DNA fingerprinting pegs rogue cultivars

By Larry Kieffer

Tampa, Fla. — Developing techniques to identify "off-types" of Bermudagrass through DNA analysis has become a market-driven research project in Florida. Superintendents in the state increasingly face job insecurity as these off-types appear on their golf courses, particularly on the greens.

The objective is to find a reliable means of verifying a cultivar before it is planted. With his job on the line, the superintendent wants to make sure he is getting what his boss is paying for.

"We have found that DNA fingerprinting has proved to be a powerful tool for identifying off-types in Tifway Bermudagrass," said Dr. Phil Busey, one of four researchers with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agronomy.

Minimum Impact

Course managers and supers need not despair over the recent minimum wage hike......39

The War On Thatch

Just say, "street cleaner"? Superintendent Brett Har ris shares a novel approach to turf cultivation......13

Course managers and supers need not despair over the recent minimum wage hike......39

Course Development

Atlanta developers warn Sydney counterparts......4

Bruce Matthews project mixes golf & fishing......31

The Savvy Super charts his way to success......24

APRIL GOLFING GOES PUBLIC IN 2002

Score another victory for public-access golf in America: The U.S. Golf Association will, for the first time, conduct its Open Championship at a publicly-owned facility: the Black Course at Bethpage State Park on Long Island (the par-3, 17th is shown here). For story, see page 3.

Love & Fought hang out their own shingles......29

Course Development

Atlanta developers warn Sydney counterparts......4

Bruce Matthews project mixes golf & fishing......31

AGC eyes Cleveland market......5

FERTIGATION OVERVIEW

This bampoline shot of the 10th hole at Bent Creek Country Club in Asheville, N.C., was taken last August at the height of heat and humidity season. How did Superintendent H. James Lake maintain such color and plant vitality? The answer is fertigation. See this month's Super Focus on page 22.

Suppliers Business

States assume regulatory responsibilities......45

Ransomes, Toro join on-line service......49

What's new in the marketplace?......50

"We have found that DNA fingerprinting has proved to be a powerful tool for identifying off-types in Tifway Bermudagrass," said Dr. Phil Busey, one of four researchers with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agronomy.

Minimum Impact

Course managers and supers need not despair over the recent minimum wage hike......39

The War On Thatch

Just say, "street cleaner"? Superintendent Brett Harris shares a novel approach to turf cultivation......13

Course managers and supers need not despair over the recent minimum wage hike......39

Course Development

Atlanta developers warn Sydney counterparts......4

Bruce Matthews project mixes golf & fishing......31

The Savvy Super charts his way to success......24

APRIL GOLFING GOES PUBLIC IN 2002

Score another victory for public-access golf in America: The U.S. Golf Association will, for the first time, conduct its Open Championship at a publicly-owned facility: the Black Course at Bethpage State Park on Long Island (the par-3, 17th is shown here). For story, see page 3.

Love & Fought hang out their own shingles......29

Course Development

Atlanta developers warn Sydney counterparts......4

Bruce Matthews project mixes golf & fishing......31

AGC eyes Cleveland market......5

FERTIGATION OVERVIEW

This bampoline shot of the 10th hole at Bent Creek Country Club in Asheville, N.C., was taken last August at the height of heat and humidity season. How did Superintendent H. James Lake maintain such color and plant vitality? The answer is fertigation. See this month's Super Focus on page 22.

Suppliers Business

States assume regulatory responsibilities......45

Ransomes, Toro join on-line service......49

What's new in the marketplace?......50

"We have found that DNA fingerprinting has proved to be a powerful tool for identifying off-types in Tifway Bermudagrass," said Dr. Phil Busey, one of four researchers with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agronomy.

Minimum Impact

Course managers and supers need not despair over the recent minimum wage hike......39

The War On Thatch

Just say, "street cleaner"? Superintendent Brett Harris shares a novel approach to turf cultivation......13

Course managers and supers need not despair over the recent minimum wage hike......39

Course Development

Atlanta developers warn Sydney counterparts......4

Bruce Matthews project mixes golf & fishing......31

The Savvy Super charts his way to success......24

APRIL GOLFING GOES PUBLIC IN 2002

Score another victory for public-access golf in America: The U.S. Golf Association will, for the first time, conduct its Open Championship at a publicly-owned facility: the Black Course at Bethpage State Park on Long Island (the par-3, 17th is shown here). For story, see page 3.

Love & Fought hang out their own shingles......29

Course Development

Atlanta developers warn Sydney counterparts......4

Bruce Matthews project mixes golf & fishing......31

AGC eyes Cleveland market......5

FERTIGATION OVERVIEW

This bampoline shot of the 10th hole at Bent Creek Country Club in Asheville, N.C., was taken last August at the height of heat and humidity season. How did Superintendent H. James Lake maintain such color and plant vitality? The answer is fertigation. See this month's Super Focus on page 22.

Suppliers Business

States assume regulatory responsibilities......45

Ransomes, Toro join on-line service......49

What's new in the marketplace?......50

"We have found that DNA fingerprinting has proved to be a powerful tool for identifying off-types in Tifway Bermudagrass," said Dr. Phil Busey, one of four researchers with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agronomy.

Minimum Impact

Course managers and supers need not despair over the recent minimum wage hike......39

The War On Thatch

Just say, "street cleaner"? Superintendent Brett Harris shares a novel approach to turf cultivation......13

Course managers and supers need not despair over the recent minimum wage hike......39

Course Development

Atlanta developers warn Sydney counterparts......4

Bruce Matthews project mixes golf & fishing......31

The Savvy Super charts his way to success......24

APRIL GOLFING GOES PUBLIC IN 2002

Score another victory for public-access golf in America: The U.S. Golf Association will, for the first time, conduct its Open Championship at a publicly-owned facility: the Black Course at Bethpage State Park on Long Island (the par-3, 17th is shown here). For story, see page 3.

Love & Fought hang out their own shingles......29
Advertising can be effective: if done correctly

By MARK LESLIE
LINDONSHIRE, I11. — Frequent advertising on television and radio works, but effectiveness can be gained much more cheaply, according to Alfonso Jr., president of Alfonso Creative Golf Enterprises in Williamsville.

Advertising salespersons try to sell frequency, but golf course operators should pay no attention, advises Alfonso, who is leading a one-hour presentation on "Turning On to TV and Radio" during the Public Golf Forum Oct. 28-29 as well as a one-day post-conference workshop here, Oct. 30.

A sampling of the tips Alfonso will give in his presentations includes:
• Don't be intimidated by appearing in your own ad. "Anticipating a TV shot, the first thing a person thinks is, 'I'm not able, I've got to hire a professional.' They need to do some homework first. The idea is to equip them with the information they need to go home and get the job done."
• Don't be frightened by the talk of $1 million-a-minute ads on the Super Bowl broadcast. "People hear that and think that in the smallest logical increment for them, it will cost $1,000 or $10,000 a minute, and they run from the idea. They operate in an absence of information and are not comparing apples and apples."
• Road block. "If I wanted to gain new customers with radio, I would run a commercial on all the radio stations in our market (that is, say, 100,000-population cities, not New York City, Chicago, or LA). You might have four or five stations. I would run all week at the same time of the day — preferably drive-time. It's called 'road blocking.' Listeners have to hear my commercial."
• "You're doing this on a reasonable trial investment of dollars," Alfonso added, "seven days a week times five stations."
• Eliminate for new customers. "When golfers come to the pro shop and say what stations they heard the ad on, I eliminate those stations and concentrate on the stations where my customers don't listen because I want new customers."

"Of course, when you want to communicate with your present customer base, you use those stations."

• Use the "creatures-of-habit" approach. "Feel people set their radios to their station and leave it there," Alfonso said. "While they're getting ready for work they're listening to the same station. I will run a commercial on a news talk station from Monday from 6 to 7 a.m., Tuesday from 7 to 8, Wednesday from 8 to 9, Thursday from 6 to 7 and Friday from 7 to 8. I've bought five commercials. Everyone who listens has heard it in two time frames."
• "After two weeks, those people can't distinguish if I'm on there every day or not. In 18 years I've done this and people have told me they hear me every day on the radio. I'm not there but they think I am. I multiply my dollar value by buying that particular schedule."
• "A radio station won't tell you that because they're making their money selling frequency."

They want you to buy two spots an hour for five days. They're not lying because it will work, but you don't have to do all that.

• Be constant with advertising. It pays big long-term dividends. "If you're on the radio for nine weeks, even if you're not on afterward, golfers think you are."

During his seminar, Alfonso will delve into use of local stations' in-house talent, independent production companies, cable stations, pre-commercial planning and post-production costs, among other issues.

"I'm trying to encourage golf course owners to turn the tide — to learn the whole story, not the half-truth about TV and radio advertising," Alfonso said, "so they can be better equipped. Maybe TV or radio will work for them."

"The point is that a course with a $12 or $25 greens fee had better have a mission, know what and how they want to communicate, put out a budget and get the job done as best as they can using everything at their disposal."

In a room of 350 PGA pros at a recent function, only two acknowledged using TV or radio, Alfonso said, adding that golf owners and operators have simply not kept pace with technology.

"We're catching up fast," Alfonso said. "Computers in the golf shop are not strangers any more. The same thing is happening in terms of how we market our facilities.

"It's no longer just the big courses that spend television and radio money. We want the most efficient use of our advertising, promotion and marketing dollars."

"In this workshop, we want people to learn more about these types of opportunities which can only benefit them economically. That's what this is all about. How can I gain information that will help me go home and improve my bottom line?"

Alfonso's 8 a.m.-5 p.m. session will include information on what to do and not do in TV and radio promotions, what to say and when and where to buy advertising. It will also feature critiques of attendees' video and radio spots as well as "Star Search" periods.

"We want participants to send us video and radio spots ahead of
"We've added one or two properties a year. I see that continuing, especially since it takes three years to get a course operating the way you want. The first year you fix what's broken. The second year you institute a marketing plan. The third year, hopefully, all your work begins to pay off."

Fore Star's primary focus is on acquiring long-term leases coupled with purchase options, if possible. It also provides management and consulting services and co-owns another facility. But the firm prefers leases. "Our last two courses have been leases from municipalities," Yonke said. "They fit well into our niche. Municipalities have usually overlooked certain things for many years. We try to focus on those first. It's often the lack of an on-site manager. The golf pro and superintendent usually answer to different people within the city government and it makes it difficult to get things done. We put one person, the general manager, in charge of both positions and things run more smoothly."

Fore Star found some major capital improvements were needed at Meadowbrook. The company sunk more than $1 million into the complex, including a total clubhouse renovation that "gave us the opportunity to run the operation smoothly," Yonke said.

Although small compared to some major management companies, Yonke prefers to see Fore Star's size as an advantage. "Large companies have to prioritize their problems," he said. "An individual course that is part of a six-course group has a better chance of someone noticing its problems and getting them taken care of than one in a 200- to 300-course portfolio."

---

**FOR MAXIMUM PROTECTION FROM STRESS...**

**MACRO-SORB® CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!!!**

Whether it's excessive cold or heat, drought or too much rain, pests and disease, less than optimum soil conditions, or just too many rounds of golf — you need healthy turf to withstand the stress caused by these and many other adverse conditions.

Macro-Sorb® is an amino acid based, nutraceutical plant biostimulant that provides maximum resistance to adverse conditions by maintaining the photosynthetic activity which normally slows down during periods of stress.

The action of the amino acids stimulates the natural processes of the plant causing improved nutrient absorption and increased availability of the managing micro nutrients. By providing the same 17 free amino acids a plant normally produces, Macro-Sorb® helps the plant retain the vital energy it needs to sustain growth while fighting the effects of adverse conditions.

"It's the summer of 1995, was one of the worst on record in the Mid-Atlantic region. Twenty eight consecutive days over 90° during a period of thirty straight days without rain. Talk about stress!!! We added Macro-Sorb® to our normal IPM program and experienced little or no turf loss — fairways, tees or greens. I'm convinced that Macro-Sorb® made the difference."

Geoffrey R. Blind
Golf Course Superintendent
Hillendale Country Club
Phoenix, Maryland

"Macro-Sorb® — a true systemic. ...it's new... it's unique... and nothing else works quite like it! Macro-Sorb® truly can make the difference."