

Superintendent Inventor Roger Kisch Goes National

By Greg Brodd

Roger Kisch, the Superintendent at Southview Country Club for more than 38 years, is not new to the business of taking an idea and implementing it into an invention that will make his life easier. Roger is always in search of a product to make the tasks of a Golf Course Superintendent easier.

One of Rogers's earliest inventions was a 3-deck tow behind rotary mower. He constructed this out of things that he "had on hand." He used this mower to manure the areas around the greens and tees at Southview Country Club. "These areas are very undulating and a reel mower would scalp the bumps," says Kisch. "I would send out a crew of 4 with 22" push mowers and mow around the greens and tees. It looked great but it just took too long. I then came up with the idea to pull

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3 mowers behind a utility cart; this proved to be just what I was looking for. The quality of cut and the ability to follow the undulating surfaces proved to be perfect for the terrain at Southview, not to mention the speed of completing this task has been remarkable."

That idea was born 25 years ago and in 2003, Roger asked National Mower if they could build an even better version for him. They got together and Roger told them what he thought needed to be done. They took these ideas and improved on what used to be built in Southview's shop out of old bedknives and spare parts. Each year Roger would make changes to the original design, but never could quite come up with the ideal implementation of components. National Mower has taken the basic design of his idea and given it the finishing touches needed. "Stan Kinkead has always been someone who is open to fresh new ideas, and when approached by the idea to build this new rotary mower he did not hesitate" said Kisch.

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Roger Kisch brought this idea to National Mower. National Mower then fine tuned it and produced the I-Gang 3 Rotary Mower pictured in the photo below.



The I-Gang 3

Kisch Goes National –

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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."

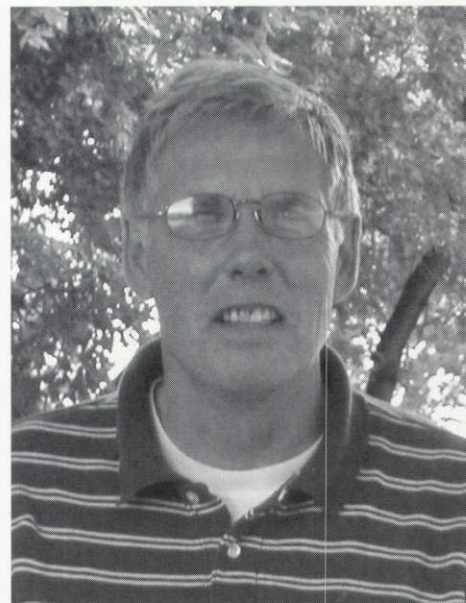
Kisch truly believes that this mower benefits Superintendents all over the world. It affords the opportunity to mow difficult areas and keep the turf in these areas free from contamination of other grass varieties. It also keeps heavy equipment away from delicate greens and tees.

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 –

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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!

