



BRIEFS

ENVIRONMENTAL GOLF'S CLAY PUTNAM RECEIVES GCSAA CERTIFICATION

CALABASAS, Calif. — Environmental Golf, a division of Environmental Industries, announced that regional manager Clay Putnam has been certified by the GCSAA. As regional manager, Putnam oversees maintenance operations at golf courses throughout the Northeastern and Great Lakes regions. The Ohio State University graduate holds a degree in turf management. "Clay has demonstrated dedication and a willingness to expand his horizons by pursuing one of the highest levels of professional development in his career," said Dave Hanson, senior vice president of Environmental Golf.



RMRTA CALLS FOR NOMINATIONS

DENVER — The Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Association has announced the opening for nominations for the 2001 Distinguished Service Award and the 2001 Turfgrass Professional of the Year. The awards will be presented at the RMRTA's annual conference and trade show held here at the Colorado Convention Center, Dec. 5-7, 2001. The DSA recognizes individuals for long standing service in the turf industry whereas the turfgrass professional honor acknowledges outstanding contributions to the industry by an individual during the past year. The deadline for nominations is Oct. 19, 2001.

PRITCHETT JOINS PALMER GOLF

ORLANDO, Fla. — Arnold Palmer Golf Management has named Walter Pritchett as superintendent of the Cardinal Club at the University of Louisville in Louisville, Ky. The hiring of Pritchett comes in anticipation of the club's opening this month. The new facility is a joint venture between Palmer Golf and the University Clubs of America. The Cardinal Club is the fourth alumni-themed club in operation and the third club to open this year. Pritchett previously served as the superintendent for the River Bend Links in Robinsonville, Miss.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

EDITORIAL FOCUS: Winter Preparation

Seed companies release new varieties for winter overseeding

By JOEL JOYNER

CORVALLIS, Ore. — This fall, new introductions will be breaking into the winter overseeding market offering golf course superintendents a salt tolerant ryegrass, improved seed blends, and higher quality turfgrasses.

The goal for golf course superintendents, particularly those below the transition zone, is to present a playing surface that's both attractive and enticing to golfers as Bermudagrass goes dormant.

The overseeding market, therefore, is a lucrative one for seed companies, and new products this year aim to bring value to golf courses and golfers alike. Although most seed companies primarily focus on permanent turf, they also have been looking at new ways to ease the golf course superintendent's seasonal challenge to accommodate golfers.

SEED RESEARCH OF OREGON

SR 4500 is the newest perennial ryegrass to be released this year from SRO. "It's going to work better for super-



Skip Lynch

ern end of the overseeding market, it may hang in there a little too long. It has a high endophyte and offers a fairly dark green color. It's a good looking grass with lots of tillers."

A lot of companies sell individual seed components to allow superintendents to make their own blends. SRO has taken that additional step out of the process by offering their own new blends of Champion Fine and Champion Max.

"Champion Fine is a blend of our ryegrass with the SR 5100 chewing's fescue," Lynch said. "It makes a little better playing surface because the ball sits up a little better. The fescue has a much stiffer leaf blade. It transitions very well, and you won't lose any color having the chewings in there."

"The Champion Max blend is basically for greens overseeding," said Lynch. "It has *Poa trivialis* in it, and you can take it down to a very fine mowing height. It has excellent color, is very dark green, and has a quick transition in the spring time."

TURF SEED

Turf Seed is showcasing four new varieties this season: BrightStar SLT is a salt-tolerant ryegrass; Citation Fore which is their highest ranking perennial ryegrass in the latest National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) trials; and two *Poa trivialis* varieties called WinterPlay and

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SR 4500

intendents the further South they are in the United States," said Skip Lynch, technical agronomist. "If they're in the north-

Dormant seeding in the fall provides greater insurance against winter damage

By KEVIN ROSS

There's been a lot of talk over the past several months concerning winter damage on golf courses. High-profile events, such as the 2001 US Senior Open at Salem Country Club in Massachusetts, (which sustained severe turf loss prior to the event), has brought this issue front and center (GCN Aug. 2001).

Winter damage is not a new phenomenon. Many states throughout the northern United States and in large parts of Canada sustain turf loss every year. Each year, many superintendents experience the same agony that superintendent Kip Tyler did this year at Salem CC. However, the work done at Salem CC has spurred much thought on how to prepare your golf course for the dreaded winter months.

THE DORMANT SOLUTION

Dormant seeding is one technique that

has not received much attention. A successful program of dormant seeding can produce spectacular results in the spring, and it is a great insurance policy in the event that any winter damage occurs.

Dormant seeding is done in the fall, after soil temperatures have declined sufficiently, so complete germination will not occur. However, soil temperatures must be sufficient for the initial stages of germination to occur.

The first step in the seed germination process is water absorption. In the second step, the seed undergoes a swelling, which initiates several biochemical and morphological events. This ultimately results in the development of a seedling turfgrass plant.

In dormant seeding, the seed undergoes

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A view of the 15th fairway at the Country Club of the Rockies in April, 2000, following the use of overwinter dormant seed.

Pythium outbreak in the Midwest attacks turf and budgets

By JOEL JOYNER

MORRIS, Ill. — In the last part of July to mid-August here in the Midwest, a heat wave and an extended period of high humidity created ideal conditions for widespread Pythium activity. Several superintendents dealt with the "water mold" in stride after protecting their fairways, greens and tees with a fungicide preventative, but others were forced to pay for their gamble with Mother Nature.

"With the heat wave in Chicago, just about every course had Pythium," said Paul Vermeulen, director with the USGA Green Section in Mahomet, Ill. "We had about four to five weeks of hot and humid weather. There was quite a bit of Pythium in fairways and roughs."

The weather finally broke around mid-August, but before that conditions were pretty tough, said superintendent Pat Norton here at the Nettle Creek Country Club, just southwest of Chicago. "Sometimes superintendents try to save too much money, and I've been guilty of that," he said. "You try to economize a little too much and hope to fly by without getting any Pythium, and then you get hammered."

Greens and tees were treated preventively at the course and survived the outbreak. "I don't really treat fairways preventively," Norton said, "so we had a fair shot of it. I usually do some spot treatments, but this year we

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Colorado resort relies on overseas work force

By JOEL JOYNER

KEYSTONE, Colo. — As labor shortages continued to disrupt golf course maintenance operations this past summer, the River and Ranch golf courses here turned to international recruitment with the H-2B visa program. It worked out so well that



Visa workers at Keystone, left to right, Janella Higgins, Veronica Furze, superintendent Don Petrey, Zoe Jackson, Siobhan Greathead and spray technician Jeremy Fornachien

other courses would be wise to consider bringing in visa workers for next summer, said Steve Corneillier, director of golf courses at the Keystone Resort.

"We were struggling to get enough maintenance people for a single course,"

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Bethpage Black

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Jones donated his services in enhancing the 1936 A.W. Tillinghast design.

Tees and bunkers were rebuilt, some bunkers were restored or moved closer to the greens, and about 250 yards were added to the design during the renovation project.

Even with the makeover, Currier knows that winter weather has the potential to be damaging. The facility, which keeps three or four courses open year round, was hit by as much as 15

inches of snow in a single weekend last winter. "If it snows, we have flooding here," said Currier. "Over New Years weekend, my whole crew was basically monitoring floods."

INITIAL CHALLENGE

Before he arrived at the facility, maintenance practices were limited, according to Currier. "They hardly did anything," he said. "In all fairness, they only had a crew of four or five people."

Currier was recruited from an assistant position at Garden City Golf in Garden City, N.Y. to step up the maintenance program at Bethpage. "We've spent a ton of money on equipment, anywhere from \$250,000 to \$350,000 each year, to upgrade all five courses," he said.

"The crew has also grown substantially," said Currier. "We keep about 50 people on staff for the winter season. We now have a maintenance team that compares to similar facilities."

12 ACRES OF BUNKERS

Currier and his crew will be tackling bunker sand replacement as their biggest project this winter. The layout sports over 12 acres of bunkers.

"The bunkers are enormous here, and they've been contaminated with quite a

few stones in the past few years," Currier said. "Several of them are really steep, and we've had a few bad wash-outs. We'll start work on them this fall and continue until early next spring putting in new sand."

Last winter, the Bethpage facility had about 25 inches of snowfall altogether, according to Currier. "Knock on wood, we didn't have any winterkill last spring," he said. "We had some ice developing for a little while, but we went and verti-drained the areas and broke it up."

"The two previous winters, we had very little snow," said Currier. "Hopefully we'll get that again. It certainly makes it easier. We do a lot of our tree work throughout the winter season as well."

WINTER PREP

Preparations at Bethpage for the upcoming winter include overseeding, aerated turf, and snow mold treatments on the greens. The Black Course was closed for a few days after Labor Day this year to overseed a few fairways that weren't quite where Currier wanted them.

"I also have about five or six acres of sod ordered," Currier said. "We're going to go around and strip off all the high traffic areas around greens and bunkers and resod them."

Currier aerated the greens in August, following the Met Open, and did the roughs and green surrounds in early September. "I'll be topdressing all the fairways this month with a light shot of straight sand," he said. "We've been topdressing them a couple of times each year."

"We'll also be overseeding them this month with ryegrass," said Currier. "We'll go

with bluegrass, though, in our green surrounds. We reseeded all the roughs last fall with rye as well. With the dormant seeding in, we'll pump up the roughs in the spring to get them a bit thicker."

The main focus for Currier this fall will be to get the dormant seed fed well so that the grass comes out in decent shape in the spring.

THE OPEN

The Black Course is shut down every year on Nov. 15, and opened again around April 15. "We'll keep the course open next spring through Memorial Day, and then we'll close it for 13 days prior to the tournament," Currier said. "I imagine the place will be somewhat in disarray."

The Red Course is usually closed Dec. 1 and opened again at the end of March. The Yellow, Blue and Green courses, weather permitting, are played year round.

"The Green and Red courses, holes one and 18 of each, will be established as corporate villages during the Open," said Currier. "The first hole of the Yellow Course will become the driving range. All next spring, our scheduling is going to be a little bit whacked out here. But having those 13 days to set up will be nice." ■

H-2B visas

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Corneillier said. "Last year, I was wondering how we were going to manage 36 holes once the new River Course opened."

Fortunately, the H-2B visa program had been in full swing for a couple of years at the resort's ski mountain to fill positions for lift operators, ski instructors, and food and beverage workers.

"We were able to expand that program, saying, 'Our needs for the summer are just as critical,'" Corneillier said. "Last year was the first time we hosted employees on international visas, and it worked well. This year, it's working great."

KEYSTONE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

Keystone hires about 3,000 individuals each season between summer and winter activities, according to Amy Kemp, communications manager at this scenic resort in the heart of the Rockies. "Out of the 44 people on the golf course maintenance staff this summer, 22 were here on visas," she said.

The training program is one of the best around, according to the River Course assistant superintendent Don Petrey. "We have the GCSAA training videos that we use, and we've developed tests for every piece of equipment we have here," he said.

"Following the tests, trainees stay with the employees until they are both absolutely sure the trainee is comfortable with the equipment," he added.

THE MAINTENANCE GIRLS

The resort recruited several female workers from Australia, New Zealand, Brazil and Argentina for its maintenance staff.

"Every employee we had here speaks English fluently," said Petrey. "The girls were responsible, early for work, and ready to work. It was a refreshing change. They worked hard, listened well and were willing to learn."

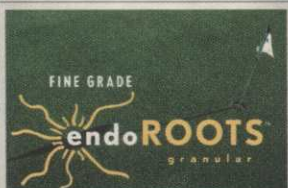
Transportation did not pose a problem. "A few either had or shared cars," said Petrey. "Some relied on mountain bikes to get around, but we also have a shuttle service here."

Keystone also provides housing. "We have dormitory-style housing as well as apartment and management housing for our employees," said Kemp. "We've finished two new buildings this year devoted to employee housing. We can house upwards of 1,300 people."

Visa extensions are possible. "I'm here on a six-month visa, and I've applied for an extension to work through the winter," said Veronica Furze, from Buenos Aires. "It's not hard to get, it's just a matter of waiting for it. We never know when we're going to get approval."

As the season wound down here this year, management at the course will have to wait until next season to see some familiar faces again. "It's going to be hard seeing some of them go," Corneillier said. "That energy and enthusiasm they bring with them - they show up in the morning giggling." ■

Mycorrhiza for Turf



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APPLICATIONS

EndoROOTS is a granular, water-soluble, mycorrhizal fungus that forms a symbiotic relationship with the roots of grasses and other plants. It is used to improve the growth and health of turfgrass and other plants by increasing their ability to absorb water and nutrients from the soil.

EndoROOTS is used in a variety of applications, including:

- **Pre-turfing:** Applying EndoROOTS to the soil before laying down turfgrass to help it establish more quickly.
- **Topdressing:** Applying EndoROOTS to the surface of the turf to improve its health and growth.
- **Seeding:** Applying EndoROOTS to the soil when seeding new areas of turf.
- **Recovery:** Applying EndoROOTS to areas of turf that have been damaged by drought, frost, or other factors to help them recover.

EndoROOTS is a safe and effective product that can be used on a wide variety of plants and in a wide range of environments. For more information, contact your local turf supplier or visit our website at www.endoroots.com.

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