BRIEFS

MARriott SIGNS ON TO AuduoN
ORLANDO, Fla. — Marriott Golf has announced that the 18 facilities it manages are participating in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, including its two newest properties, Grande Vista in Orlando and Kierland Golf Club in Scottsdale. This portfolio-wide membership exemplifies our commitment to an alternative approach to golf course management and development," said Tom Schlick, Marriott Golf's director of grounds operations. "Marriott's goal is to achieve greater balance with the environment."

RHODY'S FIRST SHOW A SUCCESS
PROVIDENCE, R.I. — The first Rhode Island Turf Conference drew more people than expected and from a wider region, attracting superintendents from Long Island and the Metropolitan New York area as well as Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine and New Hampshire. Speakers included Dr. Houston Couch of Virginia Tech, and Noel Jackson and Bridget Ruenmele of the University of Rhode Island.

GREEN INDUSTRY EXPO SETS SITES
CINCINNATI, Ohio — Organizers will hold the Green Industry Expo at the Cincinnati Convention Center, Nov. 18-21, with an outdoor equipment demonstration at Schmidt Field on the city of Cincinnati. It is less than 60 minutes by air or an easy day's drive for more than 60 percent of the nation's population.

WIDER REGION AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
DES MOINES, Iowa — The International Golf Course Conference drew superintendents with one of the new varieties such as Crenshaw or the new Penn series (A-1, A-4, G-2, G-6) believe maintenance programs need to be modified to manage them effectively. There is a review of these management differences and specific practices that may need to be modified. The 1990s have been an exciting time for bentgrass managers. More varieties are available than ever before. Many were developed to improve tolerance to the high heat and humidity common to the Southeast. Many new varieties have a higher plant population per unit area compared to Penncross and offer the golfer a higher level of putting quality. The combination of these improvements results in varieties with improved playability considerations. This summary article will appear in GCSAA's Green Industry Management. At least one technical paper will be written for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal, which could affect local government and regulatory agencies and scientists around the world.

Although the U.S. Golf Association has spent millions of dollars in the last few years to fund pesticide and nutrient fate studies, they were conducted in laboratory settings and at university field stations, not golf courses. The ETS study is intended to coordinate information from studies specifically designed to sample groundwater from golf courses.

NEW BENTS NEED DIFFERENT CARE
By PATRICK M. O'BRIEN and CHRISTOPHER HARTWIGER

Much of the discussion on the new bentgrass varieties has focused on differences like color, texture and summer performance. But information on how to best maintain these varieties has been limited. Should they be maintained similarly to the most common bentgrass, Penncross, or are changes necessary in the basic management program to maximize their performance? An overwhelming majority of superintendents with one of the new varieties such as Crenshaw or the new Penn series (A-1, A-4, G-2, G-6) believe maintenance programs need to be modified to manage them effectively. Here is a review of these management differences and specific practices that may need to be modified. The 1990s have been an exciting time for bentgrass managers. More varieties are available than ever before. Many were developed to improve tolerance to the high heat and humidity common to the Southeast. Many new varieties have a higher plant population per unit area compared to Penncross and offer the golfer a higher level of putting quality. The combination of these improvements results in varieties with improved playability characteristics. Continued on page 26

THE BEST AT WHAT THEY DO

Metsker earns Tradition Award
By MARK LESLIE

MARYSVILLE, Ohio — Stanley Metsker, who was instrumental in pushing the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) to accept certification, has been chosen for the Scotts Tradition of Excellence Award.

Metsker, 59, of the Country Club of Colorado in Colorado Springs, will be presented the Excellence Award during the PGA Senior Tour's Tradition tournament at Desert Mountain in Scottsdale, Ariz. Although Metsker feels his crowning achievement was pushing certification first through the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association (RMGCSSA), then through GCSAA, his

Hunker tops in TPC Network

By PETER BLAIS

ORLANDO, Fla. — Outstanding tournament conditions, Audubon certification and a happy membership combined to earn superintendent Ted Hunker of the Tournament Players Club at River Highlands in Hartford, Conn., the TPC's designation as its top operation of the year.

Hunker received the award at the annual gathering of TPC superintendents held here during the International Conference and Show.

"The winning operation had such a terrific year it was a very clear choice," said Cal Ruth, director of maintenance for PGA Tour Golf Properties. "The head superintendent was very deserving of this award." That superintendent was Hunker.

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A summary article will appear in GCSAA's Green Industry Management.

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GOLF COURSE NEWS
TPCs honor Hunker, River Highlands

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"It's a wonderful feeling to be considered the best of the best," Hunker said. "It's particularly rewarding because in my previous four years here we never had a chance."

River Highlands underwent a major renovation a few years ago and it has taken several seasons for the course to mature, Hunker noted. The final major improvement was placing new sand in all the bunkers, a job that was completed prior to last summer's PGA Tour stop, the Greater Hartford Open. The Tour players applauded the improvements during the tournament. Greg Norman won the event.

The course members also noticed the improvements and showed their pleasure through a membership survey. "It came back very positive," Hunker said. "They were much happier than in past years."

Audubon International topped off 1996 by designating River Highlands as the 48th facility certified by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. Hunker noted the contributions of his two assistants, Noel Hall and Tom DeGrande, as well as equipment manager Bob Tyler. "We wouldn't have won this without them," he said.

Hunker grew up in Pueblo, Colo., and earned a turf management degree from Colorado State University. He worked six years as assistant superintendent and head superintendent at DeBell Golf Club in Burbank, Calif., before returning to his home state as course manager of Boulder Country Club. After six years at Boulder, he took over River Highlands in 1991.

Roth praised the work done by superintendents at all 22 TPC operations. "It was a very challenging year with the heavy rainfalls and heat waves that hit many parts of the country," he said. "The tournament expectations were higher than ever. But we still had numerous successes and had the best conditions ever at our facilities."

In addition to Hunker, five TPC superintendents received gold-level awards for superior conditions at their facilities: Mike Dutrey at TPC of Michigan; Fred Klauk at TPC Sawgrass (Jacksonville, Fla.); Gary Meyers at TPC of Scottsdale (Ariz.); Jerry Dyer at TPC Southwind; and Collier Miller at TPC Summerlin. Klauk also received an award for having the best-landscaped course for the third straight year.

The TPC also honored four operations with worker safety records that, according to Roth, were five times better than the national average. These were the Golf Club of Jacksonville, TPC at Avenel, TPC at Southwind and TPC at Eagle Trace. The superintendents turned the tables on Roth, presenting their boss with a plaque for his help in running their facilities. "This is in recognition of the assistance we've received from headquarters," Meyers said. "We could not do our jobs without your support."

R.T. JONES GOLF CLUB JOINS SANCTUARY SYSTEM

GAINESVILLE, Va. — The Robert Trent Jones Golf Club (RTJ) has achieved designation as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. Numerous projects undertaken on the course enhance habitat for wildlife and preserve resources for the community including providing nest boxes for bluebirds, purple martins and wrens; placing bat roost boxes; using integrated pest management techniques; careful monitoring of water quality; water conservation; and creating buffer zones to enhance water features.

Superintendent Glenn Smicklely said, "Since the golf course is located on Lake Manassas, a drinking water reservoir, I am very aware of my obligation to make sure the integrity of the lake is not jeopardized in any way. With the implementation of a comprehensive integrated pest management program and strict water management measures, data collected by an independent source has shown that water quality of the lake has improved."

GULL LAKE VIEW GOLF CLUB EARN SANCTUARY STATUS

AUGUSTA, Mich. — Gull Lake View Golf Club has been designated a "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. Gull Lake View Golf Club became the fifth in Michigan and the 49th golf course in the nation to receive the honor.

"Gull Lake View Golf Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property," said Marla Briggs, staff ecologist for Audubon International. "The programs that we have developed while participating in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program have helped us to bring a very natural feeling to the golf experience on our courses," Gull Lake officials said.

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