


GCSAA's New President:

A Way In High Places . . .

From the mountains of Utah comes the Association's new leader, Riley L. Stottern, CGCS — an accomplished golf course superintendent, outdoorsman, corporate team manager and devoted family man.

Christopher C. Caldwell
GCM Managing Editor



An American original, the Jeremy Ranch layout — carved out of the rugged Wasatch Mountains in an area near Park City, Utah — has been praised as an "ideal" golf course for a high-dollar, best-ball event like the annual Shootout held there. GCSAA's new President has been the course manager since before the first shot was fired.

For many Americans elsewhere in the country, the West remains first and foremost what it has always been physically — a land of extremes. Yet, in the past decade particularly, it has also become once again a refreshing source of revitalization for the rest of the country.

And over the past several years during his time on the Board of Directors, Riley Stottern has had a big hand in the revitalization of GCSAA. Thus, it's particularly fitting that he should have taken the helm of the Association in San Francisco during the Association's just concluded most successful Show ever — an event that culminated as a celebration of GCSAA's revitalization.

Clearly, the influence of the West is being felt in the Association as never before in recent times. What does the new President himself think of this and what it portends for the Association?

"Well, I think that the geographical shift of the Board of Directors — with two 1985-86 Board members moving to Texas, plus the election of a Californian to the 1986-87 Board — shifted a little bit of the power to the West. I'm sure most of us in the West enjoy that, because the Board has been overly balanced to the East. But most of the golf courses are in the East or Northeast, and we should probably have a lot of Directors from that area.

"Golf in the West has been, I think, underrated for a long time. Because of the limited number of golf courses in a large geographical area, we don't get as much attention as a lot of the courses in the East. And I think that we are equally prepared and as sophisticated as any of the golf courses anywhere."

While there may be technical differences in course demands and applicable conditioning procedures in use from East to West, the fundamental considerations are not as dissimilar as might be assumed.

"We have differences of management, in that their soils are low pH and they're using lime. As Gene Baston (GCSAA's Immediate Past President, who's spent much of his professional career managing courses in the East and the South) and I have often discussed, I don't know anything about lime — and he doesn't know anything about alkaline soils and gypsum and sulphuric acid to lower our pHs. I think basically turf maintenance and turf management are the same."

Points Of Departure

Being in mountain country — especially in the mountains as the Jeremy Ranch layout is — represents another story.

"There's a lot of difference here, in that I have only about a 90- to 120-day growing season. When the snow leaves the golf course in the spring, we've got like two weeks — at maximum — to have it open and ready for the golfers to play. And this puts a lot of pressure on us.

"Fortunately, we have golf cart paths — from the first tee to the 18th green — and that helps, because the soils are so saturated that it allows us two weeks for them to drain before we have to put the cars on the fairways."

The difficulties aren't confined to purely weather-related matters, either. Jeremy Ranch has, as Riley puts it, "a lot

of conditions that most golf courses wouldn't see.

"We have had a lot of mice damage in the past, because of all of the open area surrounding the golf course. We lose a lot of trees, aspen trees especially — that's a soft poplar-type tree — to beavers. We have trappers who trap the East Canyon Creek that runs through the golf course throughout the wintertime to keep the beavers under control.

"We lose a lot of our pine trees to porcupines. There aren't any homes around most of those pine tree plantings and I don't think there are any animals — including dogs — that a porcupine is scared of. They'll take on just about anything. Because they are free to run at will, the only control is shooting them whenever we can.

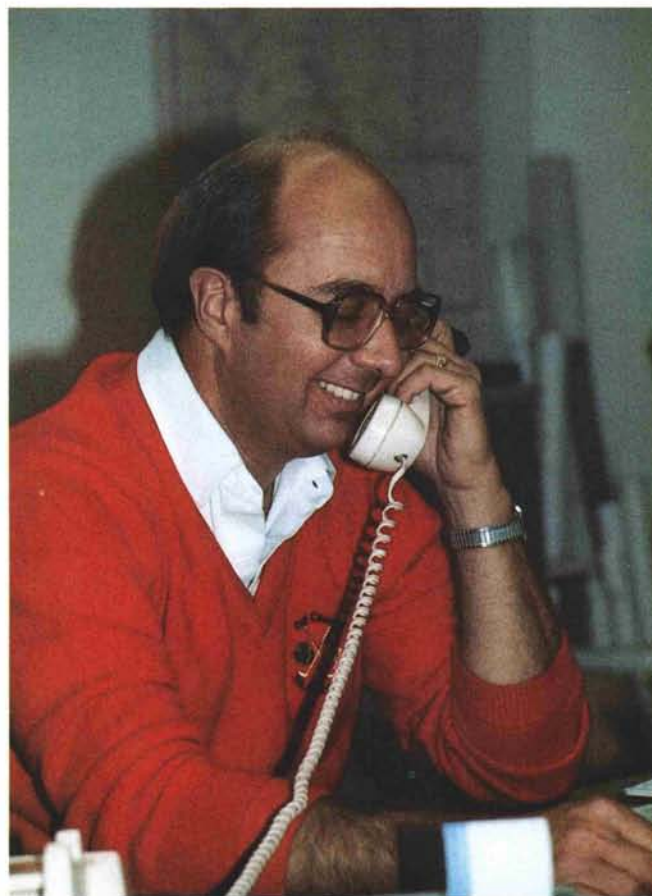
"But chemically, there's no control for them.

"We are using some chemicals on mice. We're trying fungicides to see if that won't keep them from infesting the turf-grass areas.

"They do a tremendous amount of damage. It takes most of the summer to recover from mice damage. They dig burrows under the snow and chew the grass right down to the roots, right down to the dirt. And they mound it up into their runs and nests. It's a terrible mess in the spring."

To hear Riley tell it, the mice and the porcupines are surprisingly picky (and precise) in their dining habits. This

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Riley L. Stottern, CGCS — the 50th President of GCSAA — has a personable style that's as open and memorable as the course he manages.

enhances the prospects of effectively controlling the former but — so far — only adds to the frustration with the latter.

"The shorter the grass, the shorter it's cut, the less amount of damage we have from the mice. They'll go right up to a green where it's treated with a fungicide and it's very short, and they'll turn around and retreat. That's why we're trying to work with fungicides. We also use a product called Hinder, which is a deer repellent, an animal repellent. We spray our trees with an antidesiccant and Hinder, in hopes that the deer and the porcupines will stay away from them.

"I probably suffered upwards of three or four thousand dollars damage this past fall due to porcupines. I don't know how many trees we'll lose. Once the trunk is girdled all the way around — and the porcupines only chew off part of the bark, but they'll chew it all the way around — then we lose the tree. It's a tremendous cost to us."

The animal problems don't stop there, either.

"We have deer in summer and fall, and the deer get in the bunkers, which means we have to rake the bunkers daily. We've got 85 bunkers.

"We mechanically rake them, because having the deer in there churning them up is just as bad as having dogs or kids or anything else, so every day they have to be raked. That's not out of the norm, but it would be nice if we could selectively take some bunkers that are out of play and only

rake them every other day. It would really help our maintenance cost."

Other Factors In Course Conditioning

Although not currently in use at Jeremy Ranch, the idea of geotextiles in the bunkers is one that appeals to Riley in retrospect.

"If I were doing it now, I'd probably put the liners in the bunkers. The golf course was built five years ago before they were popular. I wish I had them, because I often get a lot of rocks turned up in my bunkers."

When it comes to the greens on the course, geotextiles would be largely redundant.

"The snow level will accumulate to three or four feet during the winter, so that's really my 'greencover.' Being 100 percent sand greens, they drain very well, and at any given time, we can expose the green and it will be thawed.

"In most cases, the grass grows underneath the snow and will be in great shape when it comes out in spring. It'll be bright green but the first frost knocks it back after it's bare. The only time we run into any snow mold problems is in the early spring when the snow melts and an ice layer forms and air can't get to the turf."

The same holds true on the tees as well.

"We treat the tees just as we treat the greens," says Riley. "The soil construction in the tees is basically the same as the greens. The only thing they don't have is internal drainage, but we have about a foot of sand under every tee."

The fairways and roughs are Baron bluegrass, and although overseeding isn't a routine annual practice, there are occasions when it's required.

"Sometimes, we have to overseed because of construction problems. When we have excessive runoff leading to erosion problems and mud deposits on the fairways, it has sometimes become necessary to overseed."

Additional Professional Responsibilities

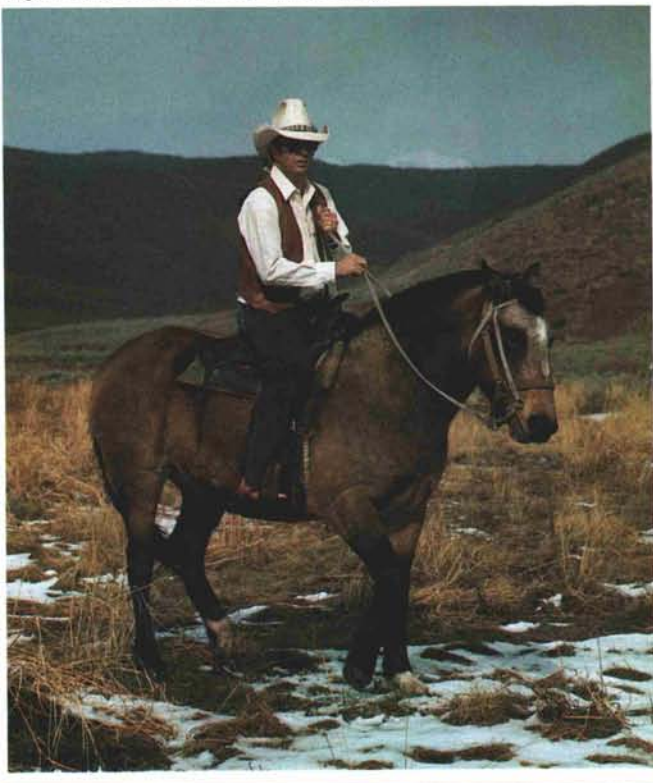
As is increasingly the case for many of today's golf course superintendents in this country, Riley's professional responsibilities extend well beyond the immediate demands of his sparkling 18-hole championship layout. When he reflects just briefly upon the scope of his duties, the breadth and depth of his involvement begin to come home to even the most casual visitor.

"Well, of course, we have the golf course, plus 30 condominiums and all of the 12,500 acres. I'm involved with security and with some of the road maintenance.

"In the area of construction, I work closely with the construction company, particularly with two fellow managers. One is a construction planner who does bidding and so forth, and the other one is actually over the physical construction of buildings — residential or commercial — and roads.

"I work closely with them, in that we have all of the machinery — backhoes, trucks, other necessary heavy equipment and trained operators — within the golf course. Because I generally hire the largest number of people, they

What does this man do when he's not busy with his course or other Jeremy Ranch property and interests? Well, sometimes he rides the range — at least, when the snow's not deep enough to ski it (Riley has been a member of the National Ski Patrol for 16 years and is actively involved in management of cross-country skiing on the course in the wintertime).



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use the golf course department as a labor pool. So I have the responsibility of seeing that the equipment and the labor are there to perform the task, to help supervise, to check on them, and to see that whatever project we're doing is done properly.

"I also get involved in a lot of the drainage work for the Jeremy Ranch — not because I'm an expert in it, but because I've had more experience in it than anybody else who's here.

Other Routines On the Ranch

Beyond snow removal, Riley's winter routine at the Jeremy Ranch also involves "helping supervise the snowmobile operation and setting a cross-country skiing track — I can't recall exactly how many kilometers we set last year, but I would say it was about 15 kilometers of track."

He explains the process this way:

"We have a large snowmobile and track setter, that sets the track about two inches deep and just a little wider than a normal cross-country ski.

"The University of Utah has their NCAA winning cross-

country team that trains here, and they set their own track on part of the Jeremy Ranch. It's a more difficult track than what we have on the golf course.

"The track on the golf course is more for residents, property owners — and for the visiting public. We're hopeful of course that if somebody comes up here and enjoys the property, they'll buy a lot, so that's why we've offered this kind of access."

* * *

Although the full spectrum of indoor and alternative recreational facilities has yet to be developed, Riley sees the day of their arrival — and his potential involvement — fast approaching.

"In the near future, we hope to build a racquet facility, that will house a swimming pool, tennis court, racquetball, handball, squash, exercise facilities, aerobics, Nautilus and clubhouse facility — the whole gamut of that type of popular recreational activities. I would hope that we would get started on that in the next 12 months.

"On the drawing board is a professional building. Then there are plans for a destination-type hotel, school, a big park and equestrian center.

"We already have horses. I don't interact with the horse

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The New President On Tournament Demands . . .

(The Shootout At The Jeremy Ranch is a relatively new major tournament that's rapidly gained quite a following, plus recognition as one of the most successful gate attractions on the PGA's Senior Tour. Does such an annual event put extraordinary demands upon a superintendent? You be the judge, as you reflect upon Riley Stottern's own view of this major annual event held on his course.)

"The golf course was seeded in '81. We didn't get a real good take. We seeded late and it was mass hysteria trying to get all the irrigation in as well as trying to get all the turfgrass established.

"Dr. Gerald Bagley — the owner-developer of the Jeremy Ranch — approached me in about June '81 and said, 'Riley, how's the golf course going?'

"'Boy, it's tough, Doc,' I said. 'We've got all the bunkers to do, and all this to do . . .'

"'Riley,' he said, 'think we can be open by September?'

"'I said, 'Gee, Doc, probably — but don't count on it . . .'

"'Well,' he said, 'I've already scheduled Arnold Palmer to come in and open the golf course September 16. That's Arnold's birthday.'

"So the Doc says, 'We will open the golf course, won't we?'

"We did. It wasn't 100 percent, but it was probably 95 percent of what we wanted it to be.

"Well, the next season rolled around. Dr. Bagley came up to me early in the spring and said, 'Riley, how's the golf course going?'

"I said, 'Well, pretty good, Doc.'

"He said, 'Are we ready to have a tournament here yet?'

"And I said, 'On what scale?'

"He said, 'Well, a PGA tournament — Senior event.'

"And I said, 'Aw, no — give me a couple of years . . .'

"'Riley,' he said, 'we've already scheduled it for August.'

"And we did it. We went through with that one, and I've now had four successful tournaments here.

"We're now in the \$450,000 range for our two-man, best-ball tournament regarded by the players as one of the best. They like it a lot. They like the format, and they like the ability to just freewheel with the ball."

* * *

(This year, the Shootout is slated during the last week of August. Riley will be the first recent GCSAA President to host such a major tournament during his time in office. He envisions no problems, complications or conflicts as far as scheduling and such.)

"My crew functions very well. My assistant handles all the roping, and all of the scheduling of the crew.

"My area is mainly overseeing a lot of what's going on in setting up what we call the VIP area, or the stadium seating. I do that myself. People buy tables in that terraced area for a lot of money. I spend a lot of time up there because of the security problems. Marshaling in that given area is very, very difficult."

operation. They've got their own facilities at the far end of the valley.

"I do like to get out and ride with my kids. We ride with the wranglers if they've got a free afternoon. We'll saddle up and tour the ranch."

Early Influences

Riley has been on and around golf courses — and around this profession — literally since childhood. His grandfather had been a superintendent in Florida before moving on to



the course environment Riley remembers most vividly from his early years.

"My grandfather moved from Florida to the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs under Mr. Penrose. He built the Broadmoor and hired my grandfather to be the superintendent there.

"My grandfather died when I was five, and I remember

being with him on the golf course a lot. That would put it around the time immediately after the second world war . . . roughly, during the years 1947-48.

"The government had displaced the Japanese off the West Coast, and he had a lot of the Japanese working for him at the Broadmoor. I can remember being around that environment. They were given a section of the golf course on which to grow berries and the food that they were accustomed to. They had huge strawberry plantings and magnificent gardens.

"There was a big, U-shaped arena on the grounds for horse shows, rodeos and different events — and underneath, there were apartments. As I remember, a lot of the Japanese lived in those apartments. My father had a lot of them working for him after my grandfather died.

"Those were very interesting times, fun times as a child around the golf course with both my grandfather and father.

"My father left the golf course business to go into the landscaping business. I worked with him in the landscaping business during the summers until he decided to build another golf course called Valley-Hi. It was a private country club in Colorado Springs.

"He built nine holes and then the opportunity came for him to move to Utah to build Willow Creek Country Club. I was a sophomore in high school, and I worked with him every summer building and maintaining the golf course.

"I graduated from high school and left the golf business for one year.

"I went to work for a drug wholesaler just to see what it was like to be out of the realm of golf. I didn't like it very much.

"I met my wife there. Only one of us could work for the company, and I decided it was time for me to leave. My father was looking for an assistant so I went to work for him

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The New President On Professional Education . . .

"If a young person asked me today how to get into the golf course superintendent's business, the first thing I would tell him or her would be to go to college and pursue a degree in business management. I think that business management is the whole key to golf course superintendency.

"I think I can teach anyone how to grow grass. GCSAA has many classes on growing fine turfgrass.

"Built-in desire and being a good golfer are also helpful in getting into superintendency, but business background *has* to be learned. It can be learned either through professional education, universities or colleges, or through the school of hard knocks.

"I've been very fortunate to have had boards of directors and individuals — including my father — who would work with me and would allow me to make out budgets. If I had not been privy to the business infor-

mation those people provided, I'd really have been lost.

"I was also fortunate to have taken one of the first management seminars GCSAA offered. I went to Los Angeles and took it there at my own expense. It was well worth the dollars that I spent. I needed the seminar at that time and thought it was very good.

"Having a formal educational background in business management also allows you flexibility later in your career, should you choose to move into other areas of business. Too many times, golf course superintendents lay their educational groundwork and mold their careers in ways that lead down a path geared only to turfgrass management.

"There are times that I think it is the greatest career in the world. I've been in it all my life and don't foresee ever changing fields. I love Mother Nature and enjoy being outdoors — but for other people, there may come times in their careers or in their lives when they want to make a change. And a degree in business management would offer them the opportunity to branch out."

for two years in that position, and then moved on to my own superintendent's role at Oakridge Country Club."

Launching A Career

"In the 12 years I was there, we planted 1,500 trees. We got the greens in beautiful condition and it became one of the best clubs in the area. Out of the area's top clubs I'd say we were in the top six or seven. I wouldn't want to rank them, but we were one of the top clubs. And it has maintained itself in that area."

The young superintendent's tree-planting program at Oakridge was begun on a very modest basis, not with any grandiose goals in mind but rather with the basic hope of making at least some improvement in the then-barren landscape.

"All I knew was we needed trees. We didn't have any money. I had about a \$30,000 budget.

"It was just a poor, struggling club, and I remember my dad found a good buy on some trees if we would dig them. It was about a 40-mile drive. I sent a crew out in a pickup truck that would barely make it. The crew hand-dug a dozen or two blue spruce, and we planted them on the course.

"I can remember the members at that time joking and laughing and saying, 'I'll never see those trees big enough to ever be a hazard out here. I don't know why you're wasting your time, and all the effort. You need to be planting nothing but big trees.'

"At that same time, I got a lot of seedlings for less than \$100 from the state forestry department — and I put them into a tree nursery. And again, people were all joking and

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A Personal Glimpse . . .

Just as golf and golf courses have been an integral part of Riley's everyday life since childhood, so it has been for his children.

"All three of my daughters were born and raised around golf. They thoroughly enjoy it. They enjoy playing and they enjoy working in the golf course environment. They'll have the opportunity to continue working for me as long as I'm in the business, or until they get married and have families of their own and can't work on the course any longer."

In Riley's own work, his daughters and his wife Barbara have had a significant influence on his conscientious approach to his professional responsibilities. He is devoted to his job and career — but not at the expense of his family.



Riley and his wife Barbara (seated at left) enjoy some time by the hearthside with their three daughters, Leslie (standing), Tracy and Johnelle.

"Seven or eight years ago, a seven-day work week was the norm for me. Then there came a time in my life when I felt like my family needed more of me, particularly on Sundays. I also wanted to become more active in the LDS church and wanted that to become more a part of my family life.

"I made it part of my lifestyle that I didn't work on Sunday — and things seemed to go along just as well, if not better, at the golf course. That doesn't mean that I don't go out some Sundays and look at the golf course, but I'm not there at the crack of dawn to get my crew started. Nor do they expect me to be there. There are certain occasions two to three weeks prior to having a tournament when I'll probably work on Sunday, but it is not the norm. And it's not really the norm for me to work weekends now.

"Even with that change in lifestyle, I don't spend all my time with my family — or even as much as I should. I am so busy with the golf course in the summertime that it's hard for me to do everything I'd like with my family. Sometimes during those periods of peak activity in the summer, they go their way and I go mine. On occasion, my wife will take a little vacation in the summertime and I won't go — our main vacation together being in the wintertime.

"But with regard to the weekends, I found out that you don't have to work on Sunday. That's a day of rest and that's what I decided to do. People respect me for it. I arrange with my crew to have enough people working weekends for Sunday to be covered.

"I try to arrange it so that individuals only have to work one out of every three Sundays. I like to extend the opportunity for church participation to *all* my crew members, whatever their own religion may be.

"I believe in Sunday as a day of rest. We all work hard the rest of the week. I believe in total fairness and in trying to treat everybody as I would like to be treated — even though sometimes that's hard to do."

laughing. Today, those trees are 30-foot Austrian pines and blue spruce."

Riley clearly enjoys reflecting upon the various ramifications of the entire tree-planting program and other changes he wrought on the course.

"I go back out there and play, and I hear some of the old members saying, 'I don't know how you planted all those trees, but what a mess you created.' It's a gorgeous golf course now, with big trees on it. I didn't have anything methodical in mind when I started, but I knew there had to be a tree program and I convinced them of that.

"The course was also affected by my remodeling of bunkers, my allowing roughs to be brought out — and really, I guess I did have a method in my madness, in that I would plant four or five trees, and then because the trees were there, you couldn't mow it with a fairway mower so you'd have to leave some rough. I'd then leave 10 feet of rough between the fairways, which they were not used to. And then I would plant another 10 trees around those, and then I'd bring the rough out farther until they realized what a golf course was.

"Pretty soon, there were roughs and there were trees. And the members were competitive, they were competitive with members at other clubs."

The Value Of Playing The Game

Riley readily acknowledges that the fact he plays golf himself was instrumental in his professional approach to dealing with Oakridge's needs. He's played golf since even before high school and although he may downplay his own skill, he's emphatic about the value of playing the game for any superintendent.

"I'm not a serious golfer. I'd probably be too frustrated



The view back from 13 green over an approach shot area again suggests the individuality of each hole on this challenging course.

to be a serious golfer. You know, I carry a 16 handicap . . . I could probably be, if I took it seriously, a 12. I spray enough shots and miss enough putts to keep it a 16.

"I enjoy leaving my club and playing another course as

The New President On Public Relations . . .

"I think PR is an individual task. GCSAA cannot take Riley Stottern — or any other golf course superintendent — by the hand and 'do' public relations for him.

"It just cannot be done that way. The Board of Directors cannot take the individual superintendent and 'get' his name in the paper or on TV. It's impossible for us to do that.

"Therefore, it comes down to the individual superintendent. You've got to be aggressive. You have to fight for your rights and for recognition. You can share the limelight, but you must participate with and work with other people — including the media — at the local level."

much as the superintendent at that course enjoys playing my golf course.

"I think whenever you play your own course, your mind is always caught up with it — you see things that need to be done. From that standpoint, I think that it's great that a superintendent plays golf. You see the problems as the golfer sees them.

"All too often, as I drive my Yamahauler around every day, I have in my mind something that needs to be done. And I'm not always looking at, or seeing, these other areas that need attention, because I'm so caught up in 'Oh, I've-gotta-go-do-this-particular-job' because I've got a crew waiting for me over there — it's a massive drain, or it's a new tee to be built or something and you're always caught up thinking about those things. Whereas when you're playing golf, you're actually walking the turf — or in a golf car, you're riding it but you're not just on a cart path, you're over on the playing area of the golf course, on the fairway. You walk on the green, you see the green, you see the condition of it, you see how the ball rolls."

Riley believes that others involved in course management and maintenance can also benefit from playing the game, and that their informed comments can help make for a better course.

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"I'm very fortunate here to have an assistant who plays the golf course once a week. He's younger, married, no children, so that makes it easier for him. All of my top people play golf. They will come back with comments and suggestions when they get through playing.

"And even though we're on a set schedule — we set it up right from the very beginning of the season, and it's just programmed in that you do certain things on certain days

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— we can alter that schedule. You know, we can have the greens verticut twice a week or once a week rather than every other week or something like that. I don't change the course because of their recommendation, but I do respond. The next day I will look at it to determine what alternative or corrective scheduling might be appropriate and proceed accordingly."

On Changing Technologies And Practices . . .

In the course of his own lifetime, Riley Stottern has seen a number of changes in the technologies available to his profession and in the development of new practices to maximize use of the latest technological advancements. Some of these practices would no doubt astonish many of his professional counterparts from the past. He's quick to point to some typical, representative examples.

"I think *anything* that puts heavy weight directly on a green — whether it's triplex greensmowers or aerifying with



The number 5 tee is known as the Seniors' favorite. On aesthetic grounds alone, it could hold its own with many a seasoned golfer of any age.

some of the machines we use or topdressing using a three-wheel vehicle fully loaded with sand, followed by mechanically dragging — would probably make my grandfather roll over in his grave. He wouldn't even put a wheelbarrow on a green without planks under it in his day.

"We've come a long way in modern turf technology — out of necessity, I think, to accommodate the masses of people who want to play.

"I don't believe I could go back to hand mowing with labor cost being what it is today. If I had my choice I'd rather hand mow the greens than triplex them. But here again, because of cost restraints and budget requirements, plus the larger greens and the way we are spread out, I've elected to go with the triplex mowers.

"Once again, a lot of it goes back to what type of membership you have and how demanding they are. Is it an equity-type of membership? Non-equity? Semi-private? Municipal? What are they willing to pay for that golf course?

"The consistency of your soils may also play a part in determining the most appropriate, effective approach. My sand is very loose and it doesn't compact extensively. At

the first golf club course where I was superintendent — Oakridge Country Club — with the heavy clay soil, the triplex mowers did create problems in that they compacted the greens

"So a lot of factors have to be considered when you're talking about whether you want to mow greens with a triplex greensmower or a hand greensmower . . ."

The question of removing clippings in conjunction with triplex mowing is not a major one at Jeremy Ranch, at least at this stage of its development.

"We don't use triplexes on the fairways," says Riley, "but I don't have the problems with clippings that some courses do. The superintendents who are removing clippings are either on bentgrass courses or bluegrass courses with a lot

"I don't have any *Poa annua* here, yet — and I've gotta knock on wood for that."

of *Poa annua*. I don't have any *Poa annua* here, yet — and I've gotta knock on wood for that.

"We spray for *Poa* each spring and fall, chemically trying to treat it with Endothal. We're knocking it back and have been successful with our program.

"I think that's probably what it *will* take, because *Poa* seeds are being tracked in from other golf courses. The first couple of years, we didn't have any here. When we brought in some sod from a local distributor, we found that within a year, in those sod strips, we had some *Poa annua*.

"If we can continue to control it or keep it at the level where it is right now, I'll be satisfied. We do hand pick it from the greens and the tees."

Lest there be any doubt about Riley's appreciation for today's technology and still-evolving practices, he hastens to clarify his personal views on the topics just discussed.

"I like triplex mowing of fairways. I would do it around here if I could afford it. In the years to come, as we get more demands to do a little bit of improving — and as we change mowers plus our mowing practices — I think I will scale down to probably five-gang mowers and then to triplex mowers. If I were worried about the *Poa*, I would also catch the clippings.

"The superintendents who are catching clippings are very, very dedicated to do that. It's time consuming and it just adds one more step to getting the golf course groomed. But I can see where there are times when we have loose grass lying on the surface, and it would be nice to be able to have that cleaned up. Of course, my member demands are not there yet."

Responding Realistically To Members' Demands

Over the years of his own firsthand experience and through countless conversations with fellow superintendents,

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Riley has reached some firm conclusions about factors contributing to successful dealings with members.

"I think you have to bend with your membership. Too many jobs are lost because some superintendents, I think, are so bullheaded that they won't bend.

"You can express your views but if you're overruled by a committee who think that they are more informed than you are — even though you know that what they want isn't a good practice, isn't agronomically sound — you better go ahead and do what they want to keep your job. And if it falls on its face, then they're to blame.

"Too many times, I've seen superintendents become so frustrated they can't stand it, and move. You know, life's too short to be that frustrated."

Riley notes how the combination of circumstances at his

Riley has reached some firm conclusions about factors contributing to successful dealing with members.

own course has influenced members' demands and his relationship with his membership.

"Being a new golf course, the demands have been more to clean up some of the areas left during the construction that have been eyesores — just a total cleaning up of the whole project. All too many times with construction, you get a pile of debris left over here and a pile of debris left over there.

"Trying to clean those areas up, trying to get the whole golf course groomed, that's been basically the members' main 'demands,' if any.

"I do have a pretty good working relationship with them. I have a non-equity type membership, which means that

they don't have any real leverage over me. It's not like a club where they own equity and they're your boss. If you're at a club that has 400 equity members, you've got essentially 400 bosses.

"Here, it being non-equity, I don't have a green committee. We have an advisory board, and they advise the president regarding what they think ought to be done. If it's met with approval — with my approval and his approval — and there's money available to do it, chances are it will get done."

Reflections Along The Path

Given his diverse responsibilities at the Jeremy Ranch and the additional responsibilities entrusted to him by his respectful colleagues in GCSAA, it's easy to conclude that Riley is known as a manager who can 'get the job done.' True enough, but one wonders . . . to what factors does he attribute the considerable success he's achieved so far in his career?

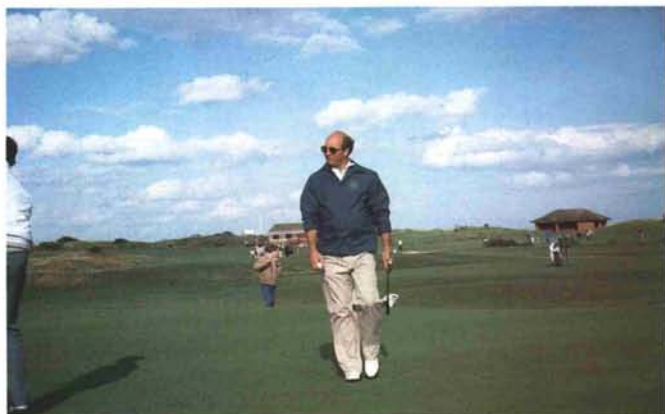
"Oh, I would think the basic training that my father gave me in turf — he gave me a very solid background. Also, I've been very lucky, very fortunate and blessed with the jobs I've had. In addition, I guess maybe my aggressive manner has been a contributing factor."

He elaborates upon the latter and how his aggressive manner has worked positively for him.

"It was probably the reason I left Oakridge Country Club. They were not willing to move as fast as I wanted to move, to do the things that I felt were necessary to take that club from where it was to where I knew it could be.

"They didn't have the same desires, and so therefore I knew that it was probably time to move on. You tend to have conflicts with committees at that point over what really needs to be done and what they can afford, or what they're willing to establish — you know, establish funds, establish budgets, establish priorities. If their priorities are going down Track Y and yours are trying to go down Track Z, you're never going to meet. Therefore, I guess one should just move on.

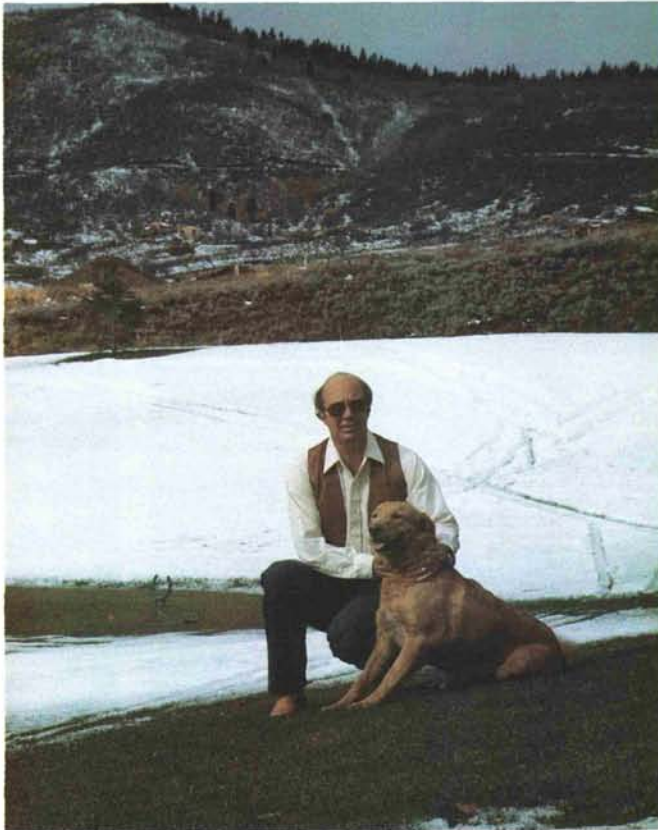
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A reflective Riley was spotted walking the links of The Old Course last year during a round played while visiting St. Andrews with a contingent of fellow GCSAA members.



Breathtaking vantage points and spectacular vistas characterize the Jeremy Ranch layout, embracing design ideas of both Arnold Palmer and Ed Seay.



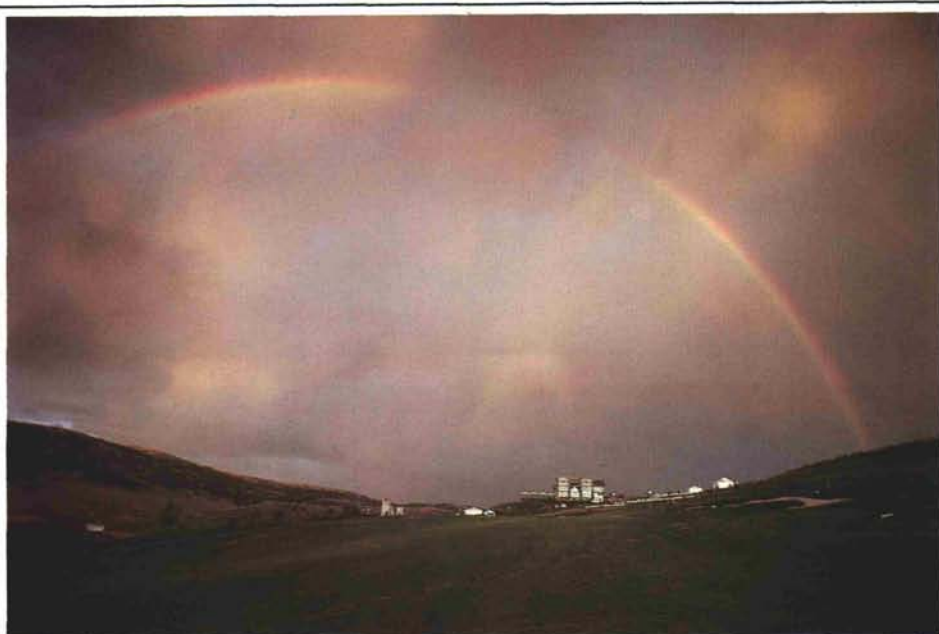
Riley and his eagle-eyed aide Arnie pause briefly while making the rounds not long after an early snowfall last autumn. Arnie's concern about the porcupine threat is evident as he scans the horizon.

"And I did. I went to Las Vegas where we had a million-dollar budget for the golf operation — that was the pro shop and the golf course. I got a taste of that freedom, working for a corporation, and I liked it.

"The thing that I had to adjust to was that working for a private country club as I had been, you're always planning two or three years in advance. Your suggestions were to implement the ideas into the committees two years in advance so two years from then, it would be their idea and they would approve it.

"Working for a corporation, I would make suggestions and find that because they had the money they would say, 'Gee, that's a great idea — let's get started.' You'd be so bogged down with work already, you'd have to put a priority date on those things or else you'd be inundated with work."

With Riley Stottern's own proven capacity for hard work and with his openness to the aggressive pursuit of promising new professional ideas, the year of his Presidency promises to be a very stimulating time during which to be involved in GCSAA, its activities and its continued successful contribution to the larger golf community of which it's a vital part. □



Risks, rewards and heartbreak all come together by this point, the 18th. Fortunately, the Jeremy Ranch — like GCSAA itself — remains in good hands, come what may.