GCSAA lowers bar for associates

**By Joel Joyner**

DARIEN, Conn. — The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's board of directors has lowered eligibility requirements for associate members.

"We discussed associate member classification last fall and determined that it was too restrictive," said Tim O'Neill, chairman of the membership committee and superintendent here at the Country Club of Darien.

Under previous guidelines, the only option available for those not at an assistant or class "C" level was to be an affiliate member paying the full membership fee. By easing the restrictions, we figured we could open up the association to more people like mechanics, horticulturists, irrigation technicians and to people who spend a career on a golf course working for superintendents," said O'Neill.

The board reduced annual dues to $125, half of what a superintendent pays. "The purpose wasn't to grow the association," he said. "Will it grow? Hopefully it will, now that it's more affordable."

**EDUCATION NOT ESSENTIAL**

The changes also eliminated educational requirements for associate member status. Having a two-year or four-year degree or a two-year turf certificate was considered too demanding. "On top of that, after July 1, 1999, it was determined that you needed to be a student member or previous student member of the GCSAA," said O'Neill. "We thought that was too restrictive as well."

There are now five parts to the standing rule:

- Individual must be employed within the golf course maintenance profession.
- Associate class members will pay annual dues equal to one half of class "A" membership.
- They will have all the privileges of membership except that of voting and holding office.
- They will be provided a green membership card.
- Associate class member will be required to be employed by and have their application attested by a voting member of the GCSAA.

**EDUCATION DOWNPLAYED**

These changes are currently in effect. "In general, I think it's a very positive move for the association," said Mark Woodward, GCSAA board member and turf manager at the Dobson Ranch and Rivercreek Golf Courses in Mesa, Ariz.

"It allows people who work for superintendents and those interested in turf management and maintenance to become members without having to meet the tough criteria we had before, and at a reduced rate," Woodward said.

The elimination of the educational requirement is not seen as a great loss. "Now, I believe, it's worded as 'Must be interested in golf course management and or growing and production of fine turf grass,'" said Woodward. "I would hope that includes every member of my staff here.

"Reducing the requirement for college education is not a big deal," he said. "I want people who work for me to be interested in this business one way or another. They should be allowed to become members and reap the benefits offered."

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**It pays to check out your pump station piping**

**By Kevin J. Ross**

EDWARDS, Colo. — When I took over as superintendent at the Country Club of the Rockies in 1995, I was delighted to see that the water source for irrigation was the Eagle River. It flowed right through the course. The first time I looked at it, I thought what a bonanza it was.

I decided to install a water treatment system. Accordingly, we budgeted for purchase and installation during the spring of the following season.

**INJECTING THE ACID MIXTURE**

During the installation process, we wired the system to the flange areas. Upon reviewing the water test results, I was slightly concerned about both pH levels and the medium-to-high levels of bicarbonates. After consulting with some water experts, we decided that we'd benefit from the installation of a water treatment system. Accordingly, we budgeted for purchase and installation during the spring of the following season.

**LOOKED LIKE A M*A*S*H UNIT**

By this time, with no rain in 47 days, we were desperate. This past season of 2000, in late August, I went to inspect the pump station. Upon entering the building, I noticed a water leak. We immediately contacted the pump manufacturer to come in and re-weld the bottom area of the flange. The leak was fixed, and we were back in business.

**Penn G-6 Marketing Deal**

On another front, T-Green has

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**Pennington Seed introduces new hybrid Bermudagrass**

MADISON, Ga. — Pennington Seed has released the new Princess-77, the first hybrid Bermudagrass from seed. Princess-77 is the result of a cross between two self-incompatible but cross-fertile Bermudagrass clones. Seed will be sold only from the first generation cross between these two clones.

The result of this cross is a fine-textured, dark green, dense Bermudagrass from seed. "We are excited about what this hybrid offers to our turfgrass accounts," said Russ Nicholson, national sales manager. After two years of testing in the 1997 Bermudagrass NTEP, Princess-77 is the only commercially available seeded Bermudagrass that is in the same statistical category as Tifgreen and Tifton 419, Tifway, Tifgreen and Tifton 328 vegetatively propagated Bermudagrass varieties for turfgrass quality.

"Now, with Princess-77 displaying the quality and performance characteristics, turfgrass managers can have better control over the planting of fine quality turfgrass, rather than having to rely on an outside contractor to establish sod or sprigs," said Charles Rodgers, Ph.D., director of research at Seeds West, in Maricopa, Ariz.