

October/November 2000

Volume 71, Number 4

Covering Up Blue Jeans

Never before has the "image" of the Golf Course Superintendent been more topical and "in the news" than the past few months. For those of you confused by this headline, you may recall a familiar Tee-2-Green advertisement this summer featuring Mark Wilson, CGCS, Superintendent at Valhalla the site of the 2000 PGA Championship. In it's original form published in several national magazines, Wilson was wearing blue jeans. When the advertisement ran in the August issue of Golf Course Management the photo had been amended changing the color of the pants. As you might imagine this decision has been widely discussed among superintendents and in GCSAA's online forum "Talking it Over." For critics of GCSAA policy, after months of debating PDI, the amended photo was like pouring gasoline on a fire.

There is no denying the importance of "image." Public perception is influenced by outward appearances. Those of you that attended our April meeting will certainly agree. Our speaker was an image consultant, Geoff Lewis. He gave an excellent presentation showing slides of men and women with various hairstyles, clothes, etc. and asked the audience to guess their profession, incomes, etc. As you might expect, we labeled the well dressed and groomed individuals as successful people. At the end of the presentation, Mr. Lewis went back through the slides slowly and to our surprise it was the same two individuals simply dressed and groomed differently. Working as long as we do on the golf course, we all know the way someone looks on the course and the way they play the game reveals an awful lot about a person's character.

by Ken Ingram, CGCS

When dealing with the image and public perception of our business, you won't be successful working alone. Support GCSAA and MAAGCS.

So is image more important than substance? Certainly not, There are always exceptions to the rule and I think our society appreciates true professionals that have the humility to disregard image. Craig Stadler among PGA Tour players or Pete Dye among the architects are examples. In the Valhalla case, Mark Wilson managed an excellent golf course and my members could care less what clothes I wore if I provided those playing conditions at my course. Even if we are successful, we will still be judged and compared to others in our profession. If the profession in general lacks education and experience it will detract from the image, income potential, and respect of even the most established individuals. No matter how many hours you work or how good the condition of your course, when budgets and salaries are discussed you will always be compared to the others in your profession.

Is the PDI a vehicle to improve GCSAA's image? Indirectly I believe it is. It makes a major assumption however, that with education and experience, superintendents will seem more professional. Is the day coming when your national trade association dictates your attire? I doubt it, but employers do. I know of one management company that tells the superintendent to wear "golf attire" while at work. My facility had a management ar-

rangement for two years with a major hospitlaility and hotel chain. They are very image conscious for "front of the house" positions and not so image conscious for the "back of the house" personnel. My staff and I were never affected and we joked that we must have be considered "back of the house."

We should all work on image individually by educating golfers, protecting the environment, and using good ethics in business. But you owe a portion of your efforts to groups working on your behalf. Even if you don't agree with everything on an association's agenda or individuals elected, your involvement makes a difference. These are interesting times for GCSAA. PDI is probably just the tip of the iceberg. This question of image is incredibly dynamic. These programs will influence your career, especially for younger superintendents. GCSAA and the chapters need your help right now. You need to attend meetings and get involved with these decisions.

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President's Message Nick Vance, CGCS

Since mid-October most of us have projects going on that we would like to finish before winter sets in. On the other hand, we are all probably looking forward to that first snow. We would all like to slow down to a fast walk for a short time.

This year has seen some job changes, new course openings, and more rain than we needed during the early spring and summer. The drought of 1999 is almost forgotten, and in place of last year's dry summer we have heard of many cases where crops were wasted because of too much water.

This has also been a very busy year for the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents Board of Directors. We have tried very hard to listen to our membership. The survey that was sent out recently gave us some direction, but we are going to need your help.

This help must not only come from the "active" members, but we also need the input from those members that don't take the



time to get involved. This is your association and it should benefit all our members. In order for that to happen we, the board of directors, must know what you expect of us and how you think we can achieve your goals.

You should all participate in the focus groups that we are going to be having. Even if you do not think you have anything to add, make your presence known and your input will be appreciated.

We only have one meeting left this year. We can make it very productive by a good turnout for the Annual Meeting in December.

I hope to see more of you in December.

Editor's Letter Ken Ingram, CGCS

We have a lot of local news this month, exciting new courses to write about and members doing exciting things. I'm doing neither. My term with the newsletter is almost up so I can write some scathing editorials. "Covering Up Blue Jeans" is my own opinion so don't take it out on the Board. If I don't get some response from the members with this article, I'm giving up.

Thanks again to Charlotte Norris for putting this newsletter together. How she types with one hand pinching her nose, I'll never know. I know it breaks her heart to print some of this stuff.



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Getting the Word Heard: Marketing PDI to Employers

The first step in any marketing program is to create the identity that you want to promote to a specific audience. Our audience is employers and influential golfers. PDI creates the identity of educated, knowledgeable and competent superintendents, which can then be promoted.

A "Yes" Vote

If the vote at the annual meeting and election supports PDI, the next step will be the execution of a multi-faceted marketing campaign during the next several years. Communicating the benefits and value of PDI is a long-term process that involves the joint efforts of the association and its members.

A Rewarding Goal

Our goal in communicating the benefits of PDI to employers is to have employers acknowledge the value they receive from employing a general member, a class "A" member and a certified member. We do not plan to explain the intricacies of the classification system but focus instead on the results this system will provide. Consequently, employers will recognize and reward their superintendents for the competitive edge that they bring to their golf course operations and golfers will enjoy the results of superintendents' work - a superb golf experience.

GCSAA Marketing Strategy

The association will use external and internal communication methods to position the benefits of certified, class "A" and general superintendents to employers and other audiences.

We will continue to use national media, such as television and magazines, to promote the superintendents' role and value in managing golf courses. Our national public relations efforts have been laying the groundwork for this initiative during the past several years, positioning the superintendent as key to golfers' enjoyment of the game, and consequently having a direct impact on the golf course's economic success.

To effectively reach employers, GCSAA will target the publications they read and the Web sites they access. We will send press releases and articles to golf trade and consumer publications and Web sites about PDI's approval, and what it means to the business of golf, the golfer and the employer. In addition, we will work with our allied associations to get the message out through their publications, such as NGCOA's *Golf Business*, CMAA's *Club Management*, the NGF's *Golf Market Today*, their Web sites and in other appropriate venues.

GCSAA also uses many publications and materials today to market the golf course management profession. We will continue to use those vehicles. Information will be placed in *Golf Course Management, Leader Board* and on our Web site. Other resources that support the profession, such as standard job descriptions, information on certification, the benefits of joining the association and materials that employers use in hiring superintendents, will include information on the competencies of superintendents. In other words, the message that PDI allows us to develop about the superintendent profession will become a standard business practice for GCSAA materials and resources.

Members' Marketing Responsibility

Members have the opportunity to prove and communicate the benefits of PDI to their employers. Demonstrating effective management of the golf course is perhaps the most important validation of competence. Discussing with your employer your commitment to continuing education, achievement of proficiency and, if certified, use of the Professional Development Resource (PDR) is strong support during your annual performance review.

GCSAA will also provide you with the resources to help you communicate the value of PDI to your employer. We will develop a package of information in an easy-to-understand format, with suggestions on how you can present the specific benefits of PDI to your employer on a continuing basis.

A "No" Vote

If the vote does not support PDI, an identity around the commitment of golf course superintendents to competency-based education and professional development will be created and promoted to employers.



Life in the Bunkers by Jeff Michel, CGCS

When bunker maintenance starts to consume more hours and dollars than greens maintenance it is time to take action. That is the situation that occured with the fifty-nine (59) bunkers at Mount Vernon Country Club in 1998. The general membership was becoming displeased with the playability of the recently renovated bunker, inspire of the major inputs coming from the grounds department. Greens chairman Dennis Evenson placed the bunker tragedy as the most disappointing piece of our Master Improvement Renovation and charged me with developing a solution to the problem.

The bunkers at Mount Vernon were rebuilt from 1994 through 1997. The standard construction technique of coring out the cavity, compaction, installation of drainage was performed. The sand used in the bunkers had demonstrated good success at the club in the past and was selected again because of it consistent availability over a multiple year timeframe (a misjudgment of grand proportion). The bunker failures began to develop shortly after installation. Poor drainage characteristics began to develop. Erosion from the steeply splashed bunker faces added some of the fine marine clay soils to the sand exasturbating the problem. Compaction set in and black layer developed in the sand. Ponding occurred after as little as .1 inches of rain or medium irrigation application. Maintenance costs soared and employee moral was being challenged.

The bunkers became the number one topic of the membership. The inanimate object, sand, was detracting from the fine playing conditions of the turfgrass. Debate centered on the fact that the bunkers are a hazard and playability is subjective. The fact that the bunkers played poorly and were a major maintenance drain could not be ignored. The greens committee decided that action needed to be taken immediately. The plan to correct the bunkers centered on several items:

- Selecting a sand that membership appreciated
- Selecting a sand that met physical properties and maintenance requirements
- Developing a method for keeping the soil from contaminating the sand

We decided that the best method for selecting a sand was to let the membership do it. We would accomplish this by replacing the sand in three high play bunkers on the course with new bunker sand. The sand would be selected from several options that were available in the Mid-Atlantic region. Samples of various sands were sent to me for review. All physical properties of the sands were evaluated prior to review by the greens committee. The committee settled on three sands that meet the physical property guidelines recommended for bunker sands.

The challenge of separating soil from sand was more interesting. Physical liners were used in 1983 when the bunkers were constructed. The liners succeeded in keeping the sand clean until a *continued on page 5*



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Bunkers, continued from page 4

bunker rake snagged the fabric. Afterwards, the bunkers became a mixture of sand and pea gravel and were unplayable. Add to the fact that the fabric inferred with play and became a hazard to golf, you can understand the membership resistance to adding fabric to the bunkers.

Enter polyurethane. I had saved a direct mail card from a company named Green Mountain International. GMI provided polyurethane to various industries to stabilize soils. A phone call and subsequent conversations with GMI revealed that they had a sprayable polyurethane that could line a bunker cavity quickly and easily. The liquid would saturate the soil and create a permanent physical barrier between the sand and the clay. Needless to say, I was intrigued by the possible application for the bunkers at Mount Vernon. Permanent separation of sand and clay that would allow the physical properties of the sand to remain intact longer, and no soil contamination. This resulted in better playing conditions. The cost of the material was about \$ 1.00 per square foot applied in house. I proposed that we install the sprayable polyurethane in the three test bunkers the members were using to evaluate sand. The proposal was presented to the board and approval was granted.

We installed the test bunkers in April of 1999. The existing sand was removed and the drainage checked. The polyurethane was applied next. It was very easy to apply using a chapin 12 volt drum pump. We installed the sand about an hour after application. We monitored the three different sands throughout the 1999 golfing season. One sand stood out above the others for playability, the VFB Premium White. The activity of the polyurethane proved to be most interesting. Sampling the bunkers revealed a very hard barrier between the soil and the sand. This barrier became harder as time progressed. Irrigation or rainfall events did not adversely affect the position or playability of the sand. (Remember the two hurricanes in September, no sand slumping off of slopes and the bunkers were playable when the rain stopped!) I was impressed. Impressed enough to submit a request to replace all of the bunkers with the VFB Premium White Sand and use the Green Mountain Polyurethane as a liner.

The total cost of the proposal for replacing the bunker sand was \$152,000. This cost, coming on the heels of a 1.2 million dollar golf course renovation, was precarious at best. I can't give enough credit to green committee chairman, Dennis Evenson, for performing the necessary political activity to get the project approved. We scheduled the work to begin on September 27, 1999.

The key to a successful project is good planning and execution. The planning is the easy part, the execution can transform into a firing squad quickly without good people. I have complete faith in the maintenance staff at Mount Vernon Country Club. The crew is seasoned and wants to provide a good product. The project involved 1150 tons of sand in 59 bunkers. I planned to use 1900 gallons of polyurethane in the cavities. The logistics are as follows:

- Remove old sand.
 - Clean and check existing drainline, make repairs as necessary. continued on page 8



Around the Mid-Atlantic

Thompson to Retire

In what is surely bad news for ducks and wildlife across the country, George Thompson CGCS, superintendent of the Country Club of North Carolina plans on retiring at the end of the year. George remained a MAAGCS member after leaving Columbia CC in 1982. George won the GCSAA Distinguished Service Award earlier this year. George is an avid sportsman and in planning the "Grand Slam" of duck hunting in January on big lakes throughout the south. Congratulations George.

Maryland National Underway

We must have more "National" golf clubs in our area than anywhere in the country Augusta National was said to have a national membership and for years had that exclusivity. By my count we have Virginia, Reston, Fairfax, Williamsburg, and Penn National golf clubs all within an easy drive. Welcome Maryland National. Maryland National is being built just north of Frederick, MD between Braddock and South mountain. It is an Art Hills design. Furness Construction from Michigan is the contractor. Brian Zickafoose is the superintendent It will be a high end daily fee operation owned by a partnership from the Pittsburg area. Brian describes the course as a links style design with nice elevation changes. The deep roughs will be fescue with 20% Little Bluestem. Greens will be L-93, fairways and tees will be L-93IProvidence. Irrigation will be Rainbird Cirrus.

Westwood Begins New Maintenance Building

After years of planning, zoning hearings, and permitting Westwood C.C. has begun construction of a new maintenance building. The property was originally a dairy farm and the old barn has served as a cart storage and maintenance building for years. Not that this scenario is that unusual but this barn was in the parking lot of one of the areas premier clubs. The new building is 11,000 square feet (maximum size for the site) and designed by Ralph Lallock and Walter, the contractor is Webb Construction. Target date for completion is March 1st. Then an ambitious clubhouse renovation begins. Good luck Walter.

Hobbits Glen Wins Cammarota Memorial

It's hard not to imagine Angie looking down on the Hobbits Glen team of Bill Neus, Dave Haber, Bob Bellamy, and Carl Oesterling. Their two net best ball of 122 won the Maryland Turfgrass Council's Angie Cammarota Memorial Tournament October 17th at Queenstown Harbor. Angelo worked for years with the Columbia Association that owns Hobbits Glen. Proceed from the event fund turfgrass research at the University of MD.



News From Old Friends

Lee and Rita Dieter spent the month of August in Germany touring and researching their family tree. I can't prove it but I think the trip was promised to Rita after Lee brought home this old 1951 Toro Master tractor from the fair. Lee thinks it came from a course in the upper Shenandoah Valley and would like you to call if you have any information. Of course if you have any spare parts he would really appreciate the call.

Test Plot

MAAGCS member Tom Walsh, from York Distributors was featured on the front page of The Capital, a large local newspaper in the Annapolis, MD area. Tom, as many of us know, maintains his front lawn as a putting green. The article titled "Smooth Surface" really shines a favorable light on Golf Course Superintendents.

Musket Ridge Under Construction

Musket Ridge is a new, privately owned upscale daily fee course just a few miles from Maryland National. The architect is Joe Lee from Florida and the superintendent is Scott Campbell formerly an assistant at P. B. Dye Golf Club. Musket Ridge is very hilly, almost a mountain course and will have tremendous views actually looking down I-70. The greens will also be very undulating. Grasses are L-93 from tee to green. The contractor is Quality Grassing and they are installing Toro OSMAC irrigation as well. Opening is planned for the summer of 2001.

Going High Side on Pillow Rock

On October 2nd several brave MAAGCS members went on a white water raft trip on the Upper Gauley River in West Virginia. Torn Lipscomb from P.B. Dye G.C. organized the trip. Tom and his wife, Walter Montross took the entire family, Ed Walker, Ed Gasper, Bart Bullock, Mike Minard, Jeff Vance and others had a memorable day Bart took a swim in Lost Paddle Rapids but Walter had the best story of the day. When the guide fished him out of the water he said in all sincerity, "That white water swimming is overrated ain't it?" If you have ever been there you know it's true.



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Turfgrass Matters

Bunkers, continued from page 5

- Install polyurethane using various drum pumps
- Install new sand
- Spread new sand and open bunker to play.

The project was completed in nine working days with two days lost to weather and sand shipping delays. Disruption to play and the golf course was minimal. The general membership was amazed at the speed and efficiency of the operation. They even like the new sand!

The greens committee helped solve the number one concern at Mount Vernon Country Club and is focusing on other golf course issues. The Board of Directors enjoyed the fact that the project was completed ahead of schedule and \$14K under budget. As for me, life is just a little easier. The maintenance of the bunkers has been reduced 75%. We have had minimal erosion of sand in the bunkers, even on the steeply faced slopes. The polyurethane has prevented any soil contamination in the sand. We can leaf rake the bunkers to create a good playing surface. The bunkers can be skipped and still provide good playing qualities. The crew is happy, the members are happy, and I am happy!

There are several keys to successfully applying the polyurethane to the bunker cavity. Foremost, the soil in the cavity needs to be a dry as possible, and the surface of the cavity has to be conditioned to absorb the polyurethane. If the soil is too wet, you will not get penetration (the old oil and water don't mix theory) The polyurethane should be warm when applied because of viscosity concerns. Use multiple pumps to speed the rate of application. We also used



a drum transfer pump and it worked better than the Chapin pump mentioned above. Wear old shoes and a tyvek suit when applying the product. (Shoes absorb the material and become ruined) Finally, use plenty of pump flush to clean your pumps after application. This will prolong the use of your pumps.

If you have any questions about the project, or the ongoing analysis of the polyurethane, please feel free to contact me at any time.

200	0 MAAGCS Calendar
December 2	Martin's West/Baltimore, MD MAAGCS Holiday Dinner Dance
December 12	Sheraton Columbia Hotel GCSAA Educational Seminar "Enhancing the Image of the Golf Course Superintendent"
December 12	Sheraton Columbia Hotel Annual Meeting & Elections
December 13	Sheraton Columbia Hotel GCSAA Educational Seminar "Bentgrass Management and Rootzone Maintenance"



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Annual Championship Results From Whiskey Creek

The Annual Tournament was held at Whiskey Creek with 74 golfers vying for the Championship. What a beautiful piece of land for a golf course, with an outstanding layout. Host Bart Miller had the course in wonderful condition and we thoroughly enjoyed the day. With the cancellation of last month's event we offered closest-to-pin, long and straight drive prizes to both Superintendent and Affiliate flights. During the awards ceremony we honored two members who passed away this year, Howard Meredith and Lou White, by naming trophies after them. We also named trophies in honor of Lee Dieter and John Strickland for their many years of service to the Association and fellow Superintendents. The day's winners were:

Affiliate Flight

John Strickland Award - Low Net	Ken Braun	69	J. Howard Meredith Award - Low Gross	Eric Ault	76	
2nd Net	Brian Ault	69	2nd Gross	Jim Cervone	76	
Superintendent Flight						
Lee C. Dieter Award - Low Net	Nick Vance	69	Louis White Award - Low Gross	Bart Miller	71	
2nd Net	Kevin Smith	70	2nd Gross	Rick Wakefield	71	
3rd Net	Jeff Tschudi	70	3rd Gross	Mark Kingora	81	
4th Net	Walter Montross	72	4th Gross	Scott Wagner	82	

Closest to the Pin

#3	Steve Cohoon and Kevin Mine	er
#11	Keith Williams and Dave Tho	mas

Long Drive

Bart Miller and Tom Clark

#7 Andy Sheehan and Dave Thomas

#15 Chad Stohle and Ken Braun

Straight Drive

Rick Wakefield and Andy Rosewag



Affiliate Flight Net Winner Ken Braun



Superintendent Flight Winners Nick Vance, CGCS and Bart Miller



Affiliate Flight Gross Winner Eric Ault

October/November

News & Notes

Membership

ReclassificationsDavid FairbanksAASam KesselAARobert OraziAA

Congratulations

To **Tom & Pilar Mynaugh** upon the arrival of a son, Thomas Patrick, Jr.

To **David & Jennifer Osterhouse** upon the arrival of a daughter, Anna Lynn.

Get Well Wishes

To Stacey Williams, wife of Mitch Williams, due to a recent illness.

To Domenic Cervone, son of Jim Cervone.

Condolences

To the friends and family of **Bob Miller** upon the passing of his wife, Donna

To the friends and family of Preston Licklider upon his passing.

To Bob Orazi upon the passing of his mother, Mary.

To Jon and Gayle Hukkala, upon the passing of her mother.

I would like to thank members of the Mid-Atlantic for the kindness- phone calls, cards and flowers - during this time of loss of my wife, Donna. Thank you again.

Bob Miller



Join us for A Holiday Dinner Dance December 2, 2000 Martin's West Baltimore, MD

7:30 p.m.- 11:30 p.m. \$100.00/couple \$50.00/person Call the MAAGCS office for more details





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