USGA, supers confront concerns over unstable Bermudagrass

By MARK LESLIE

HOUSTON, Texas — Believing that "Bermudagrass greens are on the ropes," the U.S. Golf Association (USGA) Green Section, superintendents, university researchers and others are hoping for vast improvements — quickly.

Convening at Houston Country Club here, some 150 golf course superintendents heard USGA agronomists and university researchers explain that cultivars of hybrid Bermudagrass are becoming increasingly unstable and some sort of research must be done to solve the problem.

"If what was going on with Bermudagrass greens and fairways existed for bentgrasses, there would be an eruption," said Green Section Southeast Region Director Patrick O'Brien. "It's amazing how it's not getting publicity because it's simply Bermudagrass."

A summary of the Houston meeting will be presented in May to the USGA Research Committee which will develop requests for proposals for projects dealing with the issues at hand, said Green Section National Director Jim Snow. "It may not require a lot of money — perhaps just defining what can be done and finding the people to do it."

"I'm encouraged. It was a good meeting that opened people's eyes about other peoples' viewpoints."

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Significant advances in genetics foster nat'il conclave of scientists

By MARK LESLIE

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Geneticists are progressing at lightning speed in this "very, very new" area of turfgrass research, and to get scientists up to speed on these advances the U.S. Golf Association Green Section and Michigan State University (MSU) are hosting a Workshop on Biotechnology of Turfgrass here, Aug. 11-13.

"This is the growth area where future significant changes will be made," said Dr. Michael Kenna, director of Green Section research and workshop coordinator. "Whoever learns the most the fastest and patent significant parts of it will be able to springboard into the future."

Scientists from around the country have been invited to the conference, and 26 45-minute talks are scheduled. Ranging from molecular biology to gene cloning and in vitro culture and somaclonal variation, many of the subjects have never been discussed in a national or international workshop

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GCSAA sending team to first international tournament

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Six representatives of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) will travel to England in September as part of the America's team to participate in the inaugural Hayter Challenge golf event. GCSAA President Bruce K. Williams also will attend as non-playing captain.

West Lancashire Golf Course in Blundellsands, Liverpool, and Fairhaven Golf Course in Lytham, St. Annes, will host the event Sept. 15-19. Sponsored by European equipment manufacturer Hayter, the tournament is designed to promote international relations and communications among golf course superintendent organizations. Plans call for the event to be held biennially at locations alternating between the United States and Europe.

More GCSAA news, pages 32-33

The GCSAA representatives for 1996 are Vice President Paul McGinnis of Mission Valley Country Club in Phoenix, Ariz.; Secretary/Treasurer George Renault III of Burning Tree Club in Bethesda, Md.; Immediate Past President Gary Grigg of Royal Poinciana Golf Club in Naples, Fla.; Past President Randy Nichols of Cherokee Town and Country Club in Dunwoody, Ga. and SU and historically the major turf zone? If so, why?

Dr. A. J. Powell

Unit. of Kentucky

Ed. — This month we begin a continuing series of interviews with leading university professors and researchers affecting the golf course industry.

UK's Powell shares transition zone turfgrass know-how

Andrew J. Powell, Ph.D., is a professor in the University of Kentucky Department of Agronomy. He has also taught and conducted research at the University of Maryland and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI and SU). Among his accomplishments are the release of Quicksand Bermudagrass, a new grass for the upper transition zone, and identification of Vmont Bermudagrass, a grass released by VPI and SU and historically the major turf used in the transition zone.

Golf Course News: With the increasing emphasis on prudent pesticide usage, are you seeing more courses converting to warm-season grasses in the transition zone? Why?

Powell: Yes, many perennial ryegrass courses are converting. They are determining that the risk of bermuda winter kill is less than perennial ryegrass summer die-back. Also, the cost of establishing bermuda may actually be less than the annual cost of their previous fairway fungicide program. Fungicides are seldom needed on Bermuda.

GCN: What are the warm-season Bermudagrass varieties that work well? Can you briefly describe their advantages and disadvantages?

Powell: For the upper transition zone, I would only consider Quickstand, Vmont or Midron. Other new vegetation varieties such as Midlawn may also prove to do well, but we have little experience with them. In addition, the new seeded varieties such as Mirage, Jackpot and Sundevil are much more winter hardy than previous seeded varieties, but it appears that they still lack some hardness dur
Supers partners in Pesticide Stewardship Program

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has formally accepted as a partner in the federal government’s Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) when a strategy submitted by GCSAA for reducing pesticide risk on golf courses was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

PESP is a voluntary public/private partnership program sponsored by the EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The partners work together to develop programs that protect human health and preserve the environment by reducing the risks associated with pesticide use.

GCSAA was eligible to become a partner in this program as an association representing pesticide users. GCSAA submitted a strategy of research, education and communication programs that demonstrates golf course superintendents’ commitment to environmentally sound turf management choices, furthering the goals of the EPA and its sister agencies in the program.

GCSAA’s research, education and communication strategies are designed to increase the use of safer pest management practices and reduce risk to humans and the environment. Research will support the development of safer products and reveal new practices and technologies that reduce pesticide risk.

Educated golf course superintendents will be more aware of the risks of pesticide use and be better equipped to manage pests safely and cost-effectively.

The United States Golf Association and Professional Lawn Care Association of America are among other green industry organizations involved in PESP.

Seed Research of Oregon presents ...

BEST 18 GOLF GREENS IN NORTH AMERICA

Nominees:

Old Overton Club – Vestaiva Hills, AL
Club Terravita – Scottsdale, AZ
Diamante CC – Hot Springs Village, AR
Northview Golf & CC – Cloverdale, BC
Nicklaus North at Whistler – Whistler, BC
Silver Creek Valley CC – San Jose, CA
Granite Bay Golf Club – Granite Bay, CA
Sun City – Roseville – Roseville, CA
Legacy Ridge at Westminster – Westminster, CO
The Club at Cordillera – Edwards, CO
Fox Hollow at Lakewood – Lakewood, CO
Champions Club – Sarasota, FL
Cresta del Sol – Palm Desert, CA
Southwood – Pensacola, FL
Glen Oaks CC – West Des Moines, IA
Point Sebago Resort & CC – Casco, ME
Carrick Creek CC – Glenwood, MN
North Course at Stonehedge – Augusta, GA
White Pine National GC – Hubbard Lake, MI
CC of Lincoln – Lincoln, NE
Sand Hills Golf Club – Mullen, NE
Lightning “W” Ranch – Carson City, NV
The Club at Genoa Lakes – Genoa, NV
Santa Ana GC – Bernalillo, NM
CC of Purchase – Purchase, NY
Oak Hill CC – Rochester, NY
Greenville CC – Greenville, NC
Karsten Creek Golf Club – Stillwater, OK
Oaks CC – Tulsa, OK
Wyndcote CC – Oxford, PA
Bluegrass Yacht & CC – Hendersonville, TN
Creekview Golf Club – Cleveland, TX
Denton CC – Denton, TX
Turtle Hill GC – Muenster, TX
Ridgewood CC – Waco, TX
Sunrise GC – El Paso, TX
Royal Virginia Golf Club – Louisa, VA
James River CC – Newport News, VA
Tri-Mountain GC – Ridgefield, WA
Sumner Meadows GC – Sumner, WA
North Bellingham GC – Bellingham, WA
The Bog – Saukville, WI

Bruce Hospes
Paul Ellwood
Mandel Brockinton
Jon Clark
Darren Burns
Mark Condos
Nick Checkleis
Jim Ferrin
John Martin
Scott Tuggle
Tim Taagen
Don Tolson
Mike Brisbois
Pat Stewart
Tim Johnson
Gerry White
Kevin Pryeski
Charlie Scott
Bruce Wolfrom
Charlie Hadwick
Keith Nordick
Tom Ururu
Jed Anderson
Gary Hodge
Robert Miller
Joe Hahn
Bob Young
Steve Wilcoxon
Leon Stroike
Mark Del Santro
Jim Hinchman
Jordan Eldredge
Merlin Tielenemeier
Danny Arena
John Anderson
Kim From
Maurie Shields
Jesse Parsons
Dan Bierscheid
Lee Anderson
Richard Jahnke
Pat Shaw

In our search to find the very best Providence, SR 1020 and Dominant creeping bentgrass greens, these golf courses and superintendents were nominated as the very best in North America.

From these names, a winner will be judged, and awarded a trip to the 1997 International Turfgrass Conference in Sydney, Australia!

Regional Finalists will be announced in next month’s issue of this publication.

Good Luck to all of our nominees!

Supers/players in int’l tourney

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Ga.; GCSAA golf champion Jim Dusch, superintendent at Atlanta National Golf Club in Alpharetta, Ga.; and Vice President of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Southern California, Samuel Williamson of Ojai Valley Inn & Country Club in Ojai, Calif.

Nichols, Dusch and Williamson have been selected by the GCSAA board of directors based on their ability to represent the association as international ambassadors and on their golf ability.

“In our profession, like many others, communication is the key,” said Williams. “Participating in this match will give us another opportunity to exchange ideas and learn how other turf organizations are handling the common challenges we face.”

The balance of the Americas team will consist of four representatives of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association and two representatives from the Argentine Greenkeepers Association.

The opposing team, from the Eastern Hemisphere, will be composed of four representatives each from the Australian, Spanish, German and Swedish greenkeepers associations.