



TPC CLUBS — THEY'RE HEADED OUR WAY!

By Tom Vlach



If you hear Pat Summeral talking about forty thousand fans filling a stadium for a sporting event, don't jump to the conclusion that it is a football or baseball game they are watching. There is a new concept in golf course architecture called "stadium golf." Stadium golf refers to the building of artificial mounds and rows of railroad ties into hills around a golf course to act as bleachers or stands. This enables fans to enjoy watching all players at a couple of different holes instead of walking miles in a day only to see some of the play between hundreds of people's heads. By restricting people traffic, major golf tournaments can be held at courses that otherwise couldn't withstand the stresses often associated with tournaments featuring the world's top golfers.

This concept in design was first introduced at Sawgrass, Florida. Course designer, Pete Dye, transformed four hundred acres of swampland into forty acres of tees, greens, and fairways. The controversy surrounding this golf course is the difficulty level created by Dye with his unforgiving use of pot bunkers, railroad ties, and telephone poles. Golf courses so designed comprise a network of what are now known as Tournament Players Clubs (TPCs). The TPC idea was introduced by the current PGA Commissioner, Deane Beamen.

What is a Tournament Players Club (TPC)? How does it differ from an average country club? Most people will agree that almost everything differs! A Tournament Players Club is required by the PGA Tour to be a home to a PGA Tour event or a Senior PGA Tour event. PGA Tour players are allowed to practice at any one of the fifteen TPCs that are now in operation. Club members have the added excitement of knowing that they can be practicing with the likes of such golf professionals as Jack Nicklaus and Greg Norman. The PGA Tour selects sites that offer

maximum exposure and profitability with minimal investment. These clubs have turned out to be quite profitable; they raised more than twenty million dollars in revenue for the tour in 1985.

Most of the Tournament Players Clubs are private, except for the TPC at Scottsdale, which is totally public. Fees and costs for memberships range from as little as seventy-nine dollars for an associate membership at the TPC at Sawgrass to as much as one hundred thousand dollars for a "Master" membership at the TPC at PGA West in LaQuinta, California.

Today's fifteen Tournament Players Clubs have been designed by ten different architects with the help of player consultants from the P.G.A. Tour. Many tour players feel that the TPC courses look and play alike. A major concern that the tour players have expressed is that the new TPC courses will eventually replace some of the prestigious courses such as Pebble Beach and Butler National. It is not the goal of the PGA Tour to replace the finest courses, but only to improve on courses that cannot handle the added exposure and huge attendance figures. On the whole, tour players agree that the new TPC courses are drastic improvements over the courses that they have replaced.

To exemplify the high quality of playing conditions at Tournament Players Clubs, one must examine the planning and ingenuity that went into building these courses. Good examples of this planning and preparation can be seen in the Tournament Players Club at Eagle Trace in Coral Springs, Florida. Eagle Trace was designed by golf course architect, Arthur Hills, in 1980. The highly organic south Florida land had to be covered with ten inches of sand to help establish a good base for the turf growth. The added sand helped to offset the drainage problems created by spectator mounds. Yet, sand alone was not enough to solve

this drainage problem. Eagle Trace is equipped with one hundred and twenty catch-basins and four miles of sub-surface drainpipe to combat drainage problems that are created by heavy south Florida rains. The highly advanced drainage system allows the course to be played just minutes after a soaking rain. To enhance the aesthetic aspects of the course, Hills imported three thousand trees representing twenty-three species. He has made extensive use of ground foliage and wild flowers as well.

Through the hard work of Deane Beamen and a commitment by the PGA, the Tour Players Clubs are bringing more enjoyment to the sport for the fans. Fans are now given the opportunity to watch professional golf from all different viewing points instead of walking miles just to catch glimpses of their favorite players.

Some of you may be asking yourselves, of what concern are these courses to me? As the PGA Tour grows, so does the expansion of the Tournament Players Clubs. Currently, the fifteen Tournament Players Clubs in the United States are concentrated in the South. Recently, the tour expanded to Connecticut, Colorado, Maryland and Tennessee. As you can see, as the tour grows, so does the expansion of Tournament Players Clubs northward. Don't be surprised if you see Tournament Players Clubs popping up in the Midwest within the next five years.

Editor's Note: "Greetings from the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. My name is Tom Vlach and I am currently living in Janesville. I am a freshman majoring in Soil Science and specializing in Turf and Grounds Management. I am actively involved in the Badger Turf and Grounds Club, where I now serve as secretary-treasurer. I have been fortunate enough to

receive the John Nichols Memorial Scholarship for my first year at the university. My golf course experience includes working at the Tournament Play-

ers Club at Eagle Trace in Coral Springs, Florida, for three years and one year at Lake Geneva Country Club in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. I am truly

looking forward to my next years at the UW-Madison and reading "The Grass Roots".

SPRING BUSINESS MEETING – REVITALIZED!

By Mark Kienert

Was it the weather? This year on a particular day or last summer in general that brought 102 WGCSA members out of hibernation?

A record number of WGCSA members attended the 1988 spring business meeting which featured a morning educational session. Over 100 people made the trip to Fond du Lac. An even bigger surprise, to most past and present members, was the number of members in attendance that stayed for the actual business meeting! Those who took in the full day of activity realized it was time spent really well.

To get things off and running, Wayne Otto opened the morning educational session with his thesis on 13 years of sand topdressing and the related problems. He emphasized his return to aerification and overseeding with bentgrass in the process. Otto predicts a return on the use of the power spiker to open up the surface and to break layers formed, thereby creating a space for more sand. If you decide to use sand, you must start early in the year to avoid layers and the topdressing should be heavy enough when applied to equal the growth rate.

Jerry Kershasky gave a review of his literature review of phosphorus deficiency associated with cold weather. Jerry's slide presentation gave vivid proof of the "Purplish Hue" that covers the entire putting surface on many of his greens. Nutritional deficiencies were concluded after the appearance of fairy rings which appeared in green crescent shapes across much of the putting surface. Jerry recommends the use of Mono-Ammonium Phosphate at the quarter pound rate when the air temperatures are at or below the 50° mark.

Of particular note to those not attending the GCSAA International Turfgrass Conference and Show held this year in Houston was Jerry's review of

the Black Layer Forum. As a review, for a black layer to form you have to have 1.) anaerobic conditions; 2) an electron donor, either through a "Surface Algae" donor or ammonium or sulphur fertilizer products; 3) lower pH's associated with sulphur use and; 4) sulphur reducing bacteria. It was the consensus of the panel that a program to halt the Black Layer includes 1) hand watering; 2) return to aerification practices; 3) the use of mono-ammonium phosphate; 4) the use of potassium nitrate fertilizers, which will add five free oxygen molecules to the soil profile.

University of Wisconsin soil scientist, Dr. Wayne Kussow, reviewed his fertilizer management programs for putting surfaces and encouraged a late season fertilizer application approach. He suggested that turfgrass has a memory, so treat your bread and butter with a little TLC. In tune with green fertility management, Dr. Kussow advised against the practice of green speed management through the reduction of season nitrogen applications. Also, avoid nitrogen application to heat stressed turf since the plant has already increased plant tissue percentages of nitrogen. Always culturally do whatever it takes to increase the turfgrass plant verdure, since it increases nitrogen recovery. Dr. Kussow sees the day when we use plant tissue analysis as a basis for our nitrogen applications.

Comments concerning the phosphorus role in increasing *Poa annua* populations were somewhat refuted by Dr. Kussow. His research has shown that plant tissue concentrations of phosphorus increase with each nitrogen application made. He recommended maintenance levels of phosphorus from .5 to 1.5 pounds/M/season.

With regard to potassium levels, increased nitrogen rates also increase the level of K found in plant tissue. He recommended a rate of 3-5 pounds/M/

year or on a 1:1 ratio with nitrogen. Dr. Kussow made one recommendation that will help the plant cope with moisture stress. It has been proven that lowering the height of cut *and* increasing the frequency of mowings per week reduces the canopy. A reduced and less dense canopy reduces water loss caused by air currents.

Blackwolf Run golf course superintendent, Marc Davison, presented an excellent slide show depicting the construction and growing-in problems associated with new course construction. He gave many in the audience their first glimpse of this exceptional golf course soon to be born in the state.

Red Roskopf, golf course owner and WTA Director, reviewed for the group the statewide fund raising efforts underway to construct a research facility on the new UW golf course. The ambitious, yet attainable goal of the WTA to open the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research Center by the year 1992. Red asked all in attendance to start programs, both individually and with their clubs, to support this worthwhile endeavor. He mentioned that the new pesticide regulations have sparked new interest in the lawn care industry around our state to help us in fund raising efforts.

Highlights of the business meeting included a one year freeze on the dues paid by Class E members and the creation of a panel to review this process.

THE GRASS ROOTS will once again be delivered to us via First Class Postage. This expense will be picked up by the association.

The WGCSA adopted a three year pledge of \$20,000 to help with the construction of the new research center. And finally, the bylaw changes pertaining to our tax status, as drawn up by the IRS themselves for organizations like the WGCSA passed without question.