

# East vs. West —

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inery. This makes it necessary to use full-time staff for mechanical operations for morning and afternoon job tasks, leaving manual labor projects to part-time staff.

The Japanese want to maintain similar quality conditions as in the United States. To do so, they try to create the same conditions as in the United States. Japan soils are very heavy clay soils and volcanic rock. This makes it difficult to grow quality turfgrass. To achieve better soil profiles, they remove soil and rock in areas where tees, fairways and greens are to be located. They then replace this area with straight sand and soil amendments. They usually do a very good job with elaborate surface drainage. Problems arise when very little or no subsurface drainage is attained on these high sand profiles built on top of heavy clay and rock. This combined with the large amounts of rain received each season will challenge even the best American superintendents to produce quality turfgrass. But through persistence and good water management (with a little help from drain tiling), quality turfgrass can successfully be attained.

Fertilizers are another inadequate resource for the Japanese greenskeepers. Most fertilizers produced here are of agriculture grade and ratios (such as 1:1:1). The nitrogen source is of high salt content and potassium is from chloride as impure materials. Fortunately, some American products are available at a slightly higher price. The problem is convincing the Japanese greenskeepers to stop thinking they are growing agriculture products and start thinking of fertilizing turfgrass. Their experience is very inadequate to produce quality turfgrass health.

Japan, as a country, has available to them some very good pest-control materials. Many chemicals used are the

same as in the United States. There is a serious problem in their dilution rates. The Japanese greenskeepers are requested to spray materials at ten times the rate of water applied to the surface of the turfgrass than in the United States. This reduces the effectiveness of the pesticides used in most cases. I am having to retain their thought process on spray application rates to achieve the best results for the pesticides.

Dealing with suppliers is very interesting in Japan. The traditional method of picking our suppliers is by whom you like to deal with. Most suppliers carry all products necessary for golf course maintenance. The same supplier will carry Toro, Jacobsen, Cushman and other brand equipment. They also may carry various golf course supplies from different companies. The problem with this method is there is no competitive bidding with other suppliers. Also, service needs are not considered as part of a good supplier. I am encouraged to see this way of thinking is changing because of economic restraints. The "money is no object" philosophy is definitely diminished in Japan.

Golf course in Japan are coming of age. With the increased popularity of American management practices, Japanese courses can move quickly to a higher level of excellence. I hope I can help just a little in the movement in that direction. I look forward to a new year of growth with the Japanese greenskeepers. For now, West is on top. But with Japanese determination, East could soon equal or overcome the West's dominance.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

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### RECLASSIFICATIONS—JUNE 12, 1995

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