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” and other public facilities, he said. Starting July 15-16, the group will meet twice-monthly, anticipating to make its recommendations in six months.

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 steak fry, a 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 Ruemmele at 401-792-2481.

REGIONAL PESTICIDE REPORT COMPLETE

LAWRENCE, Kan. — The 1995 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 CCGCM—Supersurintendent Report, 1421 Research Park Dr., P.O. Box 927, Lawrence, Kan. 66044-0927.

By Mark Leslie

Buffalograss and zoysiagrass have both surpassed even the optimistic forecast of an eminent turfgrass scientist who, three years ago, said they would be “the dominant warm-climate grasses of the next decade.” Dr. Milt Engelke of Texas A&M, who was involved in research on both varieties, predicted great things for them in August 1990.

“The past six to 10 years, perceptions about buffalograsses have changed dramatically,” he said.

Buffalograsses have a jump on the zoysias, mainly because of the introduction of the new turf-type buffalograsses sooner than the introduction of the new zoysias, Engelke said.

“There probably is another species — save maybe the zoysiagrasses — that has the latitude and flexibility and biological resiliency of buffalograss,” Engelke said.

“We have some zoysias that will be right in there with them, but not as good in winter-hardiness. Zoysia can't handle the competition. Buffalograss is wonderful for compaction. It might not be an absolutely beautiful bright dark-green color. But there won’t be a lot of holes in the ground either. You won’t be playing in the mud.”

Water crises drive use of Buffalograss

Growing water crises in some areas, combined with an increasing demand and desire to use smaller amounts of chemicals, have made little-known buffalograss a marquee item in some areas. “Soil growers in Colorado told me they could sell 200 acres (of buffalograss sod) at more than double what they had,” said Dr. Terry Riordan of the University of Nebraska.

Riordan, a key breeder of buffalograss, said improved varieties are “just starting to reach the market... There's been a big increase in production acreage throughout the South. About every cultivar of sod is sold out.”

Buffalograss is perfect for Las Vegas-type climates, but four years ago when Greg Nash and Billy Casper designed this Palm Valley course, the advance buffalograsses of today were not available.

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 133 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 16,866 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
Continued from page 1

Kopec and Dr. Charles Mancino will oversee the facility, which has benefited from donations of money and equipment from scores of programs. And the cost-benefit ratio is tremendous for everyone involved," said Kopec.

The number-one benefit will be the laboratory's work aimed at decreasing water application to sports turf by having better techniques in irrigation scheduling, he said. "Second, we need to develop new grass varieties that would use less water than Bermudagrass and that would be suitable as a grass cover. We're not looking to replace a 2-1/2 acre ballfield of highly trafficked Bermudagrass with another grass. We're looking to develop new grasses, perhaps domesticate some naturally occurring desert species into a turf setting where it would retain 95 to 100 percent grass cover and take five or six irrigations during the summertime at most."

Research on efficient water and secondary reclaimed water for turf will be "a strong part of the program because there's quite a populace being established in the Southwest and the research we do here is applicable to Tucson, Phoenix, Las Vegas and deserts of Southern California," Kopec said.

"There are 500-plus golf courses in this area and a lot of their turfs need this special management." Weed control is a problem at desert courses in the Southwest, he said, because Bermudagrass is grown in the summertime and courses overwound with ryegrasses and other cool-season grasses from October to May.

Mancino is looking into to mesquitegrass, a low-main-tenance grass native in Arizona at 2,800 feet and above.

"For lower elevations, we're looking at buffalo grass, salt grass, paspalums and potential domestication of some other range species. Some would be applicable to golf courses," Kopec said.

The eight-acre facility includes 6-1/2 acres of turf. The laboratory structure contains a wet laboratory, office space, equipment garage and storage space.

Crucial to research efforts are the world's two largest lysimeters — 12-foot-deep, seven-foot-in-diameter tanks containing 50 tons of soil on scales sensitive enough to measure 250 grams (the weight of the morning dew) in weight change.

Kopec and Mancino are looking forward to initiation of a new funding mechanism being worked out by the Arizona Golf Association and turfgrass industry along with Dr. Merle Jensen, UA's associate dean for research.

Called the Turfgrass Futures Investment (TFI) program, it would infuse revenue from golf played in the state into research, education and extension programs at the university.

This will provide long-term support for graduate students, technical, computer, research operation, and educational activities. TFI has been discussed for two years, but Kopec reported "a lot of activity" in the last three months.

"The industry has been fabulous with donating equipment. To complete the army, I just need some soldiers," Kopec said. "The game of golf is an important part of the American economy and just 10 cents per round can kick back 10,000 times-over return on a project."