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 *Gaumannomyces 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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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 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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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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**Delhi students cited**

DELHI, N.Y. — Two golf/turf management majors at Delhi College have been awarded scholarships by the Duke Polidor Foundation.

Robert McClay of Wawarsing and Ryan Daly of Cato are recipients of $1,500 scholarships from the Somer-based foundation.

This marks the second consecutive year that Delhi students have been selected for this honor, according to Dominic Morris, professor and department chair.

The scholarships honor the memory of Duke Polidor, a University of Massachusetts student who became superintendent at Fairview Country Club in New Jersey. An annual tournament is the principal fund-raiser for the foundation’s scholarship program and the event is organized by John Currie, a 1967 Delhi graduate.

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**Piller assumes Canadian reins**

TORONTO — Dean Piller, superintendent of Cordova Bay Golf Course in Victoria, British Columbia, was elected as president of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association during the 50th Canadian International Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show here.

Also elected were Vice President Merlin Affleck of Stanhope Golf and Country Club (G&CC) in Stanhope, PEI; Secretary-Treasurer and Alberta Director Jay Leach of Cottonwood G&CC in Dewinton, AB; British Columbia Director Jim Nix of Abercrombie Country Club, New Glasgow, NS, was appointed Atlantic director to finish Affleck's term.

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**Baker home & glad of it**

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"Our seasonal staff of 11 averages 18 years of age," Baker said, "and we work well together. There is less power distance between us and they feel comfortable to come to me with suggestions."

Baker grew up about a half mile from the property where course now sits — "land that our family used to rent for pasturing cows," she said.

She has many memories of growing up here: Getting bucked off her horse by hole 10, having picnics under the big trees between holes 5 and 6. Her favorite hole? No. 3, which used to be the local garbage dump but which has been completely cleaned up.

When she graduated from high school in 1994, construction started on the course and she worked for The Links as a summer job in 1995 and 1996.

"Even with all the pressures, I wouldn’t trade this job for anything."

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**Polidor Foundation**

Two months before graduating with honors from North Dakota State University in 1998, with a major in horticulture and a minor in business administration, Baker accepted the assistant superintendent position at The Links. But then, she said, "I gladly accepted it," she said. But then she had to make a quick phone to hire Andersonas her assistant and help out until she graduated.

Baker and her crew installed a fertigation system that has improved the course’s turf quality 500 percent, she said, by using two applications of a 28-0-0.

"It was like the Jolly Green Giant came and painted everything green," she said. "We also put out two applications of a 10-34-0 to get our phosphorus levels up."

"Even with all the pressures, I wouldn’t trade this job for anything," Baker said. "I love it here and it’s beautiful."