

Grab Bag

Consultant earns estimating certificate

James R. Huston recently received certification from the American Society of Professional Estimators as a Certified Professional Landscape Estimator. The certification follows an 18-month period of study (400 hours) in which applicants are required to submit estimating projects, take an extensive written exam on estimating knowledge and develop problems and test questions for future applicants. Huston is president of Smith Huston, Inc., Englewood, Co., a construction and services management consulting company for the green industry. He has written three books on landscaping estimating.

Practice ranges in demand

Maintenance of practice facilities is a growing challenge for golf course superintendents.

"The art of practice is becoming a sport in itself," says Doug Mahal of the Minikahda Club, Minneapolis. Golfers may only have an hour or two of free time, not enough time to complete a round, but they stop in for practice on the course range.

"They want to get the most out of their practice. They want driving ranges that are nice and well-equipped. They want target greens and bunkers," says Mahal.

Minikahda doubled the size of its practice facility, and management has plans for a \$250,000 development by improving the driving range, complete with covered stalls for practice in the rain.

Grab Bag features brief observations and prognostications throughout the green industry. If you have an unusual photo or comment you'd like to share with us, please send it in...



Travelin' in style

Perf-a-Lawn, Toledo, Ohio, gets its a lot of attention with this Model A Ford pickup which was used in movies like "The Untouchables" and "Hoffa". Company mechanic John Larde (shown here) keeps it in tip-top condition. He and his wife Karen enjoy driving it to special events in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. Company owner V. J. Huffman likes sharp vehicles says Larde. The company's shiny Dodge Ram service vehicles sport chrome wheels.

The 'what-if' of snow removal

"It is difficult because there can be almost no snow in a year or there can be 45 or 50 inches. As opposed to a little further north where you're always going to have some snow. In our location, you can be set up to go and then have almost zero income. If you've kept people on payroll or bought equipment, that's a pretty poor return on your investment."

DAVID GEORGE, EXTERIOR DIVISION MANAGER, ENGLDOW GROUP, CARMEL, IN.