

## New design in modular greens expands season

EAST LANSING, Mich. — New technology for golf greens, designed here by the golf architecture firm Matthews & Nelhiebel, hopes to extend the golf season and lower maintenance costs for golf courses.

The Michigan firm has designed a putting green in collaboration with Michigan State

University that uses the Integrated Turf Module (ITM) turfgrass system. The ITM system is a series of modules interlocked beneath the putting surface. The modules have channels that connect to a blower that is capable of providing warm or cool air through the root zone. The blower is also able to re-

verse the air flow, drawing moisture out of the root zone.

"By forcing air through the root zone, the ITM turfgrass system can lengthen the golf season in cool climates and avoid heat stress complications in warm climates," said designer Howard Nauboris. "The system may also reduce the spread of

disease and fungus due to excess water in the root zone."

The prototype green is located on the MSU campus. Matthews & Nelhiebel and MSU's turfgrass program designed the system to follow the contours of traditionally built putting surfaces.

The modules are located 16 inches below the surface of the



Bruce Matthews, holding plans.

green and may also provide environmental benefits, according to Nauboris. Gas fertilizers can be directed through the channels of the modules, potentially reducing fertilizer runoff.

W. Bruce Matthews III, firm principal, plans on offering the modular green as a renovation option. "I see many field applications of modular greens," said Nauboris. "It offers another tool in the architect's arsenal for replacement or renovation of existing greens in poor micro-environments."

The design is a first for an ITM contoured surface. The ITM system is currently used on a flat playing field in Giants Stadium in New Jersey.

## Political action

Continued from page 13

said. "The GCSAA does not require any particular involvement in that arena. But the association does have a Washington presence to monitor legislation and regulation, and it plays an active role in issues that effect our profession."

"At the local and state levels, the government relations department at the GCSAA is there to help. Every day there's somebody at the department that wakes up in the morning thinking about state and local legislative issues that concern our members," Witt added.

The new online tool has been added to the government relations section of the GCSAA and is located at [congress.nw.dc.us/gcsaa](http://congress.nw.dc.us/gcsaa). Enter a ZIP code, hit search, and all the information needed to write a letter or make a phone call is made available.

"When a superintendent receives an action alert from the GCSAA stating, 'Here's a bill in your state, it's going to effect your job, you need to weigh in on this,' this site will simplify the process of getting involved," said Riordan. "An e-mail draft tool for emergency responses would also allow members to enter their information and click send, or there will be space provided for members to write their own comments and send them immediately."

"The easier you make it for someone to participate," she said, "the more likely they will participate." ■



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