



BRIEFS

ASHWORTH NAMED SUPERINTENDENT AT HERITAGE RANCH

FAIRVIEW, Texas — Western Golf Properties, of Scottsdale, Ariz., has named Monty Ashworth superintendent for the Heritage Ranch Golf & Country Club, located here just north of Dallas. Heritage Ranch, a semi-private Arthur Hills-designed layout, opens this month. It will be the focal point for a 575-acre, active-adult community. Ashworth's previous superintendent position was at the Woodbridge Golf Club in Wylie, Texas, where he also served as assistant superintendent during the construction and growth. Earlier in his career, he served as an inspector with the Texas Department of Agriculture.

DAHIN IN, ANTAYA OUT AT THE MEADOWS COURSE

ALLENDALE, Mich. — Ran Dahlin has been named superintendent at The Meadows at Grand Valley State University here. He replaces long-time superintendent Kathy Antaya, who recently joined the USGA, taking a staff agronomy position at the headquarters in Far Hills, N.J. Dahlin comes to The Meadows from the 36-hole Egypt Valley Country Club, in Ada, Mich., where he had extensive experience in tournament preparation. The Meadows, 15 miles west of Grand Rapids, will host the Division II women's championships next year.

KICKLIGHTER AND PONTIUS MEET GCSAA CERTIFICATION

FT. MEYERS, Fla. — Hampton Kicklighter and Rick Pontius, superintendents with Environmental Golf, have both reached certification status with the GCSAA.

Kicklighter is the new superintendent here at the private, 18-hole Hideaway Country Club. Prior to his new assignment and certification, he served at four East Coast courses, including the Orange Lake Legends and Legends Walk Golf Course, both in Orlando. He also worked at Oyster Reef Golf Club in Hilton Head Island, S.C.

Michigan native Pontius is at the Taylor Meadows Golf Club in Michigan. A second-generation superintendent, he's a graduate of Michigan State University.



Rick Pontius

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 full dues. "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 even 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



Tim O'Neill

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 Riverview 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 turfgrass,'" 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."



Mark Woodward

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. It represents a significant improvement in what has been available on the market and should help simplify turfgrass management where Bermudagrass is adapted," 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 Tifton 419, Tifway, Tifgreen and Tifton 328 vegetatively propagated Bermudagrass varieties for turfgrass quality.

"Now, with Princess-77 displaying the quality of vegetative types, 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.

PENN G-6 MARKETING DEAL

On another front, T-2-Green has

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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 to have a pristine river, fed by high mountain snowmelt, as a ready source for our turfgrass needs.

Even so, I thought it would be prudent to test the water for bicarbonate levels, pH, TDS and other factors that influence irrigation water quality.

After reviewing the water tests, 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.

INJECTING THE ACID MIXTURE

During the installation process, we wired the system to inject the corrective acid mixture only when one or both of our main pumps (VFD 1000gpm each) were running. We didn't want the system running while our pressure maintenance pump was on.

nance pump was on.

At the time, I was quite satisfied with this set-up. Little did we now what would hit us in a few years.

This past season of 2000, in late August, I went to inspect the pump station. Upon entering the building, I noticed some water on the pump skid. It was coming from a pinhole-sized leak in the weld area around the bottom of one of the flange areas.

We immediately contacted our local portable welding service to come in and re-weld the bottom area of the flange. Once the piping was drained and dry, the welder began what we thought would be an easy job and then we'd be back in business.

Boy, were we wrong! The first bead of weld he tried to put on the area created an even larger hole. After a few hours of welding and multiple beads of weld, we ended about back where we started, still with a small leak.

LOOKED LIKE A M*A*S*H UNIT

By this time, with no rain in 47 days, we were desperate. We then applied layer after layer of JB weld, a reactive hardening compound that sets up almost as hard as a weld. Finally, we were able to achieve enough of a seal to get our

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An acid-eaten section of pump station piping

Pump house

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leak down to just a slight drip.

With the need for water on the turf, we decided to live with this and start irrigating. As all superintendents know, when you have pump station problems your sleep value at night drops dramatically. During this period you also tend to visit your pump station once an hour, which we cer-

tainly did.

Two weeks went by and our confidence kept rising. We thought we could make it to the end of the season and address this piping business afterwards. Well, so much for building confidence! Over the next six weeks we developed three different flange-weld leaks, all on the bottom and all similar to the first. Our pump station looked like a M*A*S*H unit by the time win-

terization came due in October.

ACID BURNING HOLES

Now that the dust had settled, it was time to evaluate and research our sudden piping problem. First, let me say that our injection material is a product called *pHAIRWAY*, which is 50 percent urea and 50 percent sulfuric acid. We determined that this material was corroding the welds on the bottom of the flanges.

We figured that as the system

would wind down and shut off, some acid material in the water would accumulate in the piping. The atomic weight of this material is heavier than water and has a tendency to sink to the bottom. This explains why the problems occurred at the bottom of the piping and attacked the welded areas first. The question now was, what to do?

Our solution was two-fold. First, we decided to custom-fit our pump station with stainless

steel. Secondly, we wanted to have our acid injection system kick on only when our flows surpassed 750gpm and shut off when they fall below that level.

Stainless would be the best choice for corrosion protection (HDP was also considered). The on-and-off tolerances for the acid system would allow a sufficient flushing action to clean the piping by the time the pumps shut down. This flushing action would insure that no acid stayed in the lines. ■

Kevin Ross, CGCS, is director of golf course management at Country Club of the Rockies and a regular contributor to Golf Course News.

West Nile virus

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Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and the District of Columbia.

SEVERE CASES ARE FATAL

Scientists aren't sure how West Nile reached North America. First identified in Uganda in the 1930s, the virus has now been found in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Last fall, an epidemic in Israel killed 13 people and infected thousands more. A massive West Nile outbreak hit South Africa in 1974, killing 3,000 people.

Humans contract the illness from the bite of an infected mosquito. According to the CDC, only 20 percent of infected people show symptoms, which resemble those of flu – fever, headache, body aches, swollen lymph glands and sometimes rashes. More severe infection may bring on those symptoms plus stupor, tremors, paralysis, coma and death.

Only one to three percent of people infected with West Nile become seriously ill, and about 10 percent of those cases are fatal, most often from encephalitis, or swelling of the brain. Eight New Yorkers have died from the virus in the last two years. There is no cure.

Those most at risk are the elderly and those with compromised immune systems, such as people with AIDS.

VIRUS RAVAGING WILDLIFE

West Nile is far more lethal to animals than humans. In the eastern United States, it is already ravaging the bird family made up of blue jays, crows and ravens. It's also deadly to an array of mammals, from horses down to chipmunks.

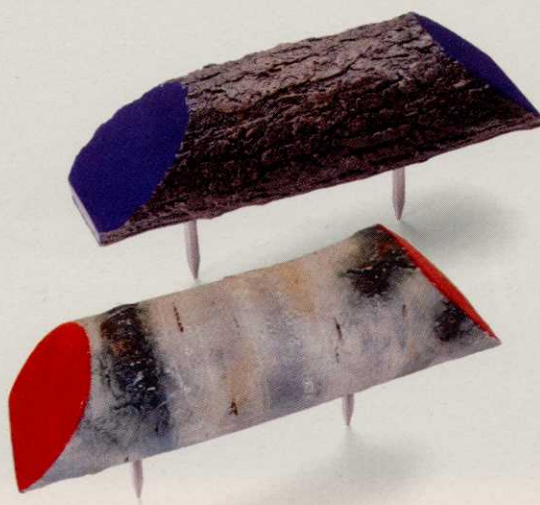
PREVENTING MOSQUITO BITES

To reduce the chance of getting West Nile, the CDC recommends staying indoors at dawn, dusk and early evening. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants whenever you're outside. Apply insect repellent containing 35 percent DEET sparingly to exposed skin. ■

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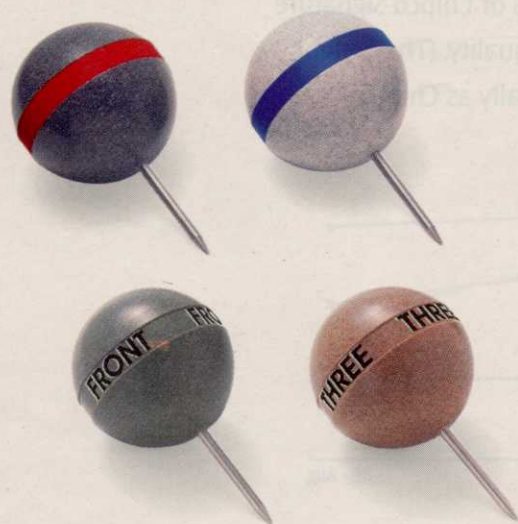
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