MINDS MEET ON IPM
MARLBOROUGH, Mass. — "A Meeting of the Minds" is the title of an urban/suburban integrated pest management conference Oct. 13 at Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel. Focus is to highlight what matters of mutual concern surrounding the practice of pest control and integrated pest management.

DEROCCO ENTERS MAINE HALL OF FAME
SOUTHPORT, Maine — Tony DeRocco, a native of Rocco Morice, Italy, who found happiness in Maine via an illustrious golf career capped by almost 30 years as a course superintendent, has been inducted into the Maine Golf Hall of Fame.

Hiers exports pro-golf message to the masses

NAPLES, Fla. — Collier’s Reserve Country Club superintendent Tim Hiers, who has delivered the message that golf courses are ecology-friendly to those inside and outside the golf industry, has been presented the first John James Audubon Steward Award.

Hiers exports pro-golf message to the masses

 metro turf field day set

The Westchester Country Club will host the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association annual Professional Turfgrass Field Day on Oct. 18. A seminar co-sponsored with The Metropolitan Golf Association will coincide with the field day.

W.VA. SUPERS RAISE $14,000

The West Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association raised more than $14,000 for the statewide teens in need Scholarship and Research Fund at its annual turfgrass scholarship and fundraiser golf tournament at Wheeling Country Club. The record $14,000 was raised to support the WVGC&SA William C. Campbell Scholarship and Research Fund.

GOLF COURSE NEWS
Mechanics groups hard to organize

WEST CALDWELL, N.J. — Golf course mechanics associations are not easy to organize, nor are they easy to maintain. Lead ask Bob Lay.

Lay, the mechanic at Mountain Ridge Country Club here, incorporated the New Jersey Golf Course Mechanics Association (NJGCA) in March 1991. The organization boasts 45 to 50 members, most of them in northern New Jersey.

"I feel it's been very helpful, but at times it's been discouraging, too," Lay explained. "Maybe it's because we're mechanics, but it's difficult to find guys who want to get involved. We get guys to join, but you need more than just members.

Mechanics unite

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In January, when members voted not to create specific membership classifications for these technicians. Indeed, the 1994 vote in Dallas mirrored another overwhelming electoral defeat at the 1993 GCSCA Show in Anaheim. Golf course mechanics can attain associate member status in GCSCA, but that is all.

Lucas, for one, saw writing on the wall back in 1990 when he started organizing his fellow mechanics in Massachusetts.

"The first time I came across the idea, I had gone out to a Jacobsen learning center," he explained. "A bunch of us were from New England. We talked between classes and learned so much from each other, I thought to myself, Why can't we do this all the time?"

"Little by little, I started to organize people. Every time I went to a dealership, I asked around and let my feelings known. "Is there anyone interested in joining this group?"

"That's what we're trying to do, and if the superintendents realized it, they'd be more receptive."

Lucas said he gathered invaluable information from a Chicagoland golf course mechanics organization. He also owes a debt of gratitude to Dr. Joseph Troll and his wife Lonnie, who run the Massachusetts Turf and Lawngass Association and Show in Springfield. Early on, Lonnie agreed to put a sign in the window of the Springfield Civic Center advertising the new association.

The response was good and the organization has grown to 131 members in all six New England states. Dues are $25 per year, and each seminar costs $50 per members. Non-members are welcome, but admission is $50. Students at turf-related university programs are admitted free with valid IDs.

"The meetings started out as just getting together for coffee," Lucas said. "But they would last until lunch, then 4 p.m. We could've talked with each other until 9 o'clock at night. It's starting to really pay off. We're exchanging parts more frequently and not competing with each other. We've working together to make our jobs easier."

Lucas said his national dreams are serious. If others share the same vision, Lucas would like to talk. He can be reached at 508-663-3299.

Dealers offer technician certification

AUSTIN, Texas — Saying the need to upgrade maintenance technicians expertise in the golf course industry is urgent, The Service Dealers Association (TSDA) is sponsoring OPE Technicians Certification Testing. The many recent technical changes in equipment will accelerate as government mandated changes take effect.

Since the first test was administered in October, 1992, more than 2,000 technicians have been tested on two- and four-stroke engines. A compact diesel engine test is available starting with the fall test period October through Dec. 15.

The electrical test is scheduled to be completed by early 1995. Drive train and generator should be ready by fall 1995. Those who pass the test receive an arm patch and certificate.

TSDA recommends two study resource textbooks as well as the individual study guides — Small Engine Technology by Bill Schuster covering two- and four-stroke engines, and Automotive Diesel by Edward Kaltovsky. Both publications as well as the study guides are available from TSDA.

For information contact Virgil Russell, director of certification at 512-443-3299.