



BRIEFS

BEARD RELEASES NEW EDITION OF TURF MANAGEMENT FOR GOLF COURSES

CHELSEA, Mich. — Dr. James B. Beard, professor emeritus of turfgrass science at Texas A&M University, has released the second edition of *Turf Management for Golf Courses* that has been 20 years in the making. With editorial contributions by USGA agronomists, the new edition is a complete revision offering more than 800 pages of management tools to help golf course superintendents, club managers, owners, architects, green committees, consultants, and builders. The reference is available from Ann Arbor Press, located here, and is published in four-color processing in an oversized format.



Beard's second edition is now available

STEPPICH SIGNS ON WITH IGM

CHAMPIONSGATE, Fla. — International Golf Maintenance announced that Tony Steppich has joined IGM as the Northeast regional manager. His main office will be located in the Philadelphia area where he will be overseeing the day-to-day operations at 13 facilities spanning from Massachusetts, through New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Prior to joining the outsourcing company here, Steppich was the superintendent at the TPC Golf Club of Jacksonville in Jacksonville, Fla.



Tony Steppich

COUSINEAU JOINS CGSA

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO, Canada — Ken Cousineau, CAE, has been appointed the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association's executive director. He succeeds Vince Gillis, CAE, who retired from the post last month. Cousineau has worked for an Ontario-based, not-for-profit organization for the past 14 years and brings with him association management experience, both in managing administrative functions and external relationships with government and stakeholders. He will assume his new duties here as of Feb. 11.

Super ideas: tree recycling, chemical cuts, and a tee blower

By JOEL JOYNER

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Innovative solutions to help save time and money in a maintenance operation is just what golf courses need when the economy starts to turn sour. From self-supporting tree recycling programs to reducing chemical use on the golf course to innovative debris blowers, superintendents John Gurke, Andrew Dalton and Larry Balko have implemented creative solutions that have proven successful at their courses.

TREE PROGRAM

At the Aurora Country Club in Wheaton, Ill., in the Chicagoland area, superintendent John Gurke has developed a tree planting program that supports itself. Located on a small acreage property in a residential area, the club has no room for a landscape waste disposal site, according to Gurke.



John Gurke

"We must recycle all landscape waste on site," he said. "What we've done is start a self-perpetuating tree program, whereby we cut and split all large tree material into firewood and chip smaller material for mulch."

The by-products are then sold to club members — delivered, stacked, and/or spread — for a cost of \$50 per dump truck load. The money is deposited into a new tree fund. "This way, we pay for new plantings with money garnered from dead or removed plantings," Gurke said.

"The labor cost is minimal, and all log splitting and chipping is done from fall to spring on frost mornings when the crew can not get out on the golf course," he



Superintendent Andrew Dalton on the third tee of the Hill course at Copper Hills G&CC.

continued. "It's a win-win situation. We get rid of the material without paying the high price of waste removal, and members get low-priced firewood and mulch. It also works as a nice public relations tool for member-staff relations."

In addition, every year in late October, the course obtains a permit from the Aurora Fire Department to hold a Halloween bonfire/hayride. "We pull a rented hay wagon around the course at night by tractor, with scare stations set up throughout," said Gurke. "The members have dinner at the clubhouse, get on the hayride and meander down to the maintenance area where we light up all unsold and unused firewood. We also include a bar tent, music, and pizzas for the event. It's a great time, and we legally finish off our extra and unsuitable-for-firewood material."

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Bay Hill gets new greens, super

By GARY BURCHFIELD

ORLANDO, Fla. — For 22 years, superintendent John Anderson raised corn and soybeans in north central Iowa before "retiring" to run a golf course in Florida. He took over as superintendent at Bay Hill Oct. 1 when long-time superintendent Dwight Kummer resigned to join a Florida company.

However, it's not all new for Anderson. He has been at Bay Hill for 13 years, the last 11 years as assistant superintendent. He knows the course. He knows the conditions. But now, the buck stops at his desk.

"There is a little extra pressure in March with the Bay Hill Invitational because it's on national TV. I've been through several of them as assistant superintendent, but this will be my first one as the golf course superintendent," Anderson said.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS

With a nationally televised event coming up this spring, Anderson has a big job in front of him. Fortunately, the par-72, 7,207-yard Bay Hill Championship

Course, is in top condition. Anderson recently overseeded the greens with Laser Poa Trivialis and the roughs with Palmer Perennial Ryegrass. Additionally, all 18 greens were re-grassed last summer.

"They were planted with Tifdwarf 11 or 12 years ago, and that grass was about at the end of its natural life," Anderson said. He hired an outside firm to



The new greens mix consisted of 80 percent sand and 20 percent Profile soil amendment.

shave off the old sod and dig out the top four to five inches of soil, to get rid of most of the organic material. They brought in all new soil, a mix of 80 percent sterile sand and 20 percent Profile porous ceramic soil amendment.

After the new soil was in place, they had an outside service fumigate each green, which involved covering the surface with plastic and injecting fumigant to get rid of any soil pests or troublesome organisms. After the treatment, greens were re-sodded in mid-June with new ultra-dwarf TifEagle.

"The TifEagle sod was grown on plastic so it was basically bare roots when we put it down on the new base. It took

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New turf disease hits the Carolinas

By JOEL JOYNER

NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — A new turf disease, tentatively named chytridiomycete, has hit coastal golf courses in the Carolinas. The single-celled organism was devastating to some courses last fall as researchers were just starting to learn about the fungus. So far, the disease has been discovered attacking annual bluegrass, ryegrass and *Poa trivialis*.

There's still debate on what to call the disease. "It's been found out West for the



Advanced symptoms of the chytrid disease on a *Poa annua* green (California).

past five years, but it's new to us here in the Carolinas. It's still new throughout the country," said Dr. Bruce Martin, plant pathologist at Clemson University. "We cannot call it the chytrid which is the slang term that's been going around. One idea is to name it rapid blight. When it is active, it can destroy a green in a week."

The disease currently is found in eight

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Bonita Bay recertified with Audubon Int'l

NAPLES, Fla. — Bonita Bay Club East's two golf courses, The Cypress and The Sabal, recently earned recertification as Audubon International signature sanctuaries.

"Recertification is not automatic, and initial designation is not permanent," said Dennis Gilkey, president and CEO of the Bonita Bay Group. "It is conferred every two years if the developer shows ongoing commitment to the environment."

Each year, a comprehensive report is submitted to Audubon International that details the environmental work done during the previous year. "We present information about projects planned for the next year, our efforts to protect the native wildlife population, and our work to limit pesticide use," said Jim Schilling, director of golf course operations here at the facility.

The report also addresses ongoing habitat enhancement and educational programs that teach club members and the community at large about the environment, course maintenance and the ways golf courses can be good neighbors.

GOING NATIVE

During 2000, the club replaced a total of two acres of golf course turf with native grasses and natural vegetation, enhanced an acre of habitat and natural areas near the golf courses and eliminated 15 sprinkler heads and adjusted 50 more, resulting in additional irrigation water savings.

"The most recent 2001 project removed 29,500 square feet of grass that needed

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Super ideas

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REDUCING PESTICIDE PURCHASES

Superintendent Andrew Dalton at the Copper Hills Golf and Country Club in Oxford, Mich., just north of Detroit, has reduced his pesticide purchases by roughly 80 percent. The facility is a 27-hole, upscale, semi-private golf club. Dalton maintains Providence bentgrass greens and fairways and

Penncross bentgrass tees.

"Having many wooded areas, wetlands and fields, I tried to develop a conscientious maintenance program that consists of natural and organic fertilizers," said Dalton. "By using these types of products in my fertilizer program, I've been able to minimize fungicide applications. I have reduced pesticide purchases by about 80 percent which ultimately saves my club roughly

\$20,000 annually."

During his three years at Copper Hills, Dalton has only sprayed fairways for diseases and pests once during the growing season. "I'm not saying that I don't get disease. But when I do see it, it's a few spots here and there. Quite frankly, it's not worth our time, effort and money to treat it unless it goes beyond our threshold levels," he said.

A big savings for the club was

not spending a dime last season on fungicides, said Dalton. "I had some fungicides in storage from the previous year that helped protect the greens and tees," he said.

Dalton primarily uses organic fertilizers NatureSafe by Griffin Industries and Soil Synergy by the Sanctuary Co. Since implementing the program back in 1999, the benefits continue to grow each year. "We bought a Lely spreader, mounted it to a



An aerial view of the ninth hole on the Hill course at Copper Hills

tractor we had, and spread the organic material ourselves. Every year we save more and more money," he said.

REDESIGNING OLD EQUIPMENT

Larry Balko, superintendent at the Heatherwood Country Club here in Birmingham, Ala., was faced with the challenge of removing debris from the tops of elevated tee boxes. "In the fall, leaves are falling faster than we can blow them off," he said.

Balko's mechanic, Gary Dalton, searched the maintenance shop and discovered an old Billy Goat blower that had a broken handle. "He cleaned out the old gas, changed the oil, and it fired up with the first pull," explained Balko. "He then removed the broken handle and mounted it on the

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Scott O'Grady is an inspiration. As an Air Force fighter pilot he was shot down over Bosnia. He shares with his audience the ingenuity that kept him alive in enemy territory for six days. He brings audiences to their feet as he shares the tools of courage, faith, and innovative thinking that are crucial to success in business and in life.



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Bonita Bay

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watering at the entrance to Bonita Bay Club East and replaced it with cord and muhly grasses and other natural materials," said Schilling. "We took 20 sprinkler heads offline and reduced maintenance costs at the same time."

As part of the community education requirements, Bonita Bay Club East is presenting 13 programs to Laurel Oaks elementary school groups, is a partner with the Lee County Work Skills program, and is the host this season for two groups of high school students learning about golf course operations as a career opportunity.

"All the Audubon-related projects we schedule are suggested by members and supervisors of the grounds maintenance team," Schilling added. "The entire team is committed to environmental enhancements and the Audubon International principles. The proof is in the results."

Bonita Bay Club East in North Naples is the off-site golf club of the private Bonita Bay Club in Bonita Bay, the 2,400-acre flagship master-planned community being developed by the Bonita Bay Group. Bonita Bay Club offers a total of five golf courses, all Audubon sanctuaries. ■