilding America" then we should want to be a part of that. ■

Golfdom would like to hear your deep thoughts on Slattery's view. Just send an e-mail to info@golfdom.com.

THE GAMES *Continued from page 6*

The number is low, compared to other types of sport, but it's a good number when taken into consideration the sport is relatively new to Brazilians.

The first golf course constructed in Brazil was in 1901. Today, there are about 100 golf courses with many more coming. The decision to include golf in the program for the 2016 Olympic Games has brought considerable attention to the sport in Brazil. Many people believe this will be the incentive the sport needs to increase its popularity around the country.

The Brazilian Olympic Committee (COB) ensures the Brazilian Golf Confederation (CBG) will have the resources to develop an action plan to increase the number of players. The CBG intends to build new training centers, among other initiatives.

For Brazil, the advantages of hosting the Olympic Games seems to outweigh the disadvantages. Normally with big events, Brazilians are most concerned with the possibility of corruption and misuse of public money. However, they understand that by engaging the whole country and auditing

the process and the money expenditure, the 2016 Olympics will be a success.

Brazilians also believe it will be good for golf in South America, especially Brazil. Golf will become more visible in the media. People will learn how golf is played. Brazilians will certainly fall in love with golf — 25,000 of us already have. ■

Aline de Costa Faé, who lives in Florianópolis, Brazil, is the country's lead for the GlobalTurfNetwork. She has authored or co-authored 65 technical articles on turfgrass management in Portuguese and English.

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Hole of the Month

HOLE NO.

7

THE OLD COURSE, BROKEN SOUND

Originally created in the 1980s by famed course architect Joe Lee, The Old Course at Broken Sound Country Club has recently been given a whole new set of teeth thanks to the imaginative trap designs conceived and implemented by award-winning designer Gene Bates. The celebrated course hosts many state and national events, including the Allianz Championship of the PGA Champions Tour for the past four years.

Playing to just under 300 yards from the back tee, Hole No. 7 might seem like an easy birdie with potential for an eagle. In reality, members of this private course must carry the corner of the pristine lake and an intimidating quarter-acre of sand just to make the fairway. This beautiful birdie bait can just as easily leave you with a double bogey – which might ruin one’s mood, if it weren’t for the breathtaking piney woods and abundance of wildlife that surround the hole.

But it was this very wildlife that was causing headaches for Joe Hubbard, Director of Golf Course Operations for Broken Sound. Hungry raccoons and armadillos had ravaged the fairways and roughs in search of insects, creating significant damage when the course was at its busiest. After being disappointed with the results he had gotten with other products, Hubbard chose the solution that was already being used to protect the club’s other larger course. That solution was Talstar® insecticide. “Talstar helped eradicate and repel the sod webworms, armyworms and a host of other insects to keep damage to a minimum for aesthetics and play,” Hubbard said. “It is our ‘go to’ insecticide.” Now the only problem spots on No. 7 are the devilish pin placement possibilities available for a challenging course setup. Good or bad, it’s 290 yards a golfer won’t soon forget.

HOLE STATS
 Distance: 290 yards, Par 4

THE TURF
 Green: TrifEagle Bermudagrass
 Fairway: TrifSport Bermudagrass



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