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POA TRIV PROBLEMS WIDESPREAD & SERIOUS

By MARK LESLIE

Poa trivialis infestations of “epidemic proportions” are being reported in bentgrasses and some Kentucky bluegrasses, affecting golf courses across a broad portion of the United States. The question is, has it always been present? A rough bluegrass, poa trivialis is “very aggressive,” said Terry Buchen, The Legends Group director of agronomy. “It will take over bentgrass. Even when the seed is blue tag-certified, it’s getting through [inspections].”

“If you talk to the seed companies, the problem doesn’t exist. But if you see new golf courses out in the field, it’s absolutely a shame how much poa trivialis is there,” said Stan Zontek, director of the U.S. Golf Association Green Section’s Mid-Atlantic Region. “It’s a huge problem. There are some supers who are fit to be tied.”

“I totally disagree with Stan and his statement on new golf courses,” said Dr. Rich Hurley, director of research at Loft’s Seed and perhaps the nation’s foremost expert on poa trivialis. “You take me to 120 old courses and I’ll find poa triv in fairways, greens and tees. I’m not saying it can’t come in the seed, but it’s all over. Take one place from Georgia, north, coast to coast, blindfolded and I’ll find it and I’ll find it quick. “It’s a hysteria pointed at the seed companies when, if there is a hysteria, it should be: ‘This stuff is everywhere.’” According to Zontek, the situation

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OB SPORTS: TURNKEY MANAGERS

By PETER BLAIS

PORTLAND, Ore. — Bringing resort golf to urban areas is the goal of O.B. Sports, an Oregon-based, full-service management firm that recently began construction of a new golf project on the western outskirts of this city.

“We’re focusing on high-end, public golf,” said company President Orrin Vincent, “Country clubs and municipal courses have traditionally been the only choices in Western [U.S.] cities. We want to bring that resort golf experience to the city.”

The 36-hole Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club, the fifth facility in the O.B. portfolio, is a good example. The Reserve will operate under an unusual format. Alternating each day, one 18-hole course will be dedicated to public/re-sort play with the other course reserved for private members and their guests.

The courses, which should open in August

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PUBLIC GOLF FORUM

A NATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE AND EXPO FOR SUPERINTENDENTS, OWNERS, MANAGERS, AND DEVELOPERS OF PUBLIC-ACCESS GOLF FACILITIES

OCTOBER 27-29, 1996

Forum focus: Customer service

By HAL PHILLIPS

CHICAGO — The golfers couldn’t be happier. With more than 400 new courses opening their doors each year, there’s an increasing variety of playing options. It’s another story for the golf course management team, however, as record development numbers mean more competition in an already tight marketplace.

Sophisticated operations that emphasize customer service, manage efficiently, market aggressively and maintain for quality will thrive in this atmosphere, while those content with the status quo will fall by the wayside. The application of these sound business principles to public-access course operations will dominate the four-track education conference at The Public Golf Forum, a two-day seminar and trade show sponsored by

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systemic control and with Subdue for unbeatable knockdown of pythium. Plus, use Fore with Prostar® to get even wider disease protection.

Finally, Fore is now available in easy-to-use water soluble packs. Just drop a pack directly into the spray system. The quickly dissolving packets make Fore easier to get even wider disease protection.

Vince Alfonso, former president of the National Golf Course Owners Association, will instruct attendees on how to use local TV and radio to their marketing advantage; Rich Katz, vice president of marketing for Billy Casper Golf Management, will show owners how to economically promote their courses via the time-honored “Barter System”; and appraiser Larry Hirsh, president of Golf Property Analysts, will share 10 ways to upscale your operation — thereby allowing higher green fees while increasing course value.

While most agronomy programs show superintendents how to spend money, the Maintenance track at the Public Golf Forum concentrates on saving it through innovative turf care and efficient management. Indeed, The Forum is unique in the attention it pays to business issues faced by today’s superintendents. Bruce Williams, president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, will share innovative, efficient staffing techniques. Terry Buchen, GCN’s Savvy Superintendent and contributing editor, will weigh in with his exclusive “10 Ways to Save Money.” Earl Shafer, the superintendent at Wilmington (Del.) Country Club, will discuss ways to use OSHA regulations as a cost-saver. Also, Chicago District Golf Association Turfgrass Advisor Dr. Randy Kane will discuss agronomic problems particularly to the region, while U.S. Golf Association Green Section agronomists Bob Brrame and Peter Vermeer also plans courses for golf turf problems and solutions.

- The Development program will employ a two-prong approach: the first part will focus on the early stages of the course development process. This will include a session on “Making Your Course Attractive for Sale,” featuring Mike Rippey, president of North American Golf, and golf course appraiser Sam Hines. Information on attending the conference and exhibiting at the trade show can be obtained by calling the Golf Course News Conference Group at 207-894-0000.

Phillips comment
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no retrofitting required. Expect the other players in golf cobbiling to quickly strike similar deals with the oodles of spike-alternative makers now crowding what had been a pretty static marketplace. Reebok has chosen to equip its Performance Convertible golf shoes with SoftSpine Extra TracTion cleats, “because they outperformed all other spikeless alternatives in our testing,” said Phil Percoco, Reebok product development manager.

The athletic footwear behemoth appears to have taken the “whole-hog” approach to its spikeless commitment. Reebok has agreed to respike, on request, any model in its golf shoe line with Extra TracTion cleats at no additional charge. The manufacturer also plans convenience programs for clubs to go spikeless, including rental-shoe discounts of 40 percent of the standard wholesale price and shoe program for tournaments.