Michigan pioneers environmental self-audit

EAST LANSING, Mich. — The Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program was officially launched June 25 at Michigan State University here, pioneering new ground for golf courses. Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Director Russell Harding and Michigan Department of Agriculture Deputy Director Keith Creagh provided opening comments and welcomed participants to this new partnership.

"As this groundbreaking initiative gains momentum, we expect to see increased levels of environmental protection and habitat enhancement statewide," said Harding. "This effort holds tremendous promise and will no doubt serve as a model for other states."

The program is the first of its kind in the nation and is supported by Michigan State University, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Michigan Turfgrass Foundation, Golf Association of Michigan, Michigan Golf Course Owners Association and environmental advocacy groups.

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BRIEFS

Glorioso Receives PTC Scholarship

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Tim Glorioso of New Kensington, Pa., graduated from the Pennsylvania State University Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program in March and was chosen to receive the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council Scholarship. After beginning his career at Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, Ohio, Glorioso

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Dwarf hybrid Bermudas need special regimen

IGFTON, Ga. — The latest generation of dwarf hybrid Bermudagrasses is changing the way golf greens play and are maintained in warmer regions of the United States. And, according to Dr. Wayne Hanna of the Coastal Plain Experiment Station here, as with any quantum change in turfgrass management, superintendents face a learning curve with these Bermudagrasses.

Hanna, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Bermudagrass expert for two decades, is in the final stages of publishing a booklet on how to manage the new Bermudagrasses.

The advantage of the new Bermudas is their absence of seedheads and preference, not tolerance, for cutting heights below 5/32 inch. They also exhibit finer texture and higher density.

Because they are very aggressive and very dwarf, they are maintained to prevent predictable problems, such as thatch.

"You can only see the differences among the new Bermudagrasses at close mowing heights," said Hanna, who developed the dwarf TifEagle. Only trials mowing the new Bermudagrass below 3/16 inch provide a true comparison of qualities. Test sites at 33 golf courses and universities enable superintendents to see the differences firsthand.

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS COUNTERS

The prevention steps Hanna recommends are typical for many golf courses — grooming, top dressing, verticutting and aeration. The difference is frequency and consistency. While standard Bermudagrasses perform better at longer heights of cut, the new varieties don't perform as intended when allowed to grow much above 1/8 inch.

Grooming (light verticutting with greensmowers) should be performed every week or two, followed by light top dressing, according to Hanna. More aggressive verticutting and top dressing should take place two to three times during the summer. Intervals between aeration should be shortened and cores removed.

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ENVIRONMENTAL GOLF PROMOTES

CALABASAS, Calif. — Environmental Golf Maintenance has promoted Gregg Swanson to regional superintendent and named Mike Robson as regional superintendent at Canyon Lake Country Club in Lake Elsinore, Bernardo Heights CC in Rancho Bernardo and Silver Lakes CC in Helendale. Swanson will be responsible for overseeing golf course maintenance programs Canyon Lake Country Club (CC) in Lake Elsinore, Bernardo Heights CC in Rancho Bernardo and Silver Lakes CC in Helendale. Swanson will be responsible for overseeing golf course maintenance programs Canyon Lake Country Club (CC) in Lake Elsinore, Bernardo Heights CC in Rancho Bernardo and Silver Lakes CC in Helendale. Swanson was chosen to receive the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council Scholarship. After beginning his career at Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, Ohio, Glorioso

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A snappy fill-'er-up

TIMONIUM, Md. — Pull-behind golf course sprayers and those mounted on a turf truckster come in a variety of sizes, the most popular in the 100- to 400-gallon range. No matter the size, they can take a long time filling — if your set-up is inefficient.

Douglas W. Petersen, superintendent at Baltimore Country Club here, uses a time-honored way that "fills up our sprayers in virtually no time at all," he said.

He uses a simple but effective overhead piping system using 2-inch-diameter galvanized steel pipe with a 2-inch ball valve and a 2-inch-diameter canvas fire hose connection.
Their internodes (branching point that dwarfs can produce 20 to 25 percent more thatch than taller members of their species. Their internodes (branching points) are much closer together, so the foliage produced in a given space is greater. That can be managed by mechanical and nutritional practices.

More foliage means a slightly higher nitrogen requirement. Hanna recommends balancing nitrogen with potassium while keeping track of micronutrients. When starting to manage a Bermuda like Tifeagle, he said, regularly test tissue samples for nutrient levels, then adjust applications to meet the turf's needs without generating excess growth.

One important point of comparison among the new Bermuda grasses is the way they accept overseeding, Hanna said. Any time a turf's density is increased, its ability to receive seed broadcast on the green can be decreased. Since the seed of poa trivialis is smaller than perennial ryegrass (Lolium perenne), it overseeds in the dwarf Bermudas better.

Overseeding performance is one reason Hanna feels it is important to test tissue samples for nutrient levels, then adjust applications to meet the turf's needs without generating excess growth.

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Thronson hands-on
Continued from previous page and wetland and half in tall pines. It measures from 5,250 to 7,187 yards.

Trendwest hired Palmer Design to create the course, but wanted Thronson's participation.

"Ed Seay and Eric Larsen [of Palmer Design Group] were just wonderful to work with," said Thronson. "They were receptive to a lot of my ideas. We've built a playable, fun course with five sets of tees that can be enjoyed by any golfer."

Trendwest's Mountain Star destination resort in Washington is still in the permitting process. Thronson's design is well underway, but he estimates two to five years before construction will begin on the 54-hole complex.

Meanwhile he and Anderson are actively involved in promoting junior golf at Eagle Crest.

"I have to give so much credit to Terry for not just giving lip service," Thronson said. "He allowed the kids to play for free after 3 p.m. on slow days."

Thronson's ultimate plans are to be a full-time course designer.

"I look at it, from beginning through construction to completion, as a piece of art," he said. "When you're a painter, you need a canvas. My canvas is the earth. Course design is something that gets into your blood."