

GREEN NEWS

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NEWS

Pictured left to right: Owners Carol & Gilbert Araki and Nancy & Ken Findeisen break ground earlier this year.

GROWING FOR YOU

Ground has broken at the new site of Hawaii Grower Products in Kahului. The new main office and warehouse headquarters is conveniently located next to Irrigation Systems, near Lowe's Hardware (formerly Eagle), and will have a larger parking lot for customer convenience.

"Our goal is to provide our customers with the same extensive variety of products as well as have a larger and more convenient location," says

Ken Findeisen, President. "Everyone will be much happier with this new location."

The complete move is set to take place in January of 2001. For now, the 380 Hoohana location is still in full operation and is where you can get all your HGP products.

Be on the lookout for the new building and the grand opening announcement.

New Kahului HGP site under construction



Cutting Edge Methods Coupled with a Strong Maintenance Program Get Plantation Course “Tournament-Ready”

It's no secret that the Plantation Course at Kapalua is one of the world's most challenging and scenic golf courses. It's the start of the prestigious PGA Tour where pros like Tiger Woods, Phil Meckelson, and Ernie Els come out to play for big bucks. This year's purse is a record \$3.2 million.

The key to maintaining a world-renowned golf course not only lies in a skilled golf course superintendent, but also in the relationship he has with his products supplier.

When Kapalua's superintendent of courses, Stephen Collins, was brought in on October 24, 1999, to “ready” the Plantation Course for the 2000 Mercedes Championships, he had his work cut out for him. The greens had become thin and weak and had little or no root system. This posed a serious problem for the upcoming tournament.

Collins, an Agronomist with a degree in Turfgrass Management and a longtime troubleshooter for the PGA Circuit, has consulted with the PGA Circuit on the English Turn course and works the Masters every year.

With a little less than ten weeks until the tournament, Collins teamed up with Ken Findeisen of Hawaii Grower Products and like two warriors preparing for combat, they formulated a battle plan. Findeisen worked out a nutritional and disease program and Collins created an “artificial growing environment” never before implemented in Hawaii.

“The optimal goal in maintaining tournament quality greens is to feed them right — before trouble sets in,” says Findeisen. “However, sometimes weather, low mowing heights, mistakes, etc. can affect even the most meticulously cared for greens. The goal at the Plantation Course was to get the course ‘tournament-ready’ by strengthening the weak greens in the shortest amount of time possible.”

The nutritional and disease program consisted of laying something down every week, whether it was a granular fertilizer, a soluble fertilizer, a bio stimulant, or a fungicide. “We tried to avoid

the ‘everything but the kitchen sink’ method,” says Findeisen. “Steve and I put our heads together and came up with a weekly schedule that would favor above and below ground growth, as well as protect the plant from disease.”

Collins’ “artificial growing environment” began when the thin weak greens were covered at night with a Typar geotextile that was specially ordered and flown in from North Carolina. This kept the daytime soil temperatures in at night. On the weakest greens, halogen lamps were used at night to keep the greens growing. “The winter nighttime soil temperatures were often in the mid-60's, which really slowed bermuda grass growth,” says Collins. “This method held in the heat, and allowed the bermuda grass to grow quickly, just in time for the tournament.”

Collins wasn't sure of the outcome. “I was basically counting down days, minutes, and seconds with great anxiety,” he says. What was so great about working with Kapalua and HGP was that I had total cooperation. I never heard the word ‘no.’ The result was near-perfect greens when the pros arrived for the Mercedes Championships. Even those with a discerning eye could not have guessed how bad the greens had been.”

Since then, the Plantation Course is on track for the 2001 Mercedes Championships. The nutrition and disease program has been followed throughout the year. “This time last year, we were lucky to have a 1-inch root system on the greens,” says Collins. “This year, our root system on the greens is over 12 inches deep.” Collins has received extensive kudos from the PGA Circuit reflected in a letter that said, “the greens to date are in the best condition they have ever been at Kapalua.”

It just goes to show that a strong maintenance program coupled with a solid working relationship between the supplier and golf course superintendent leads to success.

For more information about HGP products, call Ken Findeisen at 877.6636.



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