

BRIEFS



**PTC AWARDS \$175,000 FOR RESEARCH**

The Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council has announced allocation of funds to Penn State for the 1998-99 fiscal year. The \$175,000 research grant brings to almost \$2.5 million the council has donated to Penn State over the years. The funds will support research projects in the departments of agronomy, entomology, and plant pathology. It will also support eight scholarships and awards granted to undergraduate and graduate students.



**PA. SCHOOLS SIGN AGREEMENT**

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Penn State University's two-year Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program has worked out an articulation agreement with Penn College of Technology which allows all graduates of the two-year turf program to complete an associate degree. Penn College of Technology is a Penn State affiliate located in Williamsport. The agreement allows any certificate program graduate to continue studies at the Williamsport campus. By completing two semesters and required classes, the student would be awarded an associate degree in landscape technology with an emphasis in turfgrass management. For further information, contact Rich Weilminster at Penn College at 717-320-8038, extension 3534, or George Hamilton at Penn State at 814-865-3007.



**PURDUE GETS \$146,000**

INDIANAPOLIS — At the Midwest Turf Expo here, the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation (MRTF), whose mission is to support turfgrass research and education at Purdue University, presented a check to the Purdue Department of Agronomy for \$146,000 for annual support of the turfgrass program, and an additional check for \$100,000 to help complete the W.H. Daniel Turfgrass Research and Diagnostic Center. Steve Frazier of the Links Group was given the 1999 Distinguished Service Award, the highest honor given by the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation. The award is presented to an individual who has gone above and beyond the call of duty for the turf industry of Indiana. Next year's Turf Expo will be held Jan. 18-20 in Indianapolis. For more information, contact 765-494-8039.

**New England Turf Show presents solutions**

Take-all patch may have met its match, says Rutgers professor

By ANDREW OVERBECK

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — After three years of research, Dr. Bruce Clarke of Rutgers University has developed a new approach managing take-all patch that introduces new management practices, and recommends properly timed and rotated cultural practices.

Since identifying *gaevmannomyces graminis* in the Pacific Northwest in the late 1970s, superintendents on bentgrass golf courses have struggled to control what they commonly call take-all patch. The perennial root disease, which is identified by large doughnut-shaped patches of damaged turf, is especially difficult to combat because by the time symptoms are evident, the disease has been present for six to eight weeks.

Knowing that, however, is one of the keys to controlling take-all

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Pebble Beach's safety program reduces on-course accidents

By ANDREW OVERBECK

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Working with the theory that every accident could have been prevented, Pebble Beach Vice President of Resource Management Ted Horton has developed a workplace safety program he feels every golf course could use.

"You must have the mindset that every single accident could have been prevented and that you as the superintendent have the opportunity to prevent them," Horton told an audience at the New England Turfgrass Conference and Show here.

His latest program, STOP for Safety, emphasizes observation skills on the part of superintendents and works to improve communication between superintendents and their employees.

"This program ensures that the entire workforce will be

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**Baker's Dozen:**  
Young crew keeps  
The Links atop pack

By TERRY BUCHEN

WILLISTON (RAY), N.D. — Nicole Baker once rode her horse on this land, enjoyed picnics here, grew up. Today she may be the youngest golf course superintendent in the country, charged with maintaining the standards of a golf course named No. 2 Best New Affordable Course in the country when it opened in 1996, and striving to establish her place in a man-dominated profession.



"Some people were skeptical that a 21-year-old woman superintendent with a 19-year-old assistant could do the job," Baker said. "But with our previous experience and what my assistant, Cory Anderson, calls 'a young course with young minds,' we have prevailed with good success."

Indeed, The Links retains its ranking



The 8th hole, a par-3 with a backdrop of the North Dakota Buttes.



as No. 1 in North Dakota, and, in 1998, was given a 4-1/2 by *Golf Digest* in its listing of Places To Play.

"There was pressure from Day One to keep the course's ranking up as we were rated No. 2 Best New Affordable

Course in the country in 1996 by *Golf Digest*," Baker said.

How does a young leadership continue such high standards?

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Chad Wilson, from Iowa State University, disassembles an irrigation head during the year-end Intern Olympics at Country Club of the Rockies.

**Finish the season with an Intern Olympics**

By KEVIN ROSS

EDWARDS, Colo. — Many golf course operations have developed strong internship programs through various turf universities throughout the United States and abroad. We host four interns per season at Country Club of the Rockies. The interns become a valuable part of our management team. Our club benefits greatly from their dedication and willingness to learn.

At the end of their internship — usually late-August — we have a final staff barbecue. During this barbecue, we have what is now known as the Intern Olympics. The interns perform three events and other staff members judge or score the events.

The first event, the Irrigation Head Challenge, is to disassemble, then reassemble an irrigation head. Each intern is timed, then judged for proper assembly.

The second event is the Hose Reel Challenge. The interns are required to sit on a utility vehicle at the start, then go to a hose reel, hook it into a quick coupling, roll the hose out 75 feet, fill a 5-gallon pail completely, then roll the hose back up and disconnect the QC. This event is also

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**K**IRKLAND, Wash. — OB Sports has formed a new consulting division under the direction of agronomist Tom Christy, director of golf course maintenance for the company.

OB Sports, headquartered in Kirkland, owns eight courses and manages facilities in Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and Texas.

As part of the new service,

## OB Sports forms agronomy consulting division

Christy will visit each property on a regular basis and will establish a customized golf course maintenance program. If necessary, he identifies and hires a first-class golf course superintendent to implement the program. Weekly updates and periodic visits to the property ensure that quality turf

conditions and cultural practices are established.

Christy, who joined OB Sports in 1998, previously worked as a superintendent at courses in California, Washington and Oregon. He is the recipient of the Golf Course Superintendents Association Environmental Stewardship Award and was the Or-

egon Golf Course Superintendent Association's Superintendent of the Year in 1995. He is a two-time president of the Northwest Turfgrass Association, a charitable trust that raises money for turfgrass research.

Ironwood Country Club in Palm Desert, Calif. and The Reserve, a 36-hole facility near Port-

land, Oregon, are among the first two clients to sign maintenance contracts. In addition, the courses already on the OB Sports Trail will continue to receive the benefit of Christy's expertise.

Members of golf courses under contract with OB Sports also enjoy the privilege of membership in the OB Sports Trail, which allows preferred starting times and discounted fees at all OB Sports-managed facilities.

## Take-all patch

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patch, according to Clarke, who shared his findings at the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show here.

Under Clarke's regime, the first step is evaluating the health of the affected soil. "The symptoms occur when the soil has a high pH between 6.5-8.0," he said.

Therefore, in order to control the disease, you must first control the pH of the soil, said Clarke. Over three years, Clarke found best results when using acidifying fertilizers. The optimum pH, he said, is around 6.0.

This approach works even better in combination with a sub-surface application of magnesium sulfate, according to Clarke. In the study, magnesium was applied in April-May at a rate of 1-2 tenths of a pound and then repeated every six weeks. This was found to be extremely effective in reducing disease and strengthening turf.

"Reducing the pH and adding magnesium goes hand in hand with combating take-all patch," said Clarke. "It enhances the plant's natural defenses against the disease and the magnesium is toxic to the fungus."

Compaction must also be controlled since shallow rooting and stressed turf leave the plant wide open to the disease. Therefore, Clarke recommended that the turf be aerified in the spring and fall, but emphasized that it should not be done when symptoms are evident on the turf.

As the aerifying method suggests, timing is key in controlling take-all patch. According to Clarke, the best time to attack the disease is from October to November—before the disease goes into dormancy but after the symptoms have shown themselves—and in the spring before the disease begins to take hold again.

"You can affect potential infections that may develop in the winter or early spring by doing two fall applications and one spring application," said Clarke.

In tandem, these approaches have proven to reduce the impact of take-all patch. Clarke expects that new fungicides using strobilurin chemistry and new turf injection equipment will increase the superintendent's ability to fight take-all patch.

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1. Michigan State University 1989, 2. Iowa State University 1993, 3. Rutgers University 1997

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