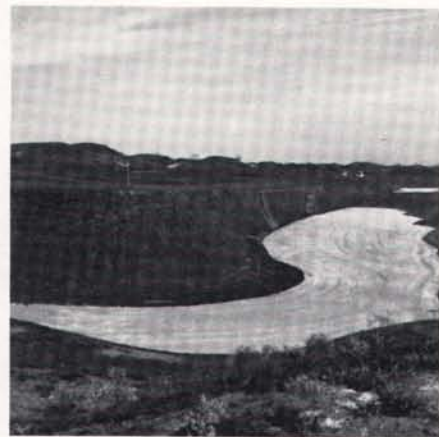


## PGA WEST REDEFINES COURSE MAINTENANCE



The Stadium Course at PGA West in La Quinta, CA, was designed by Pete Dye and features an island green like its sister courses in Florida. Turf students from Cal Poly Pomona get a personal look at the bentgrass green during a recent tour.

Pete Dye is changing golf course design and maintenance like Walt Disney changed amusement parks. Dye's design of the first PGA West course in La Quinta, CA, is enough to cause any golf course superintendent many sleepless nights. The once-flat desert land has been converted by Landmark Land Company, Sunrise Company and the PGA Tour into a severely rolling Stadium Course that challenges the best maintenance procedures.



Golfers who hit into this trap on PGA West's Stadium Course face a 20-foot high chip to the green.

Mark Snyder, superintendent of the Stadium Course, is not the Lee Iacocca type you might think such a challenge would require. Snyder, a graduate of Michigan State University's turf program, has six years experience working on desert courses in Phoenix, AZ, and the Palm Desert area. The blond, well-dressed Snyder might be confused for a golf professional.

But, instead of thinking about golf shots, Snyder's mind is filled with visions of 20-foot-high banks around bunkers, trimming around thousands of boulders placed all over the course and the roller-coaster fairways. "I have much more respect for Weedeaters and Flymos," says Snyder. "On an average day, we'll have two men on the course with Weedeaters and five with Flymos. We

hope to reduce the hand work on mounds and slopes by using growth regulators on the bermudagrass."

Dye incorporated a wide variety of blooming desert plants in bunches throughout the course. These plants survive on one inch of water per month. Surrounding the desert plantings and trees are 114 acres of bermudagrass. Desert plants, trees and turf are irrigated by a Rain Bird Maxi III system with 3,000 heads and 105 controllers. Snyder uses fertigation and three irrigation cycles of four minutes each at night during the season to supplement daytime maintenance.

The Stadium Course also has an island green made famous by other PGA courses in Florida. "The single access to the green makes it tough to spread out the wear on the bentgrass," says the 30-year-old superintendent. "More than 15 acres of bunkers have to be kept in shape continuously and we have more than 22 acres of lakes to trim around." To accomplish all this, Snyder has one foreman, two mechanics, three irrigation specialists and 20 other workers on his crew. His budget is an impressive \$900,000 including salaries.

Like all desert superintendents, Snyder manages overseeded perennial ryegrass in the winter busy season and bermudagrass in the summer. He is part of a trend in the desert using bentgrass on his greens instead of bermudagrass.

The PGA West complex will sprout an Arnold Palmer designed course this coming October. Jack Nicklaus has started design work on a third course and Dye will return for a fourth course on the site. The four PGA West courses will bring the number of courses in the area to more than 70.

Dennis Orsborn, vice president of golf operations for the Sunrise Company, which is building the homes and shopping area for PGA West, says, "All these courses are in an area five miles wide and ten miles long. The busy season starts with a bang on October 1 every year, but summer business has been increasing. This area from the standpoint of maintenance really is a Disneyland. You have to see it to believe it."

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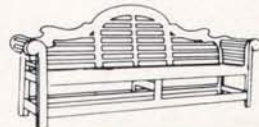
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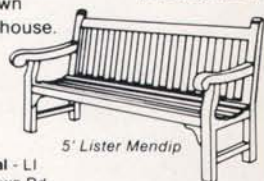


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