

Par Aide: Home Grown Company Embraces Super Ideas

By Steve Garske
President, Par Aide Products Co.

As Par Aide Products Co. closes in on its 50th anniversary, it's a great time to take a look back on our history, and to call attention to how Minnesota Superintendents have contributed to our success - in addition to being such loyal supporters of our product line.

Our company roots go back to a chance encounter at the 1954 annual PGA meeting held in St. Paul. My father, Joe Garske, was invited to that event as the guest of Wally Mund, Golf Professional at Midland Hills CC, President of the PGA and a good personal friend.



Steve Garske
Par Aide President

Somehow during this conference, Joe was given the challenge of building a "good" ball washer. No one knows for sure how it came about, but as the owner of a non-ferrous foundry, Dad was clearly in a position to experiment with the idea, and designed the Par Aide ball washer that is not much different today, at least in function. In fact, it was the helical agitator which by its nature causes the ball to turn in random direction, thus more completely cleaning it, that allowed for the original patent, awarded in 1957.

He took his prototype to his first GCSAA conference and show in St. Louis in 1955, and a star was born. Response was overwhelming. As the story I understand goes, he stopped at both Standard Golf in Iowa, and diverted over to Menasha, Wis., to visit with Lewis Line on his way back home. As these were the only two known companies making golf course accessories, his objective was to sell

his design, patent, tooling, etc to one of them. He knew nothing about the golf business but did know how, and wanted, to make the castings for them. Both turned him down and Par Aide was born as a simple diversion of Progress Casting Co. (In fact, on the early models of the Junior and Senior ball washers, a few still used on Minnesota courses today, will show the Par Aide logo but will also read "manufactured by Progress Foundries").

From what I was told upon returning to Par Aide in the '80s, by whom I refer to affectionately as the "old timers" such as Jim Lindblad, Bill Johnson, Joe Moris, Jack Kolb, John Fuller, Russ Adams, Jerry Bibbey, Jerry Murphy, Larry Mueller and so many others, the Minnesota association was informal and very personal. My father was well aware of the support and friendship he received in those early years, which was probably vital in allowing this young company to grow.



We are indebted to those of you who not only support us through your buying decisions but have become personal friends of ours as well. We are proud to call Minnesota home and the MGCSA, our association.

We will be celebrating our 50th year, 2005, in a variety of ways. We hope that you will share in our and your success in turf industry.

(Continued on Page 33)

Quality since
1972

8011 Bavaria Road
Victoria, MN 55386

Specializing in • Restoration • Renovation
• Drainage Problems • Slit Drainage • Greens
• Bunkers • Laser Leveling • Grading • Irrigation

Jeffrey Hartman
952-443-2958

GOLF DIVISION

Kisch Goes National –

(Continued from Page 32)

Kinkead adds, "The whole project came together very quickly. I think we had the first prototype for Roger to use in a total of 90 days. National Mower has had a relationship with Roger for a very long time. Roger has given valuable input on products in the past. We are happy to have a place for this product in the National Mower product line."

Kisch truly believes that this mower benefits Superintendents all over the world. It affords the opportunity to mow difficult areas and keep the turf in these areas free from contamination of other grass varieties. It also keeps heavy equipment away from delicate greens and tees.

Instead of sending out a 3,000 lb. rotary mower to mow these areas and risk the possibility of scalping and tearing turf,

Roger now sends out a 450 lb. tow-behind-mower pulled by a 3-wheeled bunker rake. The lightweight and very low psi allows this combination to go just about anywhere.

One of the biggest issues surrounding the new mower was "What to call it?" "The Kisch Kutter" was a thought, but the name I - Gang 3 was settled upon. This follows suit with the Innovative line of new mowers being produced by National Mower Company.

Roger truly believes that all superintendents have the need for equipment that is unique to their facilities, and that no one piece of equipment will do everything for everybody. His suggestion to all superintendents: "Go against the flow and use your creative talent to come up with ideas, and follow through with them." Who knows, you may have that idea that impacts the lives of Superintendents all over the world.



Roger Kisch
Superintendent, Southview Country Club

Par Aide Products –

(Continued from Page 27)

However, the contribution of Minnesota Superintendents goes beyond mere support. Through the years many of our product offerings have been inspired by or designed and offered to us by Superintendents from all over the world, including a number from Minnesota. For this we are not only fortunate but also very grateful. And, furthermore, what is so interesting is that these folks almost always come to us without attorneys and/or great expectations of wealth. Most all are just excited about sharing a good idea with their peers.

Some of the notable contributions (and I sincerely hope I am not missing any!) include the following in no particular order:

Scott Melby, Stencils (2004 catalog, page 49); Dick Grundstrom, retired, Bubble level handle for hole cutters (page 61); Scott Austin, Midland Hills CC, Superintendent's Tool (page 62); John Fuller/George Ostler 3-prong cup puller (page 62);

Bob McKinney, Mendakota CC, Traditional Park Bench (page 68);

And most recently, Shaun Peltier, Eagle Valley GC, (Pro and GM) Safe-Tee Water (introduced in 2004); Jack MacKenzie, North Oaks CC, Green & Whites (new for 2005).

Perhaps one of my favorites was one of the first, as far as I am told. Apparently early on in the history of Par Aide, George Ostler, who was then the Superintendent at Midland Hills where my father was a member, hurt his back and suggested to my father that there had to be an easier way to extract the plug from the hole cutter. From this need came the Lever Action Hole Cutter. Who would have guessed?

Although our business is international in scope, we will always be your Company. Our ball washers continue to proudly display that we are manufactured in St. Paul, MN, and indeed as with most all of our products, they are American made and specifically Minnesota made. -- Steve Garske, President, Par Aide Products Co. PS: We're still looking for ideas!

