USGA grants $151,000 for research at FGCSA green at Fort Lauderdale

If you build it, they will come.

The USGA Research Committee last month legitimized the two-year effort of the FGCSA to build a research green at the University of Florida’s Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center by awarding two research grants worth $151,000 for work at the facility.

Drs. John Cisar and George Snyder will get $135,000 for a three-year study of mobility and persistence of pesticide and Dr. Monica Elliott received $16,000 to study the organism that causes bermudagrass decline.

The projects were two of 18 approved by the USGA panel for its special $2.8 million environmental research program. The committee considered 25 proposals in the final screening at Innisbrook Resort in Tarpon Springs early in December.

The committee also approved another $758,000 in grants under the USGA’s regular research program. No Florida projects were under consideration for regular funding.

“The fact that a USGA-spec green was available for pure research played a role in the committee’s decision,” said John Foy, Green Section Regional Director for Florida. “So did the fact that Florida has more golf courses than any other state.

“But basically, they were just solid research proposals that met the criteria for the special environmental research program.”

The USGA had solicited project proposals in three areas: golf course benefits, alternative pest management, and pesticide and nutrient fate. The Cisar/Snyder and Elliott proposals were the only Florida projects to make the list of 25 finalists.

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Legislature shortens Envirotron campaign

When the Florida Legislature moved up the starting date of its annual session from April to March, “They cut 30 days off my fund-raising campaign for the Envirotron,” said Bob Yount, executive director of the Florida Turfgrass Association. The FTGA must raise its half of the $700,000 before the Legislature meets.
of Massachusetts will share one grant while the University of Nebraska, Iowa State and Kansas State will share the other. Both projects involve the fate of pesticides and fertilizers.

Some of the money awarded to the Fort Lauderdale researchers will help pay for maintenance of the research green. Approximately one-fourth of the 20,000-square-foot green was built to USGA specifications. Both USGA-funded research projects will be performed on that portion of the green.

Golf trade group still seeking funds for lobby effort

Why are the Florida Golf Council and better schools distressingly alike?

Everyone agrees both are needed but not enough people seem willing to pay for them.

"Florida Golf Day," proclaimed for Nov. 17 by then-Gov. Bob Martinez, netted only $6,000 in seed money for the organization. The minimum goal, thought to be conservative, was $25,000.

The need for such a trade group is apparent to those who attended a hastily convened but remarkably successful golf summit in November.

All agree that the trade organization should work with legislative representatives and regulatory staff to present the golf industry's views on proposed regulations.

Florida's citrus industry, with $862 million in receipts, certainly has its collective voice heard in Tallahassee.

Golf, with direct annual spending of $1.6 billion and an economic ripple effect of $5.2 billion, so far has been silent.

Nancy Oliver, interim executive director of the council, is trying to end this silence. To reach those who will form the broad base of support, she and members of the council's board and steering committee are hitting the road.

Regional meetings began in November in Tallahassee and were held throughout December in Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa, Sarasota, Sebring, Fort Myers, Naples and Miami.

The meetings were to inform the public and members of the golf industry about the council's potential impact.

The response has counteracted Oliver's disappointment with the Golf-Day fundraiser.

"After the first two meetings, we had people telling us the organization that is needed," Oliver says. "They are also willing to support us financially, and that's very encouraging. I'm confident the Florida Golf Council can be a success."

Money, obviously, is a key factor in the council's eventual success, but a clear focus is also important.

Ron Safford, director of sports development for the state's Department of Commerce, says the council should go beyond gathering and providing information. Part of the problem is public relations.

"We keep hearing these horror stories... golf courses are..."
getting ripped in the press,” Safford says. “We need to let people know the industry isn’t anti-environment but that those in the golf industry are as concerned about the environment as the public is.”

“We as golf course superintendents have been trying to articulate this problem and address it for a decade,” says Tim Hiers, golf course manager at John’s Island Club in Vero Beach. “We felt that we had the truth about the environmental impact of golf courses. However, the truth isn’t going to win if the people don’t know about it. And no one has taken the time to disseminate this information. As a result, the negative information gets the publicity. And this has cost us dearly already.”

Golf course designer Tom Fazio says that on one Florida project, the regulations were changed three separate times. It not only took time to conform to the new regulations, but Fazio says it also cost an additional $150,000.

David Smith, president of Lake Poinsett Development Co., has been involved in the permitting process for nearly five years. His proposed 800-acre residential and golf development on Lake Poinsett and the St. John’s River has received the necessary permits from the St. John’s Water Management District. But now an environmental group has challenged the permits, and Smith is, at presstime, going into a hearing brought on by this challenge.

Oliver admits that the council is not a panacea. But by pooling its resources, she says, the industry will have its interests represented with the legislators and the regulators.

Fazio feels that the council should take a page from the environmentalists’ success. “If they are going to make the grade, they must have specific agendas and issues they will go after that will build the council into an organization that has clout.

“This is what the environmentalists have done.”

**USGA to hold two Green Section conferences in Fla.**

The USGA Green Section will conduct two Green Section Educational Conferences in Florida this year. The addition of a second conference was prompted by the growth of USGA Turfgrass Advisory Service subscribers in Central and North Florida.

The first conference will be March 12 at The Royce Hotel (Airport) in West Palm Beach. The second will be two days later at Orange Lake CC in Kissimmee. Both will run from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Featured speakers will be the same at both conferences:
- Ron Dodson, president, The Audubon Society of New York State, Inc., who will discuss the new USGA-Audubon “Cooperative Sanctuary Systems” program.
- Dr. Bert McCarty, Environmental Horticulture Department, University of Florida, will speak on Inte-
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grated Plant Management.
• Jim Moore, Director, Mid-
Continent Region, USGA,
will speak on Computers in
Golf Course Management.
• Brian Silva, golf course ar-
chitect, will speak on the his-
tory of golf course design.
Other topics will include:
• The future of golf course ir-
rigation in Florida
• Fuel and pesticide storage
• The construction and man-
agement of USGA spec
greens in Florida
CEUs will be given for mem-
bers of the GCSAA, CMA and
PGA. Club officials, managers
and golf professionals will ben-
efit from the program, accord-
ing to the USGA.
Seating at both sessions will
be limited. Preference will be
given to those who pre-register
by calling Shelly Foy at the
USGA Green Section Regional
Office in Hobe Sound, at 407-
546-2620 or by faxing the
names and addresses of those
attending to 407-546-GOLF.
Brochures for the Green Sec-
tion Conference will be mailed
in early February.

NGF honors six
Fla. public courses
Six Florida golf courses are
among 50 across the nation to
be honored by the National Golf
Foundation for special
achievement in public golf. Al-
though the awards recognize
efforts in promoting public
golf, the recipients were quick
to credit the role played by su-
perintendents in their efforts.
"The bottom line is, you have
to have a course that golfers
want to play," said Jerry
Comeau, general manager of
the St. Clair Shores (Mich.) Golf
Club, cited by the NGF as its
showcase winner for the vari-
ety of programs it offers.
"No matter what you do to
get people on your course the
first time, you won't get them
back unless the superintendent
is doing an outstanding job."
Florida courses honored
were Melbourne Beach Mu-
nicipal; Marriott's Orlando
World (Layton Overstreet, su-
perintendent); Metro West CC
(Steve Sorrell, superintendent),
Orlando; Mangrove Bay GC
(Marshal Edgren, CGCS, su-
perintendent), St. Petersburg;
Twin Brooks GC, St. Peters-
burg; Sandridge GC, Vero
Beach.

Lake City CC
seeking OJT sites
Students in golf course op-
erations, landscape technology,
and turf equipment manage-
ment at Lake City Community
College will be seeking intern-
ship sites for summer 1991. The
three-month practical field
training (May through July) is
a mandatory part of the LCCC
curriculum.
Firms interested in partici-
pating should contact John R.
Piersol, chairman; Golf Course
Operations/Landscape Tech-
nology; Lake City Community
College; Rt. 3, Box 7; Lake City,
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