

COMBATING WATER PROBLEMS

by SCOTT LIESTMAN
SUPERINTENDENT
RUM RIVER GOLF CLUB

Rum River Golf Club is a small nine hole golf course located in Princeton, Minnesota with the Rum River running adjacently. Since its beginning in 1953, we have had a problem with flooding. In the mid 1960's the membership constructed a dike that is still in tact today, but just hasn't solved all of our problems. There has always been some seepage through the dike and our floodgates are not completely watertight. Every time the river comes up, enough water seeps in to create a large pond in the middle of our fourth fairway and create a channel of water about forty yards wide across our sixth and seventh fairways. Thus limiting our play to only several holes. This condition would occur two to four times yearly causing us to lose two to four weeks of revenue a year. So the question was, what should we do?

We proposed to build a new pond on the left side of our fourth fairway, and use the fill from the pond to raise our problem areas. There was little if any opposition from the board and stockholders, so our next question was when do we do this major reconstruction? Mother Nature helped us with the answer. In June of 1984 we received 10.5 inches of rain in eight days and were completely flooded causing us to shut down for a period of almost four weeks. When the water finally receded we had six acres of dead turf. The time was now.

We began by measuring and marking all of our areas to be filled and used a transit to figure the depths and grades of fill and estimated that we would need approximately nine thousand cubic yards of earth moved. We then staked and measured all of our sprinkler heads that would be covered over so we could relocate them with the least amount of effort. Next we received bids from several construction companies and decided who to go with. I drew up a contract stating each area to be worked on and that each area worked on was finished only when all grade readings were approved by myself.

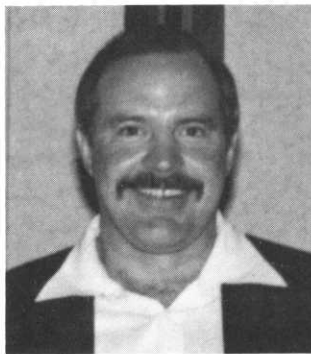
The heavy construction began the second week of August and ended about the first of September. We then finish graded each area and seeded with Athletic Pro at a rate of 150 lbs./acre on fairways and 100 lbs./acre on roughs using a Jacobsen overseeder. A balanced fertilizer was applied at a rate of 1 lb./1000 sq. ft. in some areas prior to and in some areas after germination. Germination was excellent and areas first seeded around September 1 were playable late this past fall. Areas seeded around the 15th of September I feel will be playable by mid May. There was one

seeding on September 20th that may have been too late for adequate bluegrass germination due to cold weather that came early. We still have about one acre of drainage ditch that we were unable to seed because of the wet fall. When the weather would not allow us to seed any more we installed 6100 feet of drain tile which all flows into our new pond. The pond in turn overflows into the river when the river drops low enough to open our flood gates.

It didn't take long to find out if our project did what it was supposed to for the Rum River left its banks again late this fall. The water that always backs into the course was contained quite well in our new pond. I see no reason why all nine of our holes will not remain playable throughout the season also with the use of carts. We feel that our club will be able to open one to three weeks earlier in the spring and that we now can avoid having water problems every time we get a heavy rain. This project cost us about twelve thousand dollars, but we feel we should be able to recover this within three years with the playing time gained.

Because of all the rain we had this past year, I have worked with the National Weather Service Hydrology Department in trying to get Princeton as a river forecast point. Thus hoping to enable us to know when the river should crest. At this time, Anoka is the farthest point North that any forecasting is done on the Rum River.

1984 was a very busy and interesting year for me, but it has come to a close. Now I look ahead to 1985 to see what loose ends to clean up from last year and what new projects to take on this year. I hope you all have as great a year as I am planning to have.



EDITOR'S CORNER

FRED ANDERSON, JR.

Winter got you down? Tired of looking at your shop walls? All fished out? Well, I'm here to help you get rid of the winter blues. You have many options that are very enjoyable and quite inexpensive. For those who live in the Twin Cities area or get to visit on a regular basis, the following attractions will help recharge your batteries and help keep your mind off your ice greens or desiccated greens at least for a few hours. continued on Page 7