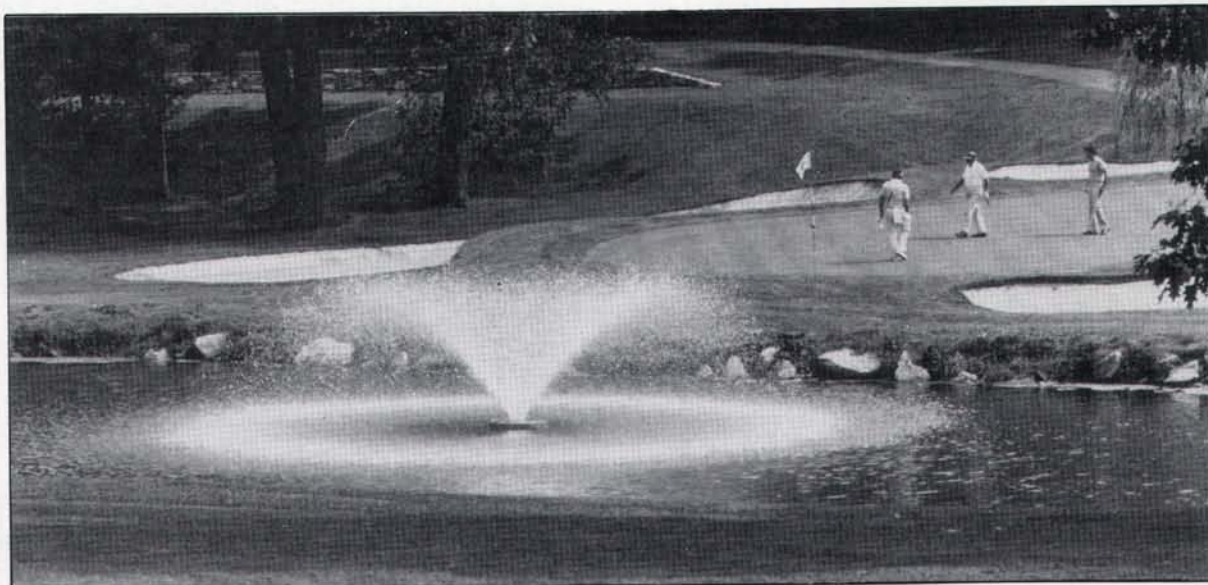


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Photo — Lehigh Country Club

THE EXTRA POINT

STMA NEWS

FROM THE PRESIDENT



It's the grass, working and playing on the grass. My last column as president of STMA concerns how I got into this business.

My dad used to take me golfing two or three times a year. That wasn't a lot of golf, but it doesn't take a lot for the fever to take hold. I was fascinated by the big, green fairways and the carpet-like smoothness of the

putting greens.

In high school, I went to work for Elwood Country Club. It was a nine-hole course in central Indiana. Charles Almony was the combination pro-superintendent. We called him "Hunk" for the way he hunkered over when he hit towering 300-yard drives. Each summer until I graduated from college, I was half of his two-man work force.

All of us became involved in the problem-solving and the worrying, as well as the hard work that goes along with operating a small course. Rookie golf course laborers started out raking sand traps and pulling weeds. We then learned to identify weeds, diseases, and insects. Hunk's idea was to get us to understand turf and its effect on the game.

I went to Purdue to become an engineer. But, like a light being turned on, I discovered that Dr. Bill Daniel had a turf program. In my sophomore year, I switched to agronomy and worked for Dr. Daniel and a young graduate student by the name of Jim Beard. Working during the school year for those two, and summers on the golf course with Hunk, gave me as good an education as I was capable of absorbing.

After graduating, I worked as a golf course superintendent, spent a couple of years straightening out the world in a brand new venture called the Peace Corps, and eventually took a job as assistant county agent in northeastern Pennsylvania. Most of the extension work was in turf, and it provided my introduction to sports turf.

Football was very important to that region and still is. School administrators were concerned about football field quality and really tried to do something about it. Around that time, Dr. Jack Harper at Penn State wrote one of the first booklets on construction and maintenance of athletic fields. It quickly became my most valuable reference.

In 1983, with the help of Dr. Jim Watson, vice president for The Toro Company, I was hired by the Los Angeles Coliseum as a consultant to assist in preparing the field for the 1984 Olympics. Working on the field with fellow consultant Dick Baldwin and the staff at the Coliseum became an exciting adventure. We successfully met the challenges of the Olympic opening and closing ceremonies, concerts, religious events, movies, commercials, soccer and football.

I have learned the intimate details of managing the turf at a major sports facility. It is crisis management rewarded with the euphoria of success. I have the utmost respect for people who do it every day, withstanding the constant, immense pressure.

My primary job right now is managing the operations of a large agricultural experiment station in Southern California. Part of my work involves research on turfgrass, mostly in the area of sports turf. I still keep in touch with the real world by consulting.

Last year, I was elected president of STMA. I am honored to have been chosen by my peers. A lot of good things have happened this year. Much would have happened in spite of me, but a little good did happen that I can take credit for. I hope I am leaving STMA better than it was when I took office. I know that I am better for the STMA experience.

All of the jobs and experiences have allowed me to make a good living. They had meaning because of the grass. When called upon, I gladly served. Thank you, STMA, for the chance you gave me.

Steve Cockerham

ORLANDO CHOSEN AS SITE FOR SOUTHEAST INSTITUTE

The Citrus Bowl in Orlando, FL, has been selected as the site for the Southeastern Sports Turf Institute on March 6. The University of Georgia and the University of Florida are assisting STMA with the educational program and product demonstrations. The format for the event will be the same as other STMA institutes, with seminars in the morning and product demonstrations in the afternoon. Special tickets for a spring training baseball game on March 7 will be available.

To register for the institute, send a check for \$30 (members) or \$40 (nonmembers) to STMA headquarters before February 25. On-site registration will be available for an additional \$10.

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Before Dye redesigned the course, there were only two fairway bunkers. This series of bunkers was added on the 11th hole.

Crooked Stick For PGA Cham

Golf has been described as an aggravating, exhilarating, uplifting and exquisitely lonely game. On any given course, grown men can sometimes be seen dancing like lottery winners.

For all its considerable etiquette and consistent good manners, golf occasionally provokes a player's most basic emotions. Solitary, "man-versus-himself" sports are like that. And golf is perhaps the world's most solitary sport.

A wide receiver can watch a football sail just over his fingertips and out-of-bounds, and realize that the quarterback bears partial responsibility for the incompletion. A point guard who sinks a jump shot off a pick can thank the teammate who set it. But when a professional golfer hooks his tee shot into the woods, he owns it solely, just as he owns a chip shot from a bunker that drops into the hole.

Hosting a professional golf tournament couldn't be more different from the game itself. The sheer volume of work demands a team approach to planning and preparation, especially for professional golf's four major tournaments.

Simply landing one of the four "majors" is a substantial accomplishment for a course. Two of the tournament sites are forever predetermined. The Masters is always played in Augusta, GA. The British Open is limited to the harrowing links of the British Isles. That leaves only the U.S. Open and the PGA Championship available for bidding by courses around the country that would like to host a major.

When Crooked Stick Golf Club in Car-

mel, IN, approximately 15 miles north of Indianapolis, was awarded the PGA Championship for 1991, the club's 90-member tournament committee realized, from a certain amount of experience gained hosting major national amateur events, that the tournament's success relied on several factors. It required a course that was superbly challenging and fair for the players, and also a pleasure to view, both for the on-site spectators and the television audience.

To shape the already-excellent course into one of PGA Championship caliber, they turned to its original designer, Pete Dye, and 30-year-old Dave Riedman, superintendent at Crooked Stick. "I always dreamed of being the superintendent here," said Riedman. That dream came true in February 1986, which was the same month that Crooked Stick signed a contract with the PGA to host the 1991 Championship.

Riedman started working as a laborer at the course in 1978, but moved on to earn a degree in turfgrass management at Penn State University, under Dr. Joe Duich. His association with Dye began when the two rebuilt the west course at Birmingham Country Club in Birmingham, AL.

When Crooked Stick was awarded the PGA Championship, Dye realized that the course would require changes and improvements. Having worked with Riedman before, he recommended him for the job of superintendent. Riedman, who was superintendent of Harrison Lake Country Club in Columbus, IN, at the time, gladly accepted.

He had never been out of touch with the

condition of the course. He knew that C-15 decline had begun to attack several of Crooked Stick's Toronto creeping bent greens in 1984, and had actually visited the course to help out with their reconstruction in September 1985.

"We'd seen the greens stressing in 1984, and we dealt with it as stress," he said. "But we realized that the disease had the potential to strike all the greens. That and the Championship, and just improving the course for the members, were all factors in deciding to rebuild the greens." Riedman explained, "We stripped the sod, fumigated, and modified the slopes to accommodate 9½- to ten-foot green speeds. We didn't attempt to modify the soil because it was already 85 percent sand. We floated the seed beds, fumigated, floated again, put down seed and starter fertilizer, and covered them with tarps."

The choice for the new greens was Penn-cross. "It's been a proven grass over the years," said Riedman. "It's probably the most recommended grass by Pete Dye on his courses."

Snow mold attacked greens nine, 11, 17, and 18, and they had to be replanted again. The planting was done in March 1986 and the greens were ready for play that June. Greens 15 and 16, which were resodded in fall 1988 by Riedman and his 16-person crew, were ready for the 1989 season.

"We did all the work in-house," said Riedman. "Both greens were totally resodded from our own nursery. I much prefer working in-house with my own people."

Using a combination of Jacobsen mowers and overseeders, Cushman Ryan aerators, Hahn topdressers, and good old-fashioned hard work, Riedman and his crew logged 75- to 90-hour weeks to ensure that the course would be in optimum condition. As a team, they have handled the daily maintenance chores, in addition to major course changes designed by Dye in order to raise Crooked Stick to PGA standards. With the exception of heavy earth moving, the task of implementing these changes fell

Prepares pionship

to Riedman and his crew.

"This is the kind of thing I like," said Riedman. "I tend to get a little bored with simple maintenance. A lot of people think I'm more of a construction superintendent than a maintenance superintendent.

"Pete has the attitude that we can do anything. A lot of the things we've done have amazed the crew and myself. Pete says I can handle bulldozers better than most people. Whatever damage they do, I feel I can fix it."

Dye has a penchant for creating hazards that are fair, yet unforgiving and intimidating. In fact, one top-rated touring professional has called him "the master of visual terror."

Crooked Stick was originally designed with only two fairway bunkers. Long rough areas and lightning-fast greens provided the course's primary challenges. "When Pete came back to look at the course for the tournament, he knew we needed fairway bunkers," said Riedman. "He also wanted to soften the greens to accommodate the fast green speeds the members are accustomed to."

Fairway bunkers were installed on several holes and additional pin placements were worked into many of the greens. On the 14th hole, Dye added new pin placements, extended the fairway, and rerouted a stream which now passes along the front edge of the senior tee.

A horseshoe-shaped pond was installed around the fourth tee. On one side of the 16th green, a sand trap was converted into a lake. Tees three, four, eight, ten, 13, 16, 17, and 18 were all changed to play longer. To make the fifth hole carry further, 100 yards of the fairway were removed. On the seventh hole, lightning ground rod protection was installed to protect a 100-year-old white oak tree.

Other changes to the course have included construction of railroad tie bridges and walls (a Dye signature), natural amphitheaters and spectator mounds, cart paths, ponds, and total reconstruction of



Railroad ties, a Dye trademark, border the 13th green. A creek was rerouted to wind in front of the green on the left. All photos copyright © 1989, Dost & Evans.

many bunkers.

"We didn't make changes and improvements just for the Championship," said Riedman. "A lot of what we did needed to be done, and we would have done it anyway. With all the new courses that are being built every day, you have to continually improve your course, or you're dead. Pete really wants to keep up the status of this golf course."

Not all of the amendments to the course are as obvious as new fairway bunkers and bridge construction. Crooked Stick's fairways, tees, and greens were already irrigated, but the rough was nourished only by natural rainfall. As a result, the bluegrass took a beating from the drought of 1988. A new Rain Bird Maxicomm IV irrigation system was installed.

Putting in the irrigation system, which was designed primarily by Riedman, was one of the toughest chores for the superintendent and his crew. They worked from November through May, in the dead of the Indiana winter.

"We used all rubber gasket fittings so we could work in winter, and glued all pipe indoors," said Riedman. "When it got too cold to pull pipe, we trenched. We worked almost every day. I think there were only about three days we didn't work."

The result of their six-month, \$400,000 effort is an irrigation system with 54 controllers, linked to an IBM PS-250 personal computer. From a computer room under construction in the maintenance building, they can syringe greens easily and adjust and control all watering functions.

They have also overcome Crooked Stick's problem of inadequate watering on the edges of its fairways. To accomplish this, Riedman and his crew installed Rain Bird 91-DR sprinklers down the center of the fairways and 51-DRs in the rough, at what he calls the "scallop point." Installation of small heads around the bunkers to water bunker faces is also planned.

He is proud of his crew's efforts. But Riedman also credits the patience and dedication of Crooked Stick's 225 members for the success of the improvement program. They have played an integral role on the "team," by providing both financial support and cooperation for the tournament preparation.

"The most difficult thing about preparing for the Championship has probably been keeping the course open during construction," he said. "The members have been really great about putting up with it. There aren't many clubs that would be so good about it. Bill Diehl, a member here, has been the greatest. He used to be the general sales manager at McCallister Machinery [in Indianapolis], and whenever we needed to rent something like excavators or backhoes, he'd get them for us at a fraction of the price."

All construction on Crooked Stick will be completed by this May as is stipulated by the PGA. From then until August 1991, when the tournament is held, Riedman and his crew will focus on a maintenance and mowing program. Per PGA requirements, all rough areas must be cut by rotary

continued on page 16

mowers, and fairways must be cut to 7/16 inch.

"Our fairways are already there," said Riedman. "We want to prepare from now until the tournament like it was going to happen next week. We want to be able to mow this golf course in four hours, because during the tournament that may be all the time we have. We want to have the equipment ready to go, backup for the equipment, and backup for the backup."

The members have made that possible, said Riedman. He estimated that the course spends \$100,000 a year on maintenance equipment, and that Crooked Stick's equipment inventory is worth approximately \$890,000. "The members say, 'Get it done,' and they give us the money to do the job right," he said. "We couldn't do it without them."

While Dye and Riedman have been working on the course itself, the tournament committee and Michael Browning, tournament director, have been attacking the challenge of making Crooked Stick perfect for the estimated 150,000 spectators who will come to view the 1991 PGA Championship. The committee decided to tap the talent reservoir of the Landscape Architecture Division of MSE Corporation (formerly Mid-States Engineering) in Indianapolis.

The union of MSE and Crooked Stick actually began when the club hired the company (which also specializes in engineering, surveying, and digital mapping) to perform a laser measurement of the course. In the measuring procedure, a laser is set up on the tee of a particular hole and a beam of light is sent out to the pin. The beam bounces off a device at the pin and returns to the tee. The distance between the two points is extrapolated from the time it takes the light beam to travel the distance.

After the measurement procedure was completed, Fred Kellams, director of MSE Landscape Architecture, approached Browning and offered to assist with the layout for the tournament. Kellams, who describes himself as a student of the game, is an Evans Scholarship alumnus. It is a caddy scholarship funded by the Western Golf Association. He had observed the process of organizing large tournaments in the past, and understood the need for tournament master planning.

"I've always had an interest in assisting with the planning of a PGA tournament," said Kellams. "I grew up in Indiana, but have lived in Florida and St. Louis, MO. However, I've never lived anywhere where they play as much golf as they do in Indiana. Indianapolis is a golfing community."

The committee knew that they needed rest rooms, concession areas, additional plantings, spectator traffic control, and parking areas. The question was, "Where are the best places to put them, in relation to the course and one another?" A landscape architect with a golfing background

was a natural choice to assist with these plans, and Browning accepted Kellams' offer.

In developing the Crooked Stick tournament plan, MSE programmed areas encompassing the entire course. The plan includes a central area for ABC Television, which because of technical demands can be no farther than 5,000 feet from any given hole on the course, and areas for other members of the media, spectators, fairway crossings, concessions, rest rooms, and parking.

"Working with the tournament committee, we developed a list of program needs important for the success of the tournament," said Kellams. "We organized stated needs and requirements and established an overall master plan or course layout."

Step one was to fully define what the committee needed to do to handle the spectators without interfering with the golfers. For nine months, the committee and Kellams worked together to create several plans. The best of each was taken and blended into one.

"We came up with a plan that encompassed all the major points that needed to be addressed," Kellams said. "This includes logistics of running a tournament, how to get people on and off the course each day, how to get them to rest rooms, concession areas, and so forth."

Among the priorities established by the committee was the need for the tournament to be a financial success. No one wants the event to hurt the club financially.

"One important feature to help minimize the cost of the tournament for Crooked

Stick was the development of corporate pavilions," said Kellams.

There were will be 24 corporate tents in the pavilion area, each measuring 30 feet by 60 feet. They will be rented for the week of the tournament. Amenities will include air conditioning, closed-circuit television monitors, private telephones, computerized scoring, and full catering services.

Additional plant material for the pavilion area will be brought in from nurseries and planted shallowly. When the tournament has concluded, the plant material will be removed and replanted around the course.

"It is more sophisticated than just pitching a tent," said Kellams of the complex planning for the pavilions. The pavilion area skirts the fairway of the 424-yard, par-four 16th hole on one side, and is just a chip shot off the 18th tee on the other. "Another service we provided to the tournament committee was an illustrative plan delineating design features. This helped provide a comprehensive marketing package to promote the tournament and aid in the sale of the corporate pavilions," Kellams said.

To date, 13 of the 24 pavilions have been rented. The price tag for each is \$120,000 for the week. "It may be a record high for corporate pavilions," Browning commented.

The committee and Kellams wanted to ensure that all of the spectator areas will provide unique, exciting views of the action. So they went to a unique, exciting expert.

"We asked Pete Dye how he thought golf could best be viewed from behind rope. How you 'corral' people at a major tournament is largely determined by miles of ski rope," said Kellams. "Most spectators feel

Bagging A Major: Luck And The Art Of Paying Dues

Crooked Stick Golf Club didn't simply wake up one February day in 1986 and find itself chosen as the 1991 PGA Championship site. Bagging the tournament was the culmination of a process which had begun five or six years earlier.

"Crooked Stick has long been considered by many to be a championship course," said Michael Browning, the 42-year-old owner of Browning Investments, Inc., and tournament director. "We are dedicated to amateur golf, but we've always wanted to host a professional event."

Several national amateur events have been held on the course, including the 1982 USGA Junior Amateur Championship, 1983 USGA Senior Amateur Championship, and the 1989 USGA Mid-Amateur Championship. In addition, qualifying rounds for the U.S. Open are held there annually.

Browning is well versed in organizing sports events at both the amateur and professional levels. He moved to Indianapolis in 1975, and helped plan the National Sports Festival held there in 1982 and the Pan Am Games in 1987. He is chairman of the Indianapolis Sports Organization, which has held more than 300

amateur events in the area. In addition, he co-owns the Seattle Mariners with Jeff Smulyan.

In Browning, Crooked Stick found a straightforward mover. Asked how he became involved with the Mariners, he responded simply, "We wrote a check." But landing the tournament was a team effort. It began when Mickey Powell, owner of the Golf Club of Indiana and former president and director of the PGA of America, asked Wayne Timberman, then president of Crooked Stick, if the club could submit a bid to host the 1991 PGA Championship. Timberman said yes, and the bid was prepared and submitted. Much to the delight of the members of Crooked Stick, it was accepted.

"It's difficult to describe the process [of being chosen as the site for a major] because a lot of it goes on behind the closed doors of the PGA," said Browning. "I think Mickey's [Powell] sponsorship at the PGA board of directors was critical. However, some of it is a matter of waiting your turn, some of it is a matter of paying your dues, and some of it is a matter of luck."

that the majority of action takes place on the green. Dye sees it differently. He thinks that the best viewing area is from the tee."

With both green and tee concepts in mind, they experimented with the viewing areas of several holes. Trees have been removed from spectator traffic and viewing areas and replanted by Riedman's crew around the course. Traditional spectator galleries have been created, such as behind the 18th green. Six thousand bleacher seats, as well as sitting and standing room for an additional 4,000 spectators, will fill this area. Unorthodox viewing areas are also planned.

One hole presented a particular problem, as both its tee and green are unsuited for large groups of spectators. The solution: bleachers will be placed along the fairway.

"It's unique," said Kellams. "Spectators will be able to see the approach shot and the action on the green, all from one place."

More than 18 months will pass before the first pro tees off in the 1991 PGA Championship at Crooked Stick. And though he will be surrounded by thousands and watched by millions on television, he will ultimately face the course alone. That's the nature of the game.

Until that time, work and preparation for the event will continue. Much has yet to be completed, such as recruiting, training, and coordinating the 2,000 volunteers that will be needed to work at the PGA Champion-



The 18th green is bordered on one side by a lake. Roughly 10,000 spectators can watch the action from the opposite side.

ship. Tournament merchandising, as well as his other duties, will keep Jim Ferriell, Jr., Crooked Stick club pro, busy in the club's newly remodeled pro shop.

In a sense, the Crooked Stick team—the members, committee, Browning, Riedman, and Kellams—have made the turn and are heading down the back nine. Last year, Crooked Stick moved from 79 to 59 in Golf Digest magazine's ranking of the top 100 courses in the country.

The 1991 PGA Championship winner can thank his family for support and his caddy for advice, but the last word in victory will be his alone. The team at Crooked Stick will have a victory of their own to celebrate, that of successfully hosting a major. And they can enjoy their accomplishment together.

"We'll be ready," said Riedman. "I think for anyone in this business, this is like a dream come true." ●



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GCSAA ELECTIONS

Gerald L. Faubel, CGCS, has been nominated for the presidency of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) for 1990-91. Faubel, superintendent at Saginaw Country Club in Saginaw, MI, currently serves as vice president of the professional association.

The organization's officers and directors will be elected during its annual meeting at the 1990 GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando, FL, on February 19-26.

Vice-presidential candidates are Stephen G. Cadenelli, CGCS, of the Metedeconk National Golf Club in Jackson, NJ, and William R. Roberts, CGCS, of the Lochmoor Club in Grosse Pointe Woods, MI.

Three candidates for director will be elected for two-year terms. Nominees for director are Joseph G. Baidy, CGCS, of Acacia Country Club in Lyndhurst, OH; Charles A. Clark, CGCS, of Broadmoor Golf Course in Colorado Springs, CO; Cecil C. Johnston, CGCS, of Avila Golf & Country Club in Lutz, FL; Charles T. Passios, CGCS, of Hyannisport Club in Hyannisport, MA; and Randall P. Zidik, CGCS, of Rolling Hills Country Club in McMurray, PA.

GCSAA's current president, Dennis D. Lyon, CGCS, City of Aurora Golf Division, Aurora, CO, will continue to serve on the board of directors as immediate past president.

BENGEYFIELD AND WATSCHKE HONORED

William Bengeyfield, USGA Green Section national director, and Dr. Thomas Watschke, Penn State turfgrass researcher and educator, will be honored for their dedication and outstanding service to golf course superintendents and the golf community at the opening session of the International Golf Course Conference and Show, February 19-26, in Orlando, FL.

Bengeyfield and Watschke have been selected as recipients of the 1990 Distinguished Service Award. The selection was made by the board of directors of Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), which sponsors the annual conference and show.

Under Bengeyfield's leadership, the USGA/GCSAA Turfgrass Research Committee has seen more than \$2.8 million raised and distributed for research to develop turfgrass cultivars that will reduce water usage and maintenance costs. The USGA Turfgrass Advisory Service, a consulting branch of the Green Section, has been an increasingly valuable resource for superintendents during Bengeyfield's tenure as national director.

Bengeyfield, a long time GCSAA member, operates and maintains Frankfort Golf Course in Frankfort, MI, as his time permits.

For almost 20 of his 35 years with the Green Section, he has also served as editor of the Green Section Record.

Watschke is coordinator for Penn State's Landscape Management and Water Quality Research Center, synchronizing all field research for the five departments that cooperatively use the facility. He also serves on the Technical Resource/Advisory Committee for Golf Course Management, the technical and professional journal for golf course superintendents.

His research has led to the use of growth regulators to control *Poa annua*, the development of new post-emergent crabgrass control compounds, advancement in broadleaf weed controls, and most recently, to a better understanding of surface runoff on turfgrasses. Many of Watschke's former students are now turfgrass scientists, perpetuating and extending his commitment to turfgrass advancement.

DEERE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP



The victorious team from the Country Club of Louisiana.

A team from the Country Club of Louisiana in Baton Rouge won first place in the third annual John Deere Team Championship, held recently at the Jack Nicklaus Resort Course at PGA West La Quinta, Palm Springs, CA.

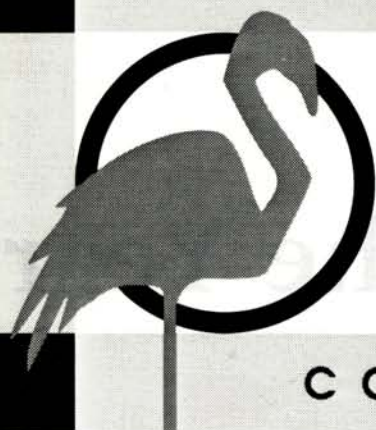
The tournament is the only PGA-sanctioned competition that provides an opportunity for golf professionals and golf course superintendents to team up with other club officials in a national championship. It was started in 1987 to recognize the important people who help make America's golf facilities successful, and includes a John Deere golf and turf distributor on each team.

The first-place team of Tolby Strahan, Dean Alexander, Luis Romero, Ben Skillman, and John Deere's Howard Ruiz beat 35 other sectional teams in the two-day, 36-hole event. More than 700 teams competed in sectional tournaments throughout the year to determine the 36 finalists for the modified scramble tournament.

Second place went to the team from Twin Oaks Country Club, Springfield, MO. The team consisted of Max Arrowood, Dee Greninger, Steve Kuzma, Joe Kremer and Deere's Dennis Whiteford.

Third place was garnered by the Elm Grove Golf Club team of Lubbock, TX. It consisted of Terry W. Harvick, Robert W. Young, Lee H. Buxton, Roland Adams, and Deere's Bob Seyfried.

G C S A A ' 9 0



ORLANDO

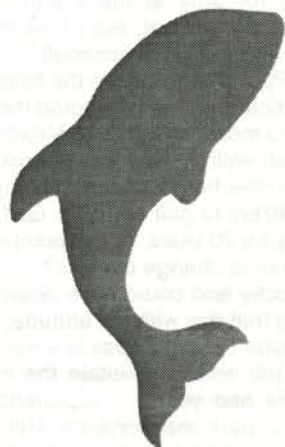


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Harry Gill: Man of the Year



Gill on right with Brewer Robin Yount... and with Brewer's announcer Bob Uecker.

Sixteen years ago, Harry Gill knew he was about to lose his job as a golf course superintendent in Rockford, IL. To make matters worse, he and his family lived in a house on the course. For months, he had mailed resumes out to several courses in Illinois and Wisconsin. Christmas approached without another job for the 54-year-old self-made superintendent and groundskeeper.

Gill had no idea that his career was about to make a big turn, one that would take him away from golf into the rather exclusive and secretive field of stadium groundskeeping. For in 1975, Harry Gill became a Milwaukee Brewer and proceeded to change the world of athletic field management, not only for stadiums, but for colleges, high schools and parks.

In 16 years, he lifted the lid of secrecy, sought and developed new techniques in athletic turf management, and helped start an association for sports turf managers that

now has more than 800 members. He has brought the sports turf industry together more than any other individual, inspired universities to teach athletic field management, and unselfishly groomed grounds keepers for other stadiums across the country.

Selecting Harry Gill as the recipient of the 1990 Golf & SportsTURF Man of the Year Award was one of the easiest decisions we've had to make since starting the magazine five years ago. His contributions to both the sports turf and golf course industry are equalled by few. He brings as much honor to the award as the award brings him.

"When Gabe Paul Jr. [vice president of operations for the Brewers] called my house in January 1975, I didn't return the call for a week," chuckles Gill today. "He got my resume from someone else. The field at Milwaukee County Stadium had been called the worst in baseball. There was talk about

moving the All Star game, which was scheduled for July at the stadium, to another city. I knew turf, but I had only a good fan's knowledge of baseball."

Gill met Paul at the stadium the following Saturday uncertain that he wanted the job. He'd have to move his family to Milwaukee and learn an entirely new line of work. He now had an offer from a chemical company to sell fertilizers to golf courses. Golf had been his life for 20 years. At this point in his life, as it wise to change careers?

"I was cocky and could have blown the whole thing that day with my attitude," Gill recalls. Maybe the cockiness is what Paul liked. The job was to maintain the entire stadium. He had years of experience in building and park maintenance. Gill took the job under certain conditions. This fall, at the age of 69, he will retire but stay on to consult for the Brewers.

On April 3, 1975, Gill walked out onto the mound at Milwaukee County Stadium and