**RENAULT NAMED TO NATIONAL PANEL**

BETHESDA, Md. — George Renault III, a disabled American veteran who is superintendent at Burning Tree Club here, is excited about his recent appointment to the Recreation Access Federal Advisory Committee. A director of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Renault is on a 27-person committee chosen to recommend “what’s needed and what’s minimum to get people up and down on the golf course.”

Starting July 15-16, the group will meet twice-monthly, anticipating to make its recommendations in six months.

**REGIONAL PESTICIDE REPORT COMPLETE**

LAWRENCE, Kan. — The 62nd annual Turfgrass Field Day at the University of Rhode Island’s Turfgrass Research Farm on Plains Road here will be held Aug. 18. Exhibits and sprayer calibration demonstrations will run from 8 a.m. to noon, and at a 3 p.m. tour, will be given of research plots from 1:30 to 4 p.m. More information is available from Dr. Noel Jackson at 401-792-2932, or Dr. Bridget Rueemmele at 401-792-2481.

**GCSAA PICKS BYRON NELSON**

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Hall of Fame golfing legend Byron Nelson next Feb. 7 will receive the Old Tom Morris Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Given in the memory of the Scottish greenkeeper and golf professional, the Morris Award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding lifetime contributions to the game. Nelson will be honored during the closing banquet of the 65th International Golf Course Conference and Show in Dallas.

**RHODY FIELD DAY READY**

KINGSTON, R.I. — The 62nd annual Turfgrass Field Day at the University of Rhode Island’s Turfgrass Research Farm on Plains Road here will be held Aug. 18. Exhibits and sprayer calibration demonstrations will run from 8 a.m. to noon, and at a 3 p.m. tour, will be given of research plots from 1:30 to 4 p.m. More information is available from Dr. Noel Jackson at 401-792-2932, or Dr. Bridget Rueemmele at 401-792-2481.

**REGIONAL PESTICIDE REPORT COMPLETE**

LAWRENCE, Kan. — The 1993 Golf Course Superintendents Report, a new publication summarizing what treatments are effective against diseases and pests in various regions of the country, has been completed. The Center for Golf Course Management, the research arm of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, is making the report available for $25. To order it, superintendents should write CCMS-Superintendent Report, 1421 Research Park Dr., P.O. Box 927, Lawrence, Kan. 66044-0927.

**EPA compiles studies on pesticides in ground water**

The Environmental Protection Agency has published a “Pesticides in Ground Water Database — A compilation of Monitoring Studies: 1971-1991,” a summary and analysis of data concerning pesticides in ground water.

The report — divided into one national volume and 10 regional volumes corresponding to the EPA regions — is a collection of data from 153 ground water monitoring studies in 45 states conducted by federal, state and local governments, universities, the pesticide industry and private institutions.

Monitoring data from more than 68,000 wells is reported. Pesticide residues were found in 16,606 wells (15,502 drinking water wells). A total of 117 parent pesticides and 16 pesticide degradates were found in at least one well. The 1992 report superseded the “Pesticides in Ground Water Database: 1988 Interim Report.”

The data indicates where ground water has been sampled, where additional sampling might be necessary and where contamination occurs in relationship to the intensity of sampling. EPA said great care must be exercised when interpreting this data due to differences in sampling intensity, study design, and analytical methodology of monitoring studies that comprise the report.

EPA uses monitoring data as one tool to help identify pesticides that need additional
Buffalograss easy on water, chemicals and clippings, researchers say

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Of course, 1,000 or 2,000 acres is not a lot, but it’s all sold and that’s good.

"There is a lot of potential" for buffalograss, said Jim Snow, national director of the United States Golf Association Green Section.

The Green Section is helping fund Riordan’s research because buffalograss requires far less water, pesticides and fertilizer than other warm-season grasses like Bermudagrass. All this is becoming more important.

"My guess is, it will probably be ‘specced’ in a lot more golf courses," said Kevin Morris, national director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Turfgrass Evaluation Program. "The drought situation in wide areas in California and the 1989 drought in the Midwest caused a lot of people to start scrutinizing turfgrasses and the irrigation of turfgrasses, looking for their water-conserving attributes.

Riordan agreed, saying: "I’m getting more and more calls from architects where they’re ‘specifying’ it or wanting it. Up until last year it wouldn’t have been available in quantities that golf courses could have used it."

Buffalograss fulfills some hard demands. Compared to Bermudagrass, it:
• requires one-fourth to one-half the water;
• leaves fewer clippings;
• tolerates cold better; and
• better resists soil compaction.

"It's going to be used initially in places where there’s a need to use it," Riordan said. "If there’s a water or nitrogen problem, people may be forced to use this grass. If they’re successful, others might say, ‘I don’t have to use this, but it would save some money and some water.’ It could snowball."

Dr. Milt Engelke of Texas A&M, who performed a lot of initial research on buffalograss before the baton was passed to Riordan, said it "fits very nicely" for golf course public golf courses with low-maintenance budgets that play a lot of rounds. "A tremendous amount of golf by the weekend hacker is played on that kind of course," he said. "We’ve been cutting buffalograss to 5/8 inch now and I’ll put it up against a lot of grasses out there with the same maintenance level. I don’t advise replacing your ‘Fairway Bermudas’ in the South or bluegrass-ryegrasses up North. But perhaps 60 percent of the golf courses out there fall under the $400,000-$600,000-a-year budget for maintenance costs."

"Specifically we’re only seeing the tip of the iceberg in the buffalograsses. I’ve seen some of Terry Riordan’s ... They look great. And [the research community] is only starting. They haven’t had 30 years to work on this."

RESEARCH AIMS

Buffalograss breeders are trying to improve the quality while maintaining natural attributes.

"We’d like to make it a better-looking turf," Riordan said. "We’d like to extend its growing season, improve the color and increase its ability to withstand low mowing heights so it could be used on golf course fairways."

The University of Nebraska breeding program is probably within two to three years of producing material that will be in testing for those characteristics, he said. "We’re having good cooperation with sod growers involved with the Crenshaw & Dognet Turfgrass, Inc. of Austin, Texas," Riordan said. "As soon as we identify something that looks good, we have it on a sod farm the next year. If it looks good there, it’s easy to increase it for additional testing and possibly put it into production."

Zoysiagrass ‘environmentally friendly’

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Turfgrass Evaluation Program. "Its strengths are its drought-tolerance and resistance to weed invasion."

"Also, it doesn’t have many disease problems. Ryegrass fairways need fungicide through the growing season. But you would rarely have to use fungicide on zoysia."

Golf course architect Dr. Michael Hurdzan calls zoysia "the Cadillac of fairway grasses in the transition areas."

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"It is potentially a big market," Morris said. Jim Snow, national director of the United States Golf Association Green Section, has high hopes for the diverse zoysiagrass. "Quite a few courses have zoysiagrass fairways. Most are in the corridor between St. Louis and Washington, D.C., where warm-season grasses aren't hardy enough and cool-season grasses aren't heat-resistant enough," he said.

But Snow tempers his hopes with the thought that zoysia traditionally is slow to establish and most cultivars are vegetatively propagated. "Buffalo and Bermudagrass are so fast to establish that people prefer them," Snow said. "Since zoysia is so slow, it's in several areas, including nearly halving the establishment time of zoysia cultivars.

"We have accelerated our production time," he said, citing a crop-a-year mode which compares to 19- to 22-month growth period for old standby zoysia Meyer. "We now have good recuperative ability from bromes, too," he said. "We have excellent growth characteristics, for establishment and production," he said.

At the University of California-Riverside, Superintendent of Agricultural Operations Steve Cockerman said Dr. Victor Gibeault’s El Toro zoysia is nearly as fast-growing as Bermudagrass.

On his test plots, Cockerman said, El Toro shows "very little thatch buildup but very stiff grass. We mow our plots at both 5/8 and 1-1/2 inches, and it looks good in either case."

Compared to Bermudagrass, Engelke said zoysia uses one-half to one-third less fertilizer, only two to three pounds of nitrogen per year compared to much more for Bermudagrass, and astonishingly less water.

"The only place I think I’ve shifted [his thinking from 1990] is when we look at the water requirements on the buffalograsses and zoysias," he said. "At one time I said we were probably using 30 to 40 percent less water than hybrid Bermudas for a comparable-quality turf. Now I’d say we’re 70 to 80 percent less."

Engelke said the top criteria for the DALZ cultvars he is working with are low water use, very high persistence (competitive ability), very low maintenance levels, and quality of surface. ‘I’ve seen them go 45 to 60 days without irrigation and hold their color," he said.

Engelke agreed with Snow that a high-quality, seeded-type zoysia is in the future.

"We are going to be limited to grass types, for one simple biological reason: Those species have a very small seed head," he said. "The problem with seeded types is that there is not enough pressure to make them commercially and that almost [the grasses Germplasm Services] lines by [president and chief scientist] Jack Murray have done a very good job in that direction."

We’re going to work as hard on zoysia as it that comes in slowly," Hurdzan added: "That can be viewed as a positive because it’s a great accent grass. We’re using it at Cooper Creek Country Club (near Cincinnati, Ohio) and we’re doing a very good job there."

"We have tried to do sod stripping, sprigging and sodding," said Hurdzan, "and there’s no question that sodding is the preferred method, although it adds $250,000 to $350,000 to construction costs. But it’s justified. It’s better where you’re changing your priorities and looking in the long run. You’ll be open quicker. You’re not going to have the costs of erosions, delayed openings and repairs. And you’re giving the golfer a finished product."

"It’s probably a very good value to sod zoysia."

FICKLE MARKETPLACE

The marketplace, Engelske said, is "real fickle."

He cited El Toro as "under-used."

He expects to see more zoysia sod in the marketplace as more developers decide the expense of solid-sodding is worth it.

"People say they can’t afford it. But, more and more that’s going to change," Engelske said. "We’re going to take advantage of some good science."

"We’re going to do "striping, spiggling and sodding," said Hurdzan," and there’s no question that sodding is the preferred method, although it adds $250,000 to $350,000 to construction costs. But it’s justified. It’s better where you’re changing your priorities and looking in the long run. You’ll be open quicker. You’re not going to have the costs of erosions, delayed openings and repairs. And you’re giving the golfer a finished product."

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