Why is Penncross the Most Widely Used Bentgrass in the World?

- After more than 50 years, Penncross is still the most widely used bentgrass, recognized by superintendents worldwide for its superior standards and unmatched traits.
- The aggressive stoloniferous growth of Penncross fills in divots on tees and landing areas quickly, maintaining a beautiful, functional playing surface.
- Its strength and disease resistance are legendary, with outstanding Dollar Spot resistance and the ability to perform consistently in heat, cold or drought.
- Penncross offers an excellent playing surface for tees, fairways and greens when maintained properly.
- Penncross creeping bentgrass should be a dominant part of every fairway blend.
FEATURES

Superintendent profile

MATCHMAKER EXTRAORDINAIRE
Jerry Faubel, former GCSAA president and Bruce Williams' partner in Executive Golf Search, discusses the state of the job market for superintendents.

Career management

LEARNING THE ROPES
Internships are critical experiences for turfgrass students beginning their careers.

Irrigation management

WATER PRESSURE
Many superintendents face challenges when dealing with restrictions and cost.

Turfgrass management

DIGGING IN THE DIRT
Knowing your soil's physical condition is the key to plant health.

Turfgrass management

FINE-TUNING TURF
Superintendents adjust integrated plant management programs to improve conditions.

Industry resources

RELIABLE RESOURCES
Chemical manufacturers support superintendents and the industry in various ways.

Course renovation

WHAT LIES BENEATH
A subsurface air and drainage system and a ceramic soil mix improve greens at a Chicagoland club.

Golfer relations

MYTH BUSTED
A New England superintendent tests flagsticks to see how they react when golf balls hit them.

Product features

PLAYING ROUGH AT OAKMONT
Superintendent leaves nothing to chance, even outside the fairways.

MAKING AMENDS
Illinois superintendent uses natural resources as soil amendments.
"Here at Merion Golf Club, our members are passionate about golf and the condition of our course, so we have an active Poa annua management program. We rely on Cutless 50W because it is highly effective in reducing Poa annua infestations in bentgrass fairways. My experience with Cutless 50W is that it is less disruptive on the bentgrass, while being highly effective in reducing Poa annua populations. In addition to bentgrass conversion, Cutless 50W also provides labor savings by reducing our mowing requirement.”

Matt Shaffer
Director of Golf Course Operations
Merion Golf Club, Ardmore, PA

"Poa annua invades bentgrass fairways and greens often out-competing bentgrass and other desirable grasses, eventually becoming the dominant turf species. Cutless 50W turf growth regulator can help you fight this encroachment, and shift the competitive advantage back to your desirable turfgrass. Unlike some plant growth regulators, Cutless 50W constricts the Poa annua but is gentle on desirable grasses such as bentgrass, allowing the bentgrass to grow and establish in the constricted Poa annua colonies. So free your bentgrass and squeeze the Poa annua out of your fairways and greens. Use Cutless 50W, the Poa Constrictor!

For more information about Cutless 50W turf growth regulator, call 1-800-419-7779 or visit our web site at www.sepro.com.

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**LET'S MAKE A DEAL**
CNL Income Properties intends to acquire 28 U.S. golf course properties from affiliates of American Golf Corp. The purchase is part of a combined transaction with Evergreen Alliance Golf Limited and American Golf in which EAGLE is purchasing 14 additional courses from American Golf.

**HEAVY TRAFFIC TIPS**
Find out how the staff at Rancho Park Golf Club in Los Angeles keeps the course playable and alleviates the stress that comes with more than 100,000 yearly rounds.

**ONLINE POLL: GROW-IN EXPERIENCE**
As a golf course superintendent, do you wish to have more grow-in experience? Visit the GCI home page to vote in this online poll.

**DIGITAL LIBRARY**
You can view last year’s digital issues of Golf Course Industry any time you want on DVD. The digital library contains all the 2006 issues on one disc. The DVD is available at the online bookstore – www.golfcourseindustry.com/store.

**EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT:**
Golf Course Industry reports on and analyzes the business of maintaining golf courses, as well as the broader business of golf course management. This includes three main areas: agronomy, business management and career development as it relates to golf course superintendents and those managers responsible for maintaining a golf course as an important asset. Golf Course Industry shows superintendents what's possible, helps them understand why it's important and tells them how to take the next step.
BUILD A BRAND

During my travels the past couple years, I've heard several speakers talk about branding and the importance a brand has in the success of a business. They've lectured about brand development and how it helps manufacturers, distributors and even magazines like this one. Building a brand helps identify the value of a business, and if a brand is well known, it's supposed to make selling for that business much easier. That, in turn, makes the business more profitable — the obvious goal of all businesses.

A brand helps enhance marketing positions, allows companies to set premium pricing, builds market loyalty and differentiates a business from its competitors. A brand has value, and sometimes part of that value is intangible. Marketing professionals say small companies, even a single golf facility, can build a brand. A brand not only includes the product you offer (e.g., the best-conditioned golf course for your dollar), but services as well. And every person who works at a golf facility is part of those product and service components of a brand. In golf, your brand is an experience because the only thing a golfer can take with him when he leaves the course is items from the pro shop, but that's not the main reason why golfers come to your facility to begin with. It's not the main reason for the business. The course is.

The keys to building your brand are: having a committed focus, recognizing your core competencies and values, consistently delivering your product and services, and providing an atmosphere for pleasant golf experiences. Ultimately, the brand helps your customers build confidence in your business because they know what to expect.

As a golf course superintendent, being in contact with the golfers at your course daily is part of building your facility's brand. Explaining to golfers why course conditions are the way they are and finding out what they prefer improves their experience. If your greens are being aerated, do you let golfers know? Do you explain why they're being aerated? Aside from course conditioning, which is the most common way for you to help differentiate your course from others, do you help build your facility's brand and improve golfers' experiences by recommending various types of services to offer customers (babysitting, shoe cleaning and car washes are examples)? Even if you can't actually implement those services because you're busy maintaining the golf course, see it to your ideas to better the facility are presented.

Brands such as Apple, McDonald's, Coca-Cola and Mercedes are some of the most recognized brands in the world. Golf facility examples include Augusta, Pinehurst, Bandon Dunes and Pebble Beach. Analyze those facilities' operations to see if there's something you can glean from them to adapt to your operation and market. Keep in mind you don't have to be known nationally to have a well-respected, strong brand.

Does your golf facility have a brand identity in your local or regional market? If so, can it be strengthened? What are you doing to help build your facility's brand? Are other managers, such as the golf pro and general manager, doing their part? Are you all on the same page regarding the need to build brand awareness to better your business? If not, maybe it's time to sit down and define your brand and execute a plan to develop it. By doing so, your facility might not suffer as much during difficult economic times and might outperform competitors during healthy times. A strong, well-defined brand betters business. So be aggressive and innovative and help define or improve your facility's brand. You'll be better off for it. GCI
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DECEMBER 2007

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 4 - 6
NEW JERSEY GREEN EXPO TURF AND LANDSCAPE CONFERENCE
Taj Mahal
Atlantic City, N.J.
Call 973-812-6467, or visit www.njturfgrass.org.

Dec. 4 - 6
OHIO TURFGRASS CONFERENCE & SHOW
Greater Columbus (Ohio) Convention Center
Call 888-683-3445, or visit www.ohioturfgrass.org.

Dec. 4 - 6
ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGIONAL TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION
Holiday Inn – Denver International Airport
Call 303-770-2220, or visit www.rmrta.org.

Dec. 9 - 11
28TH INTERNATIONAL IRRIGATION SHOW
San Diego Convention Center
Call 703-536-7080, or visit www.irrigation.org.

Dec. 18 - 19
HEARTLAND GREEN INDUSTRY EXPO
Overland Park (Kan.) Convention Center
Call 816-321-1660, or visit www.hagcsa.org.

Jan. 7 - 9, 2008
GREAT LAKES TRADE EXPOSITION
(MICHIGAN TURFGRASS CONFERENCE)
Devo’s Center
Grand Rapids, Mich.
Call 517-321-1660, or visit www.michiganturfgrass.org.

Jan. 21-23, 2008
IOWA TURFGRASS CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW
Iowa State Center
Ames, Iowa
Call 515-232-8222, or visit www.iowaturfgrass.org.

Jan. 23-25, 2008
GEORGIA GREEN INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION WINTERGREEN EXPO AND WINTERSCHOOL CONFERENCE
Classic Center
Athens, Ga.
Call 706-632-0100, or visit www.ggia.org.

Jan. 31 - Feb. 2, 2008
GOLF INDUSTRY SHOW
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Fla.
Call 800-472-7878, or visit www.golfindustryshow.com.

Feb. 4 - 8, 2008
TURFGRASS PRODUCERS INTERNATIONAL’S MIDWINTER CONFERENCE
Caribe Royale Hotel
Orlando, Fla.
Call 847-649-5555, or visit www.turfgrassod.org.

Feb. 25 - 28, 2008
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA TURF CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW
Monroeville (Pa.) Expo Mart
Call 877-326-5996, or visit www.paturf.org.

Feb. 29 - March 4, 2008
CANADIAN GOLF SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION’S 59TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL TURFGRASS CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW
Telus Convention Centre
Calgary, Alberta
Call 905-602-8873, or visit www.golfsupers.com.

Contact Heather Wood, Web editor, at hwood@gie.net, to submit event information for the magazine or Web site.
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Getting a head start

The road to becoming a superintendent these days usually involves much more than obtaining a degree and typing a resume. Assistant superintendents are looking to differentiate themselves from their peers, and that's where Green Start Academy comes in. The program, hosted by John Deere Golf & Turf and Bayer Environmental Science, was held recently in Clayton and Fuquay-Varina, N.C., for the second year and brought veterans to those who are still green in the industry.

Participant Adam Warring, assistant superintendent at The Links at Bodega Harbour in California, was looking for such an advantage. He was recommended by his superintendent, Brian Morris, and wrote an essay to gain acceptance into the program. Warring was one of about 80 attendees participating in the two-day program, which was jam-packed with activities and information, he says.

The itinerary included a virtual tour of the Bayer research facility in Clayton, a tour of the John Deere Turf Care facility in Fuquay-Varina and sessions with professionals from the industry, including representatives from Bayer, John Deere, North Carolina State University, the USGA, the GCSAA and superintendents.

“It teaches assistant superintendents the new things going on in the industry,” says Matt Armbriester marketing manager at John Deere's golf segment and one of the lead organizers of the program. “It's very dynamic; things are changing all the time. If they can learn more, they can manage their staff and resources better. They can learn a lot from meeting and talking to other people who are in the same boat.”

The content of the program will be tweaked a little each year to keep the information relevant, Armbriester says. One of the sessions focused on water management, which is becoming more of an issue as that resource becomes more scarce. Throughout the program, none of the content was geared specifically to John Deere or Bayer products, Armbriester says.

The most valuable part of the program for Brett Ziegler, assistant superintendent at Knollwood Club in Lake Forest, Ill., was the opportunity to network and learn from industry veterans such as Bruce Williams, CGCS, of the Los Angeles Country Club and Bob Farren, CGCS, of Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina.

While Warring says this type of program can help give assistant superintendents a competitive edge, he's frustrated by the seemingly impossible task of breaking into the superintendent realm.

"The information was good, but if anything, I would have liked to have gotten more advice as far as an assistant superintendent trying to move up to a superintendent position," he says.

Warring has searched for open superintendent positions but doesn't find it to be promising.

“Typically, on 95 percent of the job postings for superintendents, line one says you must have previous superintendent experience,” he says. “What the hell are you supposed to do?”

Ziegler, 24, concedes that it seems to be more difficult to become a superintendent than it used to be, but says it's attainable. His goal is to become a superintendent in the next five years. Programs like the Green Start Academy can help his chances, he says.

“I'm not going to say that if you went to this you're ready to become a superintendent, but at least it opened my eyes a little bit as far as the things I need to do to take that next step,” Ziegler says.

The program will proceed next year based on survey responses from this year's participants, Armbriester says. – Heather Wood