



OPENING DAY

By Michael Semler



By the time most of you read this, you will likely have experienced the opening day at your golf courses. Since the golf course I manage is scheduled for opening on June 1 of this year, we still have a few weeks to go.

I think that for all superintendents, opening day is traditionally the biggest event in the golf season. It may not be the most enjoyable event because the pressures to get the course open can be quite substantial; nevertheless, it is still a lot of fun.

This year will be an one of the most enjoyable opening day events for myself. The reason is that, for the past two years, construction and preparations have been under way for this opening. In looking back on the past two years there were times I felt that the project would never be completed. At times, the amount of earthwork that took place appeared astronomical. The meticulous staking and grading, and then regrading, have

moved that mountain of soil into shapes and forms that now make golf holes. The seed bed preparation seemed to go on forever. Rains, which in years past would bring a smile to any golf course superintendent, only brought a string of curses. Finally, when the last of the seed was sown and the sod was laid, a large party was held by the golf course staff in celebration of the completion.

Now that the construction phase is complete, I wonder where the past two years have gone? I know my wife and son feel the same way, only for different reasons. I can now look back and feel a sense of deep relief. I feel relief because the slopes have been stabilized with a cover of turf. I can finally experience a day without 8 irrigation cycles and the added problems that go with it. Because the 1 million or more rivulets caused by the rains have been repaired. (or at least 900,000 of them). And finally, I feel relief because we can show off what

the last two years of difficult work has accomplished.

No one can come close to describing what constructing a new golf course involves; you have to experience it. The trials and tribulations seem to take a heavy toll on the spirit of the workers. Yet they continue making slow and steady progress, until finally, by some miraculous happening, the golf course is finished and ready to play.

I really do believe that this will be one of the more enjoyable opening days I will experience. Although I must admit, that one of the true pleasures of the past two years has been the absence of golfers, and the ability to enjoy all 230 acres for myself. Now that is an experience we should all get to have!

However, like every opening day on every golf course, a whole new set of challenges await me and the staff, and it is time to begin preparing for them. 🌿



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