



BRIEFS

IGM PROMOTES THREE SUPERINTENDENTS

LAKELAND, Fla. — Citing its rapid growth in Central Florida and along the East Coast, International Golf Maintenance announced the promotion of three superintendents to regional managers. Gregory Mackintosh, former superintendent at the Widow's Walk Golf Course in Scituate, Mass., now heads up the company's Northeast operations. Also promoted is Steve Gano, selected as manager of the Southeast region, who joined IGM in 1999 as superintendent of the Valdosta Country Club in Valdosta, Ga. The third appointment went to Jason Moore, who now heads up operations in Central Florida. Moore was recruited straight out of Lake City Community College in Lake City, Fla., and was the first superintendent hired by IGM for the company's first contractual facility. Prior to his promotion, he served at the Twin Rivers Golf Club in Oviedo, Fla.

GCSAA, GOLF DIGEST JOIN ON ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

LAWRENCE, Kan. — The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America joined with *Golf Digest* magazine, forming the Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards to recognize stewardship of golf course superintendents and their facilities. The program blends GCSAA's Environmental Stewards awards with the magazine's Environmental Leaders in Golf awards. Superintendents who have previously been winners of either award are ineligible to apply for the 2001 award, unless they have changed facilities. The program is sponsored by: Syngenta Professional Products; Rain Bird Corporation, Golf Division; Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products; and Pursell Technologies.

GILLIS RETIRING FROM CGSA

MISSISSAUGA, Ontario — After more than 12 years as the executive director of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association, Vince Gillis plans to retire. Gillis said it was time to give up full-time employment and pursue his personal interests. He has been in association management since 1965, and expressed his satisfaction with things that have been accomplished during his tenure with CGSA. Jay Leach, president of CGSA, said that he will strike a committee to give direction to the board on leadership succession. Gillis will assist in the transition.

Florida's water 'disappearing,' governor warns parched state

By JOEL JOYNER

TAMPA, Fla. — Even as Florida rolls through its rainy summer season, water officials continue to press for conservation as drought concerns escalate. The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), for example, has introduced a new, hard-hitting campaign with their "Wasting water is a crime" slogan.

Concerns have reached the highest level. "One of Florida's most vital resources — water — is disappearing," warns Gov. Jeb Bush in TV announcements broadcast around the state.

According to weather experts, wet-season rainfalls are just a "drop in the bucket" in recovering Florida's water supply. Barring major hurricanes, normal rainfalls from June to October will be insufficient to erase the water deficit at Lake Okeechobee, a vital reservoir, before next winter's dry season.

District-wide enforcement against water use violators has generated more than \$250,000 in fines.

'DRY AS A BONE'

Golf course superintendents, relieved that the wet season has arrived, are still suffering from three years of drought. "It's getting worse," said Norman Carmouche, superintendent here at the Palma Ceia Country Club. "We're still under the phase three category for restrictions."

Allowed to irrigate fairways only once

a week and greens and tees thrice weekly, Carmouche doesn't anticipate any change. "It's been dry as a bone here for a long time," he said.

"We're an older, more established course, built in 1914," said Carmouche. "We've fared better than most courses in the area because of our shade trees and very little mounding. I played at the TPC



Lake and canal levels in Florida are in critical condition, endangering wildlife.

at Tampa Bay the other day and, with their mounding, they were really burning up there."

'DOWN TO THE BOTTOMS'

Pond levels at Carmouche's course are down six to eight feet. "They're down to the bottoms," he said. "When you see a duck walking across the bottom of a pond, you know they're low."

Hand-watering has increased for many courses here. "We do quite a bit of it on the greens, trying to hit the hot spots,"

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Penn State professor seeks to commercialize Poa annua for golf market

By JOEL JOYNER

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Poa annua has few friends.

And why should it? "It's thought of as a weed, and some people are trying to get rid of it," said David Huff, associate professor of turfgrass breeding and genetics here at Penn State University.

Oddly enough, Huff is trying to develop a strain of Poa that the market might like. "The truth of it is," he said, "it plays a big part in the golfing world, but a superintendent can't go out and buy it if he needs it."

Huff is a staunch advocate of Poa annua putting greens. In his view, its density is greater than that of the newest bentgrasses "by an order of magnitude." In one of his test plots, he has counted as many as 1,360 Poa plants in an area the size of a quarter.

His goal is to provide a product that meets golf course standards. "I hope to have a satisfactory Poa product on the market within five years," he said.

'NUMBER ONE PRIORITY'

After examining about 1,600 strains of Poa annua, Huff and his team have narrowed the candidates down to about 60 strains.

"Two years ago, we decided to make the Poa project our top priority," Huff said. "We now have varieties that have performed very well on some test plots, and this year we're placing some on actual greens to obtain real-world evaluations and observations. We're looking to get it down to about 10 to 12 strains."

Poa is susceptible to pests and diseases and sensitive to heat stresses and

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Survey: 63 percent of courses promote wildlife

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Results of the first comprehensive national survey of U.S. golf course management practices show that golf facilities can be maintained in a manner that is compatible with the environment. Nearly 63 percent of the survey respondents indicated that their golf courses are managed specifically for wildlife.

Conducted under the auspices of the Golf and Environment Initiative, the surveys went to 11,000 superintendents who belong to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

The Golf and Environment Initiative is a consortium of more than 20 golf associations and environmental organizations that have been examining the game's environmental practices since 1995.

"The debate about golf's impact on the environment has been clouded by a lack of complete and nationally aggregated data," said GCSAA president

Tommy Witt. "That has led pro-golf and anti-golf factions to make assertions that can't necessarily be supported by fact."

The survey addressed a number of agronomic and economic issues, including grass types, number of rounds played, length of season and maintenance budgets. "It would be fair to characterize our first effort as solid, but limited," said Witt. "We collected a tremendous amount of information, but not enough to allow for extensive interpretation."



To broaden the coverage to a two-year spread, half the superintendents provided information for 1999 and the rest for 2000. Among the survey findings were these:

- An average golf facility covers 150 acres, with 111.5 of that reflected as managed turf.
- 62.9 percent of the respondents manage their courses specifically for wildlife.

In addition, facilities owned or controlled an average of 100.3 acres of wildlife habitat.

• The most common form of habitat consists of freshwater bodies (found on 78.8 percent of golf courses), deciduous woodlands (67.9 percent), wetlands (51.9 percent), and streams or rivers (48.9 percent).

• Median golf course irrigation water covers 78 acres, or 70 percent of managed turf areas. The national irrigation median is the equivalent of 13.5 inches applied to irrigated areas per year.

• 85.4 percent of golf courses have at least one certified pesticide applicator, with an average of two certified applicators per course.

The GCSAA voluntarily surveyed its members as part of a collaborative effort to build a national database of environmental data for golf courses.

"This is an important step in collecting objective data that both the golf industry and the environmental community can use to evaluate environmental conditions on golf courses," said Paul Parker, executive vice president of the Center for Resource Management.

Florida's water

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Carmouche said. "But it takes a lot of manpower."

Wells were installed at the course in the 1930s. "They're pretty salty now," he added. "There's nothing like a good rainfall."

The Orlando area is dealing not just with drought, but also wildfires. "It seems like half of Florida is on fire," said Earl Leyton, golf course mechanic at the Dubsdread Golf Club in Orlando.

"I've even had a 1,000-acre fire out by my house."

Water bodies in the area are hurting badly, too. "I live over in Clermont," Leyton said, "and there's a chain of lakes out there that's no longer a chain. The rivers are all dried up. Lake waterlines are 300 to 400 feet from the docks. It's really a mess."

POWDER-DRY ROUGHS

Courses in St. Petersburg also are coping with drought stresses. "The course outskirts are basically powder dry," said Dave Kane, assistant superintendent at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort.

"In early March, we got nearly an inch," Kane said, "but then we hadn't had any since January. We're hurting. This is the worst drought period since they've kept records in this area."

The challenges continue to stack up. "Florida has a lot of sandy soil, so what little rain we've gotten so far drains straight down through," said Kane. "We do use effluent, and we can irrigate our greens, tees and fairways okay. But the problem is that the sodium content gets high. We need rain to flush it out."

SUPERS STRIVE FOR FLEXIBILITY

In South Florida, phase two restrictions continue to remain in effect even though rainfall conditions are fair. "Temporarily, we're in great shape," said Randy Randquist, superintendent at the Boca Rio Golf Course in Boca Raton. "Long term, we still have concerns about water restrictions."

"Lake Okeechobee is still real low," he said. "I believe the levels are around nine feet now, which is the lowest it's ever been for this time of year. Our real concern is when we get back into the dry season again — especially if restrictions are still in place. And that really hinges on Lake Okeechobee getting some heavy amounts of rain."

Parts of the 663-square-mile lake have actually caught on fire.

Superintendents in South Florida are negotiating with the SFWMD for more flexibility. "They won't make any changes to phase two restrictions," said Randquist, "but there is some indication that they may rewrite

some rules for a potential phase three situation to offer more flexibility."

Superintendents may be able to better manage when and how often they irrigate their courses. "If we can show a genuine reduction by using flow-meters, they may be more willing to rewrite those rules," Randquist said.

Drought conditions are expected to persist in the Southeast through August. ■

Danneberger launches Superintendents' Korner

By JOEL JOYNER

COLUMBUS, Ohio — T. Karl Danneberger, Ph.D., professor of turfgrass science at Ohio State University, has launched Superintendents' Korner, an Internet site for superintendents in the Midwest.

Located on the OSU Web site, SK is designed to cover issues and developments concerning

turfgrass in the region. Current topics, called "turfnotes," are listed on a regular basis and inform superintendents on both abiotic and biotic stresses that occur throughout the growing season.

"I launched it in April, and I think it has been well received," said Danneberger. "Whenever I make a new posting, I send out an e-mail to those on the SK list."

The site may be viewed at <http://hcs.osu.edu/karl>. Turfnotes published so far this year cover a range of topics, everything from red thread, mushrooms in aerification holes, necrotic ring spot and dandelions. Basal rot anthracnose, take-all-patch and dollar spot on bent/Poa fairways round out the list.



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