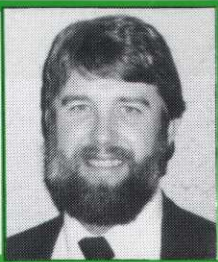


EDITOR'S CORNER

By Tom Parent
River Oaks Golf Course



I try to be controversial and again get silence or whole-hearted agreement. I can't be any more like Rush Limbaugh than last month's One Guy's Opinion. So, I'll just say my peace, on subjects near and dear to my heart, until **someone gets sick of it and writes in something.**

I had a whole series of articles ready on low input sustainable turf that I thought I knew a lot about. **WRONG!** Since my article was published in the March 1996 issue of *Golf Course Management Magazine*, I have received at least one phone call a day, from fellow superintendents, or Voodoo mix suppliers, from all over the country.

There are superintendents living my dream of: The pesticide-free maintenance of high quality turf grass. There is an entire subculture of superintendents that have, like myself, made this goal the focal point of their lives.

But unlike me they are succeeding. As a result the entire remainder of "Low input" is . . . well . . . junk. Not in as much as the information was wrong, but outdated and incomplete.

In several weeks, I am hoping to fly to St. Louis, Mo. to speak with a superintendent who raises bentgrass greens, tees and fairways with little to no pesticides. Please notice I wrote pesticides, not just fungicides. This man also gets upset if he has to put down more than one pound of nitrogen a year.

All I have learned falls very far into the too-good-to-be-true category, even for me. Yet, as I said before, every day someone calls me with another example of very low input turf. These people are very excited to have someone who doesn't think they're crazy to talk to.

So I will rewrite low input or better yet get an article straight from the source. Until then I will hopefully sustain this high learning curve. It's getting to the point I have been having trouble getting to sleep at night trying to digest it all.

On a lighter note, I had the impression that *Hole Notes* editors were required to go to Augusta, Georgia. So my wife and I did. Not liking crowds, we went down two weeks early and visited my wife's cousin. The azaleas were blooming, the grass was green and Augusta National was a block away. I can't figure why Arnold and Jack didn't come early so we could watch them through the fence. It sure looks a lot different than on television.

It was surprising to see, in person, whole golf courses that were brown except for the greens. It must be a whole different business down south. People play golf in the

spring, fall and winter and stay in the air-conditioning in our busy season. During half that time the courses are either dormant or coming into or out of dormancy.

One thing I love about the South besides the people and the culture is the food. Deep frying are not dirty words in the south. My wife and I tried to go a day without eating something deep-fried——we failed. I've always felt right at home down there. I can't imagine their summers or my waistline though — give me the North!!!

I'm always looking for good quotes for the bottom of my E-mail messages and found an unusual source. I read the flyers from Best Buy, Comp USA, Office Depot, Knox, Menards like some people follow stock prices. Want to know the going rate for fencing? I'm your guy. Next time you get a flyer from Menards, check the bottom of the pages. You'll find little jewels of wisdom and humor.

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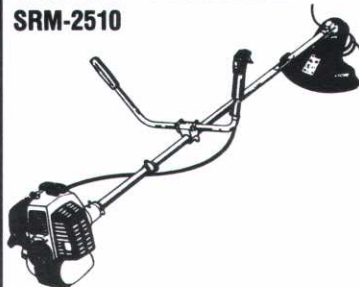
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