Mechanics' Corner: Educate the masses

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Mechanical maintenance may seem unnecessary; but it pays off by protecting the paint and aiding in cleaning during the season.

The goal of this maintenance is increased longevity of the equipment, improved production and decreased downtime during the season. Although this maintenance program does not sound time-consuming, it is.

It takes me and four other men helping to complete the work in time for the upcoming golf season. So, as the 1996 golf season approaches, the membership at Sunset Ridge Country Club can be sure that the maintenance facility will be ready, even if the weather isn’t.

MALOY JOINS GREEN SECTION MID-CONTINENT REGION

Brian Maloy, the construction superintendent during a recent renovation of Great Southwest Golf Course in Grand Prairie, Texas, has joined the U.S. Golf Association Green Section as an agronomist. He will work with Mid-Continent Region Director Paul Vermoulen, who left an agronomist’s post in the Western Region to succeed Jim Moore. Moore is director of the newly created Construction Education Program. A superintendent for 10 years, Maloy worked at Indian Creek Golf Course in Carillon, Texas, and Oakridge Country Club in Garland, Texas. He holds bachelor’s degrees in agronomy and horticulture from Iowa State University.

Q&A: Engelke

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One problem is, we don’t retire old varieties. We just add more. Competition is healthy and ultimately provides greater choice for the consumer as long as the consumer is properly informed.

The USGA initiated Green Section Research in 1982 and began intensely funding breeding programs. With the exception of Penn State, little effort had been made in golf turf development. Efforts by the University of Arizona, University of Rhode Island and Washington State University yielded improved bentgrasses — SR1020, Providence and Putter, respectively. Most of the breeding effort in creeping bentgrass was an aside to the primary mission of their programs and consequently very little support was available for timely or rapid advancement.

GCN: Where can we expect to see the greatest advances in turfgrass research in the next 10 to 20 years?

ME: Biotechnology will play an even more important role in the development and advancement of new turfgrasses, although it will be somewhat hampered in the short term due to restrictions on the exchange of genes and germplasm resources. In the long term, we will be able to transfer desirable genes across plant species to accelerate the development process. The turf industry will likely face many challenges due to the self-interest of selected user groups. We have already seen major efforts to restrict turf use in many Southern cities because of the perception turf consumes too much water. Educational efforts are needed to promote turf as the “glue” that unites the environment and helps keep it intact.

GCN: Do the golf-related associations do a good job of allocating their research dollars?

ME: The USGA, GCSAA and similar organizations have funded research for decades, mostly in small grants to numerous individuals and institutions. Unfortunately, most of these dollars were only supplemental or generally of minor nature, meaning a significant piece of research was seldom accomplished. With the advent of the USGA Green Section research effort, the number of grants were increased, enabling serious research efforts be put forth in fewer but significant areas.

The initial emphasis targeted breeding (which requires a long-term effort with significant funding) along with understanding the physiological development and performance of grasses under stress conditions. The shift in attitude enabled the industry to substantially improve varieties and management strategies because funding was consolidated into significant and continually accountable grants.

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