



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.

Poa annua

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winter damage, and its diversity complicates the uniformity in growth and color demanded for golf course greens.

"We're looking to eliminate those types of weaknesses," said Huff. "We do have a variety that's resistant to several strains of anthracnose. One Poa strain also has a very good field resistance

to dollar spot. The tests this year will be a key factor. We're also focusing on color."

SEED PRODUCTION

For those who have Poa and rely on it, Huff hopes to offer a tool so they can continue to manage their courses the way they would like. "I've had one guy say, 'More superintendents have kept their jobs because of Poa rather than have lost their jobs because of Poa,'" he said.

Building a market with an abundant supply of Poa products could prove challenging. "It may be quite some time before we solve all the problems with the plant," said Huff. "Probably not in my lifetime. But the biggest single thing holding us back from the marketplace is seed production.

"You just can't go out and harvest the seed with a combine," he said. "That's what all the seed

producers use. They're huge operations, and I don't imagine most would want to harvest Poa as a sort of specialty."

HANDLING NATIVE STRAINS

Kevin Morris, executive director of the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program, in Beltsville, Md., sees other com-



Cup hole filled with Poa on bentgrass test plot

plications. "Poa is unique because there are so many locally adaptive eco-types that it would be difficult for someone to market," he said.

"The problem is marketing a

'The problem is marketing a variety that can overcome and withstand the native varieties of Poa.'

— Kevin Morris

variety that can overcome and withstand the native varieties of Poa," Morris added. "It would be hard to obtain a uniform green that's not invaded by a local Poa with a different strain. Native types may move in and create a splotchy, non-uniform green, just like they do with bentgrass."

That hasn't stopped Colin Boyd. He has been growing Poa annua for the past five years, doing green extensions on as many as 60 golf courses.

"We're doing this because the older-style golf courses—the Oak Hills and the Aroniminks of the world—have Poa annua greens," said Boyd, president of Colin Boyd Turf Industries in New Wilmington, Pa. "We focus on the golf course industry, and strictly greens and tees.

"Our approach is to make it so that the golfer can't tell that we were there, as opposed to using straight bentgrass," he added. "The sod we grow, we hope, helps make our extensions match up well and flow with the rest of the green." ■

PENN STATE STUDENTS RECEIVE GCSAA SCHOLARSHIPS

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Eight students at Penn State's Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program were awarded



scholarships by the GCSAA. The scholars are: Daniel J. Brickley,

R. Geoffrey Brunner, Sean R. Jordan, Toby J. Kiggins, Joshua J. Laughridge and Joseph Maloney. Merit award winners were Aaron J. Baker and Steven T. Craig.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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