Ohio show hits hot buttons

President stresses green 'marriage'

BY MARK LESLIE

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Calling the relationship of the state’s golf course superintendents, sports turf managers and lawn-care operators “a beautiful marriage,” new Ohio Turfgrass Foundation (OTF) President Joe Duncan said the different groups are learning more and more from each other as time passes.

“That relationship has existed for a long, long time, but we depend on each other more than ever before,” said Duncan, owner of Evergreen Lawn Care Inc. in Troy, who succeeded Hank Chafin at the OTF Conference and Show here, Dec. 8-11. “We’re learning that everything we do is an integral part of each other’s work. Things that happen on sports turfs and on golf courses, and the research they are fostering, affect us all.”

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Prof. pushes more biological control

BY MARK LESLIE

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Questions abound in the arena of turfgrass soil ecology and biology, but Dr. Michael Boehm pointed to a future where biological care plays an equal role in maintenance with chemical and cultural care and the turfgrass’ genetic resistance. The Ohio State University (OSU) assistant professor of plant pathology painted a picture in which current maintenance practices are dominated by chemicals, and where cultural practices and genetic resistance dwarf biological controls.

“We want to get all spheres relatively the same size to give turfgrass managers the ultimate and largest arsenal to combat turfgrass diseases,” Boehm told an audience at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Show and Conference here.

“Our goal,” he said, “is the integrated management of diseases ... to push the responsible use of biorational, environmentally friendly and environmentally compatible practices.”

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Golf and the Environment

Tackling unreasonable expectations

BY RON DODSON

It’s interesting how jobs seem to define who we are. For instance, when we ask, “What is a golf course superintendent?” we’re really asking what job does he or she do, and, believe me, everyone’s got an answer about what they’re supposed to do.

First of all, everyone seems to agree that a superintendent’s primary job is to manage the golf course (meaning turfgrass). And it follows that every golfer expects that turfgrass, both in terms of man and machine hours as well as in terms of damage to water quality and the turfgrass’ genetic resistance. The Ohio State University (OSU) assistant professor of plant pathology painted a picture in which current maintenance practices are dominated by chemicals, and where cultural practices and genetic resistance dwarf biological controls.

“We want to get all spheres relatively the same size to give turfgrass managers the ultimate and largest arsenal to combat turfgrass diseases,” Boehm told an audience at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Show and Conference here.

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FREE BALLS? YES ... AT THAYER CC

BY KEVIN P. CORBLEY

LAKEWOOD, Colo. — Computer mapping is the future of golf course maintenance and construction. That’s the direction Larry Rodgers of Larry Rodgers Design sees here in the industry taking. And his clients, some skeptical at first, tend to agree.

For more than a year, Rodgers has been using Global Positioning System (GPS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies to monitor and map the installation of irrigation systems. His company designs for new and existing courses. When each project is completed, Rodgers’ clients not only have new irrigation, they are left with a digital map of the course they can use for many purposes.

“Digital mapping essentially replaces aerial photography in golf course mapping,” explained Rodgers. “GPS and GIS are a lot more accurate and much less expensive in the long run than air photos.”

Typically, an aerial photo of a course is taken after construction and has limited use as a map reference for some maintenance and future design changes. Digital mapping is conducted throughout the construction process, whether for a new course or a replacement irrigation system at an existing one. The digital map is created in layers as the project progresses and can be used to facilitate the construction itself. Rodgers explained.

“The bottom line is, this technology saves money by virtually eliminating change orders in renovations of existing courses,” said Rodgers.

Digital maps give contractors an extremely accurate visual guide they can follow during construction. As a result, completed projects match very closely the digital map. Rodgers said.

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