

With high rainfall, sandy soils, 12 month growing season, and hybrid bermuda, high fertilization was a must. Back to logistics, when everything comes by ship and takes maybe five to six months for delivery, good inventories must be kept. For example, I had to order a sod cutter blade by air freight and the shipping cost was much more than the cost of the blade.

As to the culture and job related problems, they were minimal. Fiji's population is about 60% Indian (brought from India in the late 1800s to cut sugar cane) and about 40% Fijian who are a negroid race. Our crew was about 90% Fijian. The man whom I was training to become a superintendent was about 50 years old and of European ancestry although his family had been in Fiji several generations. It was almost like being in Minnesota for his name is Ted Peterson. The second man, Brian Eastgate, was about 22 years old and also European. Both men spoke Fijian fluently and were, therefore, able to carry out most of the actual work direction. At one time we had nearly 200 men working on the construction of the golf course although only about half were under my supervision and direction.

The men were paid about 50 cents an hour but they were very happy to have a job and worked extremely hard providing they knew what was expected of them.

OSHA would have had fits in Fiji, for example, I would say that about 95% of my crew worked barefoot. Most of them had probably never had a pair of any kind of shoes in their lives. It was amazing to watch the type of terrain that they could walk over or watch a man digging a trench with a shovel and barefoot. When I left we had 50 men working on golf course maintenance and were planning to cut this to about 30, who would form the year around staff. It may be of interest that despite the high rainfall we had the capability of irrigating the entire course with a double row fairway system and all of the trenching for the system dug by hand.

We were there in their summer, December-March, and it was hot and humid, although the body seems to adapt quite well. The average temperature is around 87° with the relative humidity about the same. Winter might find it cooling off only five or six degrees with slightly less rainfall. Despite this, disease was a problem for only about three or four weeks which I guessed to be mostly a pythium species. Various species of cutworms were the worst problem. They could quickly defoliate an entire fairway although recovery would be quick.

All in all it was an experience that we thoroughly enjoyed and would like and hope to do again. Fiji is about everything that you have heard of a South Sea Island and the Fijians are undoubtedly the most likeable people anywhere.

Of course, on my return it was necessary for me to find employment and I have taken the position of Golf Course Superintendent at the Chattanooga Golf and Country Club, Chattanooga, Tennessee and we will be leaving for there in July. The Chattanooga Golf & Country Club is a very old club, having been built in the 1890s. It has bent grass and bermuda fairways and golf is played the year around. Chattanooga is on the Georgia-Tennessee border and is on most routes to Florida, so we hope that those of you who head for Florida for a winter vacation will give us a call when you come through.

VANDALISM AT THE WHITE BEAR YACHT CLUB, AUGUST 3, 1974

A cart was stolen and driven over greens 8-10-17, spinning the wheels and tearing up the greens, driving over the pins and poking holes in the greens with the poles. They then totaled out the golf cart by rolling it down the #8 golf path. Superintendent Tom Frost and his staff used nursery sod and repaired the greens and fortunately, by Sunday, the 4th, you could hardly tell there was any damage. we are certainly glad to learn of the quick repair. However, it is too bad these vandals cannot be apprehended and punished.