By Peter Blais

The lack of turf schools and educated turf managers are two of the biggest problems architects and developers face in Asia, according to experts in the region.

"Developers don't always recognize the need for a well-trained superintendent," said architect Ronald Fream, who has been designing courses in the Pacific Basin for 20 years.

"Yet the real work starts when the construction ends. The course is finished and you leave it in the hands of a 100-man crew with no one with any turf education. It's frustrating."

American professors and golf industry experts frequently give seminars throughout Asia. Dr. Jim Beard of Texas A&M University is one of the most active.

"But sending Beard over for an occasional three-day conference just doesn't cut it. Beard does a good job. But he and a handful of other visiting professors can't do it alone," Fream said.

Korea is probably closest to having anything resembling a U.S. turf school, Ronald Fream said Jim Watson, vice president and agronomist with The Toro Co. Watson has spent considerable time lecturing and researching in Asia.

Dr. Ki Sun Kim finished his doctoral work at Texas A&M, Watson said. "He's teaching turfgrass management and doing extensive research at Seoul National University."

Dr. Joon Ahn is another well-known Korean researcher and educator, according to Associate Professor John King of the University of Arkansas. Ahn was the first to reproduce common Bermudagrass by tissue culture, King said.

"The growth of golf has simply outstripped the area's ability to turn out qualified students," Christian said.

"The Japanese are probably superior to the United States in teaching the basics of chemistry and biology, Brede said. "They are the best golf courses in the world. They want people who have been involved in American courses managing their facilities."

"They haven't had the chance to incorporate course work and research into the golf industry. But I think it will come," Brede said.

"They need to get the job done in the least amount of time, so I can go on to another job and make more money. It's that simple," John Frick, owner, Grassroots, Cincinnati, OH

"With equipment, like a lot of things in the lawn-care business, you learn the hard way."

"I put the equivalent of five years of homeowner use on a trimmer in five days."

"Same thing with chain saws and backpack blowers. I bought the discount-store brands first, before I knew better."

"But after my first Stihl, I never even looked at another brand."

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Harvard Graduate School of Design offers special study in golf course development

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — The Harvard Graduate School of Design has invited golf consultant Jim McLoughlin to present a mid-June course of study on the general subject of Golf Course Development.

The curriculum will be developed and presented through McLoughlin's two firms: The McLoughlin Group, a golf consulting firm, and Double Eagle Enterprises, a golf development company.

The course is designed for present and future developers, counselors to developers, investors and government regulators/planners. It will address defining feasibility studies, minimum site requirements, regulations and approvals, model business plans, the critical importance of master-site planning, public and private financing, construction parameters, sample model schedules and summary reasons why projects fail.

Guest Speaker Thomas J. Boccar is one of the country's leading public finance lawyers and a principal within Double Eagle Enterprises. Boccar will address the topic of financing public and private golf course development projects.

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