

# Elevation, climate are control challenges

*A 200-foot drop and cool, moist air from the Hudson River means equipment at Ardsley is kept in low gear, and disease activity is monitored twice a week.*

**G**olfers who play the Ardsley CC in suburban New York are treated to spectacular views of the cliffs of the New Jersey Palisades across the Hudson River.

"Elevation drops 190 feet from our first tee to the third and fourth holes," says Superintendent George W. Pierpoint III. "It requires a lot of hand work. We rake all bunkers by hand, and we use walking greens mowers. Getting equipment up and down the slopes is

a real challenge. We're in such a residential area that our working hours are extremely limited. Because of the noise ordinance, we can't do anything at night or before 7 a.m."

#### **Changes to bunkers, mounds**

Ardsley was built in 1895. In 1989 architect Marvin Armstrong designed a bunker and mounding renovation plan, which Pierpoint's crew follows closely. Many greens have been redesigned to modified USGA standards.

Drainage is a problem, par-



**George Pierpoint, III, right and son George IV, himself a golf course superintendent.**

ticularly on the back nine, which were built on rocky land.

"We are constantly installing drainage somewhere," says Pierpoint. "We use ADS perforated drainage with three-, four- and six-inch pipes and ADS catch basins."

Poor drainage often leads to disease problems in the lower

areas of fairways. Pythium strikes first in pockets of the 16th and 17th tees, which lie at the base of a hill. Pierpoint uses these spots as barometers for monitoring disease pressure. He uses Banal fungicide as a curative and for prevention.

The third green is sensitive to brown patch, which is not as devastating as Pythium, but nonetheless looks bad.

"It has three stages," observes Pierpoint. "You see it coming; then you treat it; and all of a sudden, it's recovered. Based on the weather, we usually spray ProStar in mid-June to early July."

#### **Nutrition for 'microclimate'**

"In general, we use a yearly rate of 4-5 lb. N/1000 sq. ft. on greens; 6 lb. N on tees; 3 lb. N on fairways and 2 lb. N on roughs, spread over several applications," says Pierpoint. **LM**



**Views from high up at Ardsley can be beautiful, but the elevation is tricky for equipment maneuvers.**