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AMDRO® KILLS THE QUEEN.

STRICTLY GOLF

The magic touch: people relations

Don't let agronomy get lost in the shuffle, but hone your interpersonal skills to get the most out of your management position.

■ "There's a little magical touch you need in this business, and that's working with people."

So says Jerry Coldiron Jr., certified golf course superintendent at Boone Links/Lassing Pointe Golf Courses in hilly little Florence, Ky., just across the majestic Ohio River from Cincinnati.

"Problems arise mostly out of personality breakdowns," Coldiron observes. And he should know: as manager of 27 public holes (due to expand to 45), he's got different personalities coming at him from all angles:

- Coldiron not only reports to the county administrator, but also tunes in to the suggestions of a citizen's advisory panel that meets twice a year specifically to discuss the golf course.

- His full-time permanent staff numbers 12, including two assistant superintendents. Either Coldiron, Jerry Thiery at Boone Links or Greg Bulmer at the new Lassing Pointe, is "on call" at any one time.

Staff meetings are held "religiously" every two weeks. "We listen, we talk, we encourage the guys to open up," Coldiron continues. "You have to interpret what people are saying, though, and then follow through. We've made a ton of improvements that have come from the employees. I provide the tools and let them be creative."

- He hires up to 40 seasonal employees who work 15 to 30 hours per week. Many of them are senior citizens, but some are not.

"I spend an awful lot of time researching people," Coldiron notes. "We use a lot of referrals. I've got two co-op students now. We try to recruit, very seldom put ads in the newspaper. And we're still lucky enough to get some people coming off farms with a real good work ethic."

- He and golf professional Jeff

- As a past president of the Greater Cincinnati Golf Course Superintendents Association and board member of the Kentucky Turfgrass Association, he's come in contact with a wide variety of people he can rely on for answers to questions. "People are great in this industry," Coldiron observes. "To my knowledge,



Jerry Coldiron, Jr. trusts in the talents and ideas of his crew. Staff meetings are held every two weeks. "We encourage the guys to open up," he says.

Kruempelman operate as a team, and have for 13 years.

"We pretty much overlap responsibilities on the general operation," says Coldiron. "He'll ask my opinion on golf as much as I'll ask about grounds. We'll meet once or twice a week. We'll sit down and do budgets together; we trade off monitoring utilities and fuel. We divide up whatever makes sense.

"When we can't agree on something—which is very seldom—we go to the county administrator."

there are no secrets. I use the university people (Dr. Dwight Barkley of Eastern Kentucky University and Dr. A.J. Powell of the University of Kentucky) as much as anybody else in town."

The basics—Coldiron admits that he spends just 15-20 percent of his time on agronomics, but that doesn't mean that he's not emphasizing the course's beauty and health.

"They're very important," he says. "That's the first way a guy loses his job is

continued on page 36



Manhattan II helps smooth out the roughs at Inverness

Tom Walker on Endophyte:

"Using Manhattan II perennial ryegrass with endophytes gives me a biological alternative to managing chewing/ sucking insects. I have seen no damage from these insects, even though I have not applied insecticides. It makes good sense to work with nature whenever possible."

INVERNESS CLUB, TOLEDO — Superintendent Tom Walker chooses Manhattan II to overseed roughs at this prestigious club because of its wear resistance, quick establishment, dark green color and drought and disease tolerance. But Tom finds Manhattan II's big plus is *density*. Manhattan II actually produces more leaves per plant, an economy sometimes overlooked.

This increased basal tillering, coupled with Manhattan II's lower crown help 'heal' shallow divots by spreading laterally. This is why Manhattan II is used to overseed the range tees at Inverness, too.

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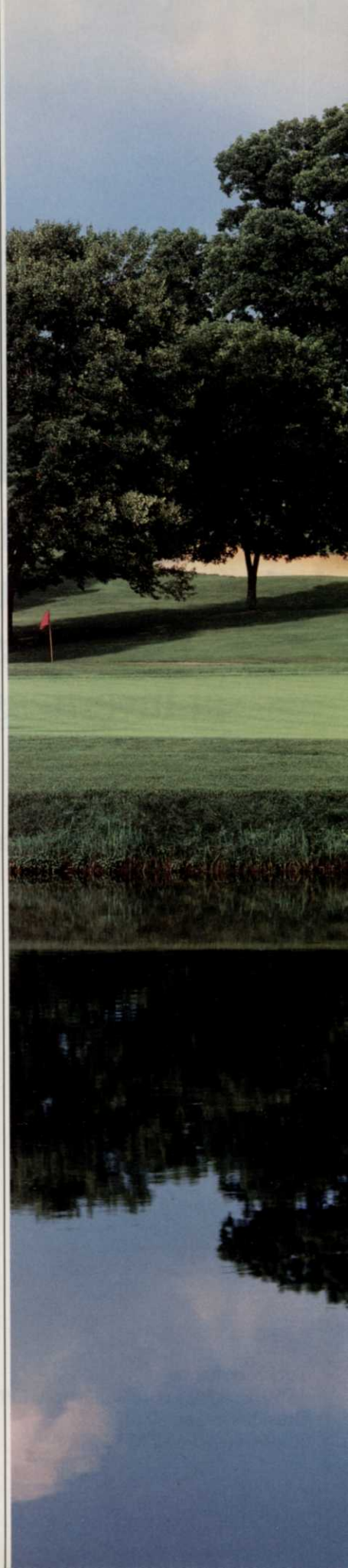
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Circle No. 119 on Reader Inquiry Card

Magic from page 32

if he forgets the basics. And lately, things have gotten real goofy: mowing heights, PGRs, playing golf all season."

One of the keys to keeping the course maintained is head mechanic Tom Woodall, who Coldiron calls "the single most important person on the golf course."

Woodall and his assistant are in charge of maintaining four tractors, half-a-dozen

"We've made a ton of improvements that have come from the employees. I provide the tools and let them be creative."

—Jerry Coldiron, Jr.

riding triplex mowers, four "five-plex" fairway mowers and 10 work carts. "We've got state-of-the-art equipment," Coldiron notes, "mostly Toro and Jacobsen."

Boone Links also leases 105 Club Car carts, and will contract for about 70 more when Lassing Pointe opens next spring.

Growing out—When LM visited Boone Links, the new 18-hole Lassing Pointe course was being grown in.

"Its design (by architect Michael Hurdzan) and construction was an exciting process," Coldiron notes. "It's a fabulous project. It could be one of the top five public courses opening in the U.S. next year."

Lassing Pointe was financed by bonds; Boone Links is self-supporting. The courses have a combined maintenance budget of \$1.6 million. And success has contributed to growth. "We've been so successful because we've never used tax dollars except for the feasibility study conducted for Lassing Pointe in 1991."

The key to its success always comes back to working with people, Coldiron reminds us.

"This is not brain surgery," he says. "You don't have to be a rocket scientist. We strive to make everything pleasant, to serve the public without worrying about our own problems. These are things you teach yourself."

—Jerry Roche

GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE

Grinding, sharpening blades

■ Grinding and sharpening to mate the reel and bedknife of your greensmower are the two most important processes in the mower maintenance program, according to Tim Moraghan of the USGA Green Section.

You should grind blades whenever a new knife is used, after topdressing and on a biweekly schedule throughout the mowing season, he says. Grinding should be followed by backlapping, the fine sharpening and mating of the bedknife to the reel using a fine grit, emory-based compound.

When you purchase a bedknife, consider the following, Moraghan says:

1) There are three levels of bedknife thickness: regular, thin and championship. The lower the cutting height, the thinner the knife.

2) Use bedknives made of factory-recommended hardened steel.

3) Check for bends in the bedknives prior to purchase.

4) Match the mower brand with the bedknife.

5) Remove the paint on the bottom of the bedknife before mowing.

6) Check that all mounting screws are flush with the bottom of the bedknife prior to mowing.

Water use on committee's agenda

■ Water usage studies are on the agenda of the GCSAA Scholarship & Research foundation's projects.

The studies would document actual water usage rates on golf courses around the country and compare them to other agricultural and industrial uses. They are scheduled to begin in the next five to 10 years.

Other projects scheduled are: a national study of the economic impact of golf courses and golf course maintenance; bird

and wildlife studies that would document the impact of maintenance practices on animals; and risk assessment studies to determine the actual pesticide exposure of golf course workers.

The University of Iowa's College of Medicine has been selected for the risk assessment study. Team leader is Iowa's Dr. Burton Kross. The initial study will focus on superintendents who have managed golf courses in the past 23 years.

Nelson gets 'Old Tom' Award

■ One of the greatest golfers of all time, Byron Nelson, will receive the Old Tom Morris Award from the GCSAA.

"There is probably not a nicer man in golf," says GCSAA president Randy Nichols. "Even though he officially retired from the pro tour nearly 50 years ago, he constantly gives all that he can back to the game."

The GCSAA established the Old Tom Morris Award in 1982 to recognize individ-

uals who have made outstanding lifetime contributions to the game.

Nelson won the Masters in 1937 and 1942, the U.S. Open in 1939, and the PGA Championship in 1940 and 1945. In 1945, he set a PGA Tour record of 11 consecutive victories, and finished with 18 for the season. His namesake PGA Tour event, the GTE Byron Nelson Classic, has brought more than 25 years of goodwill to Dallas, Texas.

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LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Cutting down pesticide use

Dr. Roger Funk urges green industry to consider concept of 'sustainable development' at N.A.A. management conference.

■ Some of the public mistrusts the green industry's pesticide use. These critics need to be reassured about the environmental benefits of the green industry's efforts.

That's where the concept known as "sustainable development" fits in. The beauty of this idea is that responsible green industry pros already practice many of its tenets. They just haven't tied them together into a package they can present to the public.

Roger Funk, vice president for human and technical resources for The Davey Tree Expert Company, Kent, Ohio, told an audi-

ence at the 1993 National Arborist Association Management Conference this past winter that sustainable development is "development we can live with."

Funk said sustainable development is actually a teeter-totter. Industry is on one side and the environment is on the other. They must be in balance for progress to occur.

"All we have to do is put a little bit more weight on the environment side," said Funk. "We don't have to take weight off the economic side...We don't have to turn backwards, and we don't want to turn backwards."

To build sustainable development into your business, said Funk:

● **Develop an environmental statement.**

"The whole idea now is to get the environment and the economy together and you can make your decisions on the two and not on one or the other," said Funk.

Funk's pesticide issues for the 1990s

1) Chemical trespass. The State of Michigan requires application companies to prepare a pesticide drift management plan. Other states may follow. Applicators (Dr. Funk addressed his remarks to arborists) will have to consider buffer zones, particle sizes, spray heights, alternative products, etc. to keep chemicals from drifting onto neighbors' properties.

2) Notification and posting. Several U.S. lawmakers want to take these regulations nationwide.

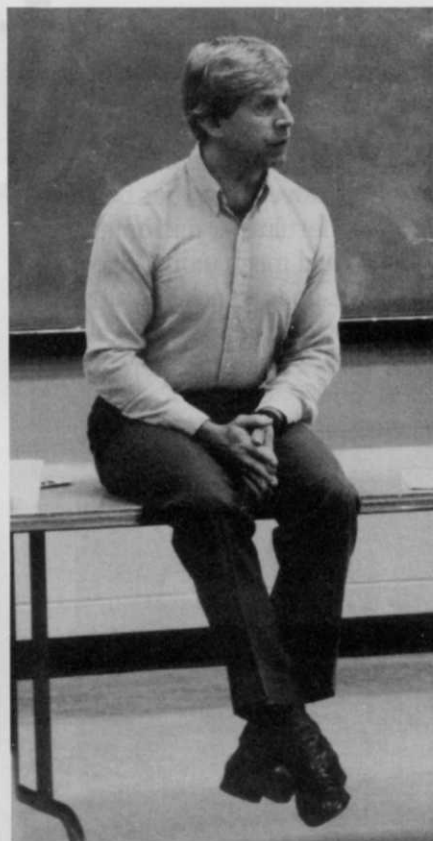
3) Multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS). No matter what industry thinks about MCS, some of the public and a small number of doctors are convinced it's real. "Since it has been given a name,

it now has legitimacy," says Funk. "And because it now 'exists', more people will come up with the symptoms."

4) Disclosure of inert ingredients. Arguing in the face of well-documented facts, some of the public's mistrust of chemicals is all-inclusive.

5) Criminal charges and/or prison terms for company management. New federal regulations can result in prison terms for managers as a result of actions by the company.

6) Designated rinse containment areas. Some states already require these areas. Others, because of fear of groundwater contamination, will probably require them also.



Dr. Roger Funk establish dialogues with customers and the public.

● **Improve environmental performance.** Select and plant the proper landscape materials with care and for appropriate sites. Provide the proper cultural care to improve plant vigor.

● **Establish a dialogue with customers/the public.** Funk asked: Do you survey your customers? Have you considered forming a community advisory panel to make suggestions for your company?

● **Strengthen your education efforts.** Consider how you can provide balancing

INSIDE

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in a small pond,
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**The value of a
good newsletter,
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views in the local school system. Provide video and/or text packs that explains your industry and its goals. Offer your services to a speaker's forum.

Davey Tree knows the power of perception—and of action. It's working to reduce its pesticide use in tree care even more than the 75 percent reduction it accomplished in the late 1980s. The company's rallying cry of "95 by '95" refers to its goal to cut pesticide use by 95 percent by 1995.

"We probably won't reach it, but we will

come close," said Funk.

For instance, Funk pointed out that tests show that chemical blow-through and chemical drippage on a tree with a 30-foot canopy can be reduced significantly by spraying no more than three gallons of material per minute at 70 psi.

Also, establishing tree application guidelines (rather than just relying on "spray to the point of runoff") would certainly cut the amount of pesticides used, he said.

Admirable as it is, a company's goal

shouldn't be merely to reduce chemical use. Goals need to be more positive, said Funk. Those goals focus on improving customer service, while reducing risk in providing that service.

"If people's perceptions are that we are the cause of pollution," Dr. Funk noted, "then, by introducing and promoting sustainable development, we will also be recognized as the people who solve the problems."

—Ron Hall

No single program for everybody

■ Thinking about offering an "environmentally sound" lawn care program? Start by asking yourself why. Hopefully, you'll come up with an answer.

"Sit down and write down your own thoughts and definitions of what turfgrass and the environment mean to you," advises Gerard "Rod" Ferrentino, Cornell University Cooperative Extension.

"Then, after you've implemented your program, revisit what you've written and enhance it periodically."

Ferrentino, an IPM specialist, feels the biggest reason why some lawn care professionals aren't successful in



Ferrentino: We are environmentalists

marketing "environmentally sound" lawn care is because they haven't identified the different types of customers they serve.

"It's very difficult to have one program that works for everybody," he told about 100 turfgrass managers at the 1993 Loft Seed Field Day.

Also, some LCOs assume that their clients already recognize the environmental benefits resulting from professional lawn care. Wrong.

"It's time to come out of the closet and tell your message that you work with the environment. You work with turfgrass. You work with trees," said Ferrentino.

"If that's not the ultimate environmentalist, I don't know what the heck is."

"Anybody who applies a pesticide should be able to tell the pest that it's targeted for, the life cycle of the pest, where the pest is in the lawn, and how severe the problem is," he said as an example.

—Ron Hall

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'Service them to death' (Maybe not that much...)

...but service is indeed one of the keys to the success of Hadco Lawn & Landscape, a big fish in a small pond.

■ Bartlesville, Oklahoma is a tiny town located 50 miles north of Tulsa.

The nation's first commercial oil well west of the Mississippi was drilled there, and every year the town hosts an International Mozart Festival. The town is the corporate headquarters for Phillips Petroleum, which is consequently its largest employer.

Bartlesville is also where you'll find Hadco Lawn & Landscape Management Company, which—for purposes of this story, anyway—is Bartlesville's greatest success story.

Wes Hadsell, 34, is president and founder of the 11-year-old company, which has established a definite presence in this town of 38,000 people.

Eighty percent of Hadco's revenue is generated by city contracts and Phillips Petroleum. The other 20 percent comes from residential accounts. It's the city's first and largest landscape/maintenance company.

Hadco "does it all," says Hadsell: irrigation, hardscaping, excavation, to the recently-added lighting installation.

A self-taught landscape designer, Hadsell draws out the plans for all designs.

Hadsell says he could easily expand to other towns; Coffeyville and Independence are two nearby Kansas cities in need of lawn care services, but Hadsell says he'd avoid expanding there for peace of mind. "It would drive me nuts not knowing how

to different situations, and are good problem solvers, like when it comes to modifying a pickup truck design (see related story, page xx).

Industry spokesman—Hadsell is an active industry supporter. He often speaks to civic organizations. A recent speech covered the importance of returning clippings to turf. He attempted to start a local lawn care association, but says the idea didn't spark enough interest. His concerns include a desire to see mandatory licensing among landscape contractors.

Hadsell started in landscape management by chance. He was in college, working about 32 hours a week for Phillips as a computer assistant. His wife, Cindy, worked at a savings and loan. The chairman of the bank needed someone to tend the grounds around his home. Wes offered to help with what he thought was a one-time favor. Soon he was mowing for a number of bank executives.

Hadsell didn't need his college degree to recognize the need for a high quality landscape management company, and soon Hadco was up and running. He bought some mowers on credit, hired one man to assist, and was on his way.

There are 15 year-round employees, about 35 during peak season.

—Terry McIver

Hadco highlights

- ✓ No smoking on the job.
- ✓ Safety meetings are held regularly.
- ✓ Crew manager makes daily site checks.
- ✓ Uniforms required. Trucks always clean.
- ✓ Profit-sharing plan for employees.
- ✓ Spot inspections by Wes Hadsell weekly.
- ✓ For ornamentals, a "pinch and prune" crew is led by a trained horticulturist.
- ✓ Mowing crews mow, trim and edge.
- ✓ 'Winter rules:' "We pull together and do what it takes to get the job done," with a smaller crew, says Hadsell.
- ✓ Service tip: Use equipment to the fullest. 'When putting in an irrigation system, why not take advantage of what you have on hand (trencher, manpower) and make a pitch for a lighting system?'

☆☆☆☆ Company philosophy: 'Service!'

everything looks," he says.

Hadsell's employees are jacks of all trades, but are by no means unskilled. He says he prefers to hire persons with a variety of hands-on experience in vocational trades, like auto body work, masonry, or other trades. They work hard, can adapt



Hadco strives to give customers a sense of pride in their surroundings.

