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Making the Rounds

1. During the trade show, Nufarm Americas enlisted the help of an unlikely ambassador to help promote its new product, Triplet Low Odor.

2. Jimmy Kidd (far left) and Steve Johnson (far right), who both work at Sandy Lane Golf Club in Barbados, spent some quality time at Floratine’s big bash, which was attended by many superintendents. “It’s our way of thanking our friends for the privilege of allowing us to assist them in their efforts,” said Floratine President Bill Byrnes.

3. BASF Professional Turf took a Las Vegas-theme approach to the show. Here, Winnercomm’s Chris Barricks (left) and BASF Marketing Manager William Strickland (right) watch the Wheel of Turf spin with a show attendee.

4. Trent Bouts, communications director for the Carolinas GCSA, lines up a precarious putt during Bayer Environmental Science’s Media Putt-Putt Invitational.

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Jack joked of rumors going around that he was so old he played with Old Tom. This made us think even more that he should have received the award long ago.

Better late, we guess.

No secrets

The big secret is that there should be no secret at all. That was a major theme — and it came through loud and clear — during the seminar, “The Secrets of Expert Irrigation Installers.”

Irrigation contractors stressed to a packed room of superintendents how important it is to communicate what they’re doing during renovations to golfers and players. And a big part of that responsibility lies with superintendents.

Bill Bartels of Tanto Irrigation stressed the importance of communicating to golfers what contractors are doing on the golf course and why. He advised superintendents to take photographs of an irrigation installation and post them in the clubhouse for all to see. “Then golfers will know what they’re going to see...
when they get out on the course,” Bartels noted.

The more superintendents prepare their courses’ members and golfers about what will happen during an irrigation renovation, the better off they’ll be in the understanding department, Bartels said.

Chris Soltis of Soltis Golf said superintendents shouldn’t sugarcoat to members and golfers what will happen to their golf courses during an irrigation renovation. Courses will be torn up. “It’s open-heart surgery,” he said, “not blemish control.”

Soltis advised superintendents never to rush — or let others rush them — an irrigation renovation to completion. He stressed the importance of a “real-time” calendar and schedule.

**Nothing but a good tine**

Aware that the Country Club of the Rockies was only the fourth course in the United States to use Penn A-4 bentgrass on all 18 of its greens, its certified superintendent, Kevin Ross, had immediate worries about thatch.

“Not really so much because of the cultivar itself, but at our elevation (7,500 feet) our climatic conditions are quite difficult to deal with,” said Ross, who spoke during the first Innovative Superintendent Session. “So once we went with the Penn A-4, we had to be pretty proactive in our approach to thatch management.

“One of the reasons we redid the greens initially (in 1996) was because of a thatch problem. And I didn’t want to tell the board of directors, after spending $1.5 (million) in renovation, that we were going to redo them in another six or eight years because of thatch.”

Based on the USGA Green Section premise that 15 percent to 20 percent of surface area should be removed or impacted per year, Ross touched on several ways to meet that goal, with an emphasis on knowing exact tine sizes.

“All tines are certainly not created equal,” Ross said. “Different companies’ tines have different specs, and that’s up to you to decide which tines to use.”

Compounding the matter, a five-eighths of an inch tine doesn’t make a five-eighths of an inch hole, Ross said. And the Green Section claim does not distinguish between the inside and outside diameters of a tine hole.

“The inside diameter is the true size of a plug removed,” Ross clarified.

**A time to play**

Certified Superintendents Michelle L. Frazier and Andrea C. Bakalyar, and Sherry Greene of the LPGA Foundation led a Women’s Forum.

Bakalyar, superintendent of The Wee Course at Williams Creek in Knoxville, Tenn., said she plays her course at least two times a week: once with the course architect and once with the green committee chairman. She said she relies on those games to help her build relationships with these key

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people. What she learns about her course while doing so also increases her standing with her board members, who now consider her their agronomic professional who knows their course better than anyone else.

"Playing your own course two or three times a week, on top of working 60 hours a week, might seem like a lot, but it will be integral to the success of your course and to your own professional success," Bakalyar said. "The game of golf itself is the key to your professional success because it builds relationships."

Completing their chores promptly

At Riverside Country Club in Bozeman, Mont., the workweek starts with a Big Gulp of responsibility. As part of their "7-Eleven Program," certified superintendent Dean Krob and his staff aim to complete seven different operations on each of 18 greens by 11 a.m. every Monday.

It isn’t easy, but there is incentive.

"As the staff likes to say, 11 a.m. is when the kitchen opens for lunch," Krob said during the Innovative Superintendents Session.

What takes place before lunchtime is a smorgasbord of duties. "And we’re fortunate to have the golf course closed until 10 a.m. every Monday to complete this program or any other program we deem necessary," Krob said.

A typical Monday morning transpires in this fashion, according to Krob:

Spiking: "We can complete all 18 greens and the putting green in about an hour and 30 minutes and you can easily incorporate doing your collars and approaches."

Verticutting: "The material removed from verticutting and viewing the green surface up close are just a few of the factors we utilize in determining whether we'll single- or double-cut the greens after verticutting. We also like to take into account how much clippings we remove after the first mowing."

Single- or double-cutting: "If we only single-cut, then we follow-up with our greens roller."

Ultralight topdressing: "We maintain an application rate of one-third to one-half cubic yard of sand per 5,000 square feet every seven to 10 days. We strive for a very even distribution pattern. It might not look like a lot, but when you’re doing it every seven to 10 days, it really adds up."

Show Scuttlebutt

What we heard, saw and experienced.

Also, some awards you might not have heard about

By Craig F. Zellers

The rumor mill was spinning during the Golf Industry Show, the first trade show to feature several associations, most notably the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA). All the talk pointed to next year’s show in New Orleans, where several other related golf industry associations will reportedly join the GCSAA’s trade show. Included in the mix are:

- Consolidated Range and Ball Picker-Upper Association of America;
- Golf Caddies International Association;
- Affiliated Golf Course Dishwashers Union of Slovenia;
- Weekend Bunker Edging Crew of the Western States; and
- Golfing Environmental Activists of the World.

Reportedly, the new name of the show is: The Golf Industry & Affiliated Interest Groups and all others Trade Show.

By the way, for those of you who were actually working on the trade-show floor and missed the opportunity to visit nearby Disneyland, there were some similarities between the two locations:

- A hamburger and soda set you back about $11.
- Some vendors were accused of having “Mickey Mouse” products.
- Trying to see the show, watch the green being built and attend the seminars led some to believe they were riding on a rollercoaster.

A lot of awards were given out during the show for distinguished, environmental responsibility, etc. But I bet you didn’t hear about these awards:

Work-the-Room Trophy — Awarded to the superintendent who schmoozed the most invitations to corporate cocktail parties.

Drool Award — Given to the superintendent who walked the entire showroom but whose club always buys used equipment.

We-De-Need-Slinking-Badges Award — To the superintendent with the most amount of badges hanging down from his name badge. (I counted seven on him.)

Shoe-Shine Award — Given to the young superintendent from Arkansas who went...
They Built It . . .
And They Came

The “Building of the Green” in the middle of the convention center was one of the highlights of the Golf Industry Show.

Craig F. Zellers is a Toro Golf Irrigation sales representative for Turf Star in California. In a previous life, he was a superintendent.

back to the Ewing Irrigation booth for a shoeshine a total of 13 times.

**Ingenuity Award** — Presented to all of those who test drove the electric cars on the track simply because they were tired and thought it was a nice place to rest for a spell.

**Worst-Dressed Award** — To all those who wore tennis shoes with sport coats and ties. And give yourself another award for choosing to look funny rather than suffer with the masses.

**Most-Disparaging-Words Award** — Overheard by observers standing at the ropes where the green was built in three days, and earned by a green committee chairman, who commented: “I don’t understand why these guys can’t do this in two days. And they should have had it rolling to a 12 on the Stimpmeter by Saturday morning.”

**Yak Award** — Given to the superintendent who spent the entire three days on the floor talking with old friends and not seeing one piece of equipment.

**Fool-the-Boss Trophy** — Awarded to the superintendent who dressed up (and out of character) because his owner was with him.

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_Bayer Environmental Science_
The Envelope...Please!

By Thomas Skernivitz
Managing Editor

Sports Illustrated had to be thinking of
guys like me when it decided to
paste Rick Reilly's weekly column
on its last page. I scan magazines the way
Quentin Tarantino spun "Pulp Fiction." I
make it to more Pampered Chef parties
than tables of contents.

Reilly, on the other hand, definitely was-
't thinking of me during the summer of
1987. In response to fan mail from some
other aspiring sports reporter at Bowling
Green State University, he reciprocated
with a personal (type-written, no less) letter.
But the note missed its intended receiver
and wound up in my hands.

Eighteen years later, as I reported from
the Golf Industry Show in Orlando, I finally
decided to share Reilly's misdirected
words of encouragement because:

a) Reilly was here, too. Syngenta Pro-
   fessional Products, realizing that Reilly is
   "one of the funniest humans on the planet;"
   according to the New York Daily News,
   wisely enlisted the author of "Who's Your
   Caddy?" to share top billing with Shamu at
   the company's Sea World gala;

b) his message to my former BGSU
colleague still holds saltwater and ap-
plies just as well to superintendents as
journalists; and,

c) it was time to come clean with
Reilly's legitimate pen pal, who up until re-
cently, had never seen or heard of the
note, which went like this:

---

Denver
July 31, 1987

Dear Matt:

How about if you have my job only on
certain occasions? Such as two weeks ago
in Scotland, when it rained and blew and
hail all over for a week straight at the
British Open and they lost my luggage and
my hotel was 40 miles out of town on the
wrong side of the road, etc. THEN you
wouldn't want my job.

Anyway, I read your clips and found
them to be pretty good. You're cocky as
hell, but I guess I was probably that bad,
too, in college. I don't have any doubt that
you'll make it to a big paper or magazine. Of
course, the question is if YOU have any
doubt about it. You mustn't. I know a guy
who wrote 102 letters and sent 102 pack-
ets of clips out before he finally got a low-
level job with the Colorado Springs Sun.
He hung in and hung in and finally got his
foot in the proverbial door. Now he's a
columnist in Oklahoma City and he's only
been writing for five years.

Does this sound like a halftime
speech? Don't give up. Write all the time —
for ANYBODY that will print you — for
cheap. Anything to get good clips. (By the
way, I think you need more variety in your
clips — not so much hockey.) Anyway,
write anywhere and everywhere, no matter
how small. All that matters is that your clips
are good and diverse. Nobody cares where
as much as how.

Here's hoping this reaches you some-
time this year.

Best,
Rick Reilly

---

The bad news, of course, is that I
missed that "sometime this year" deadline
the way Nuke LaLoosh juuuuust missed
the outside corner. Only right before the
GIS show did I finally try to track down
Matt, who, back when the Mile High City
postmark was fresh, had already gradu-
ated and split northwest Ohio forever.

Now the good news: The guy that
none other than Rick Reilly thought was
good enough to make it... made it. Matt
Winkeljohn, my old college buddy,
informed me that he is now the Atlanta Fal-
cons beat writer for the Atlanta Journal-
Constitution.

He started small, literally,
having worked his way up from the agate
page of the AJC sports section. He
moved on to cover Southeastern Confer-
ence football. And somewhere along the
way he must have dumped hockey.

As for my 18-year delay in forward-
ing the Dear Winkeljohn letter, I'll para-
phrase its author and just hope that Matt
doesn't care "when" as much as
"how." And, besides, all's well that ends
well, right? That certainly seems to work
for Sports Illustrated.
Dragging greens: “We’re not putting down that much sand, so it doesn’t take much to go once over the greens.”

Greens roller: “We’ve found that rolling is not only beneficial after all this is done, we’ve found that it is very effective in working the sand down into the canopy of the grass.”

Spraying/watering: “After all the abuse we’ve done to the green, we give it a light watering and it sure helps out.”

Salt of the turf

With courses in many areas of the country forced to switch to effluent for irrigation, the amount of salt and nutrients in that irrigation water has potential to cause problems.

In a tag-team presentation on salt-affected turfgrass sites, Robert Carrow of the University of Georgia and Ron Duncan of Turfgrass Ecosystems in San Antonio, Texas, analyzed the strategy to handle salt-affected grass during a seminar.

“The biggest fear is loading the soil with solids,” Duncan explained. “Remember, that’s how the Great Salt Lake and the Salton Sea got started.”

The answer is managing the salts along with the turf. It requires frequent soil testing, water testing and a realization that each location will react differently to nutrient-loaded water.

“You have to re-examine your maintenance programs, your aeration practices, the amendments that you use,” Duncan continued. “All of those practices have to be designed to the water quality that goes down in the irrigation.”

‘Gold mines of the west’

There are 33 Indian golf resort-casinos in 15 states, with seven more under construction and 11 more in the conceptual stage. Mike Skenandore’s message to superintendents at the Tribal Golf Forum on was clear: Keep these “gold mines of the West” thriving and look for ways to further develop your own tribe-owned golf courses for the sake of the Native American people.

“This results in increased revenue, a decrease in unemployment of the Native American people, and a higher feeling of self-worth,” said Skenandore, a Native American and superintendent of Wanaki Golf Course in Menomonee Falls, Wis.

Skenandore emphasized that Native Americans are the neediest minority in America, having the highest unemployment rate and lowest education rate. Therefore, they are the most in need of the new economic opportunities expanded golf course operations could bring.

“No longer can casinos be considered the ‘lion’s share’ of tribal revenue,” Skenandore said. “High-end golf courses must be paired with casinos in the event of political uncertainty with gaming compacts.”

The way to get there?

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On the Run

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- develop a plan;
- apply for grants (such as a First Tee grant); and
- talk to other facilities to learn about their successes/failures.

For good of the game

Four topics of discussion were on the table at the United States Golf Association's Green Section Education Program held Feb. 11: the environment, green speed, organic fertilizers and distance control.

Environment: Kimberly Erusha, the Green Section's director of education, emphasized that environmental issues are here to stay, and that superintendents need to ask themselves questions such as: 1) Do I have a written environmental plan? 2) Does my maintenance facility need to be updated? 3) Do I have buffer zones around my water features?

The USGA also urged superintendents to document their environmental efforts and share their message with the public.

Green speed: Larry Gilhuly, director of the Green Section's Northwest Region, and agronomist Matt Nelson teamed to pose the question, "Are fast greens..."
ruining the game?” The answer was yes, if you consider that fast greens: 1) slow the pace of play, 2) eliminate interesting hole locations, 3) slow recovery from hallmarks, and 4) invite more turf stress from diseases and insects.

They emphasized that 9-foot to 10-foot Stimpmeter speeds were adequate for the “average” golfer and would allow for more enjoyment of the game.

**Organic fertilizers:** Stan Zontek, director of the Green Section’s Mid-Atlantic Region, cleared up some misconceptions about organic fertilizers. “They’re not bad products, but they’re also not wonder products,” he said. Tips he offered to superintendents: 1) develop a buyer's checklist, 2) determine the products' strengths and weaknesses, and 3) determine whether or not the product is cost-effective for the result you desire.

**Distance control:** USGA President Fred Ridley opened his talk on the controversial topic of distance control by saying, “Equipment issues are complex, and there are no simple answers.” The increase in average driving distance on the PGA Tour from 260 yards to 286 yards from 1993-2003 is the result of several factors, he said, including greater athleticism, improved golf balls and the use of launch monitors. Measures have been taken to control distance, however, and there has been no increase in the PGA Tour's driving distance average since 2002. “If more increases occur,” Ridley said, “the USGA will take action to protect the game.”

**Back to all that walking**

While we were walking those many miles in the convention center and up and down Universal Boulevard, we kept humming songs with the word “walk” in them. Before we walkout on this report, we’d like to leave you with our list of the Top 10 songs on strolling. A Ringo Starr-like drum roll please …

10. “Walking in Memphis” — Marc Cohn;
9. “Walk On By” — Dionne Warwick;
8. “Don't Walk Away Renee” — The Left Banke;
7. “Walk the Line” — Johnny Cash;
6. “Walk On” — U2;
5. “Walking on the Moon” — The Police;
4. “Walking Down the Line” — Bob Dylan;
3. “Walking on Sunshine” — Katrina and the Waves;
2. “Walk Like An Egyptian” — The BANGLES; and
1. “Walk This Way” — Aerosmith.

**Congratulations Are in Order**

Congrats to Seth Strickland, superintendent of Miami (Fla.) Shores Country Club, who shot a 1-under-par 71 on the International Course at ChampionsGate Golf Club to cap off a two-day performance of 4-under-par 140 to win the GCSAA Golf Championship.

Congrats to new president Tim O’Neill, certified superintendent at the Country Club of Darien (Conn.); and new vice president Sean A. Hoilehan, certified superintendent of Wildhorse Resort Golf Course in Pendleton, Ore.; and new secretary/treasurer Ricky D. Heine, certified superintendent/general manager of The Golf Club Star Ranch in Austin, Texas.

Congrats to the winners of the 2004 GCSAA/Golf Digest Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards:

- National Public (Overall Winner): Mark Claburn, Tierra Verde Golf Club, Arlington, Texas;
- National Private: John F. Anderson, The Club at Pronghorn, Sunriver, Ore.;
- National Resort: Sandy C. Clark, Barona Creek Golf Club, San Diego, Calif.; and
- International: Sean A. Kjemhus, Stewart Creek Golf and Country Club, Canmore, Alberta, Canada.

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We're talking the basics here, as in rudimentary, elementary and fundamentally. The key to keeping roots in greens healthy and able to withstand a sweltering summer has more to do with utilizing the essentials of turfgrass management than some far-out agronomic alchemy. Several agronomists with the United States Golf Association (USGA) are as sure as Sherlock Holmes about that.

"I don't think there are any secrets here," says Patrick Gross, director of the USGA Green Section's Southwest region. "Although superintendents are fascinated with the myriad of new products, agronomy 101 will be the most important factor to help them grow healthy roots."

Says Keith Happ, senior agronomist for the Green Section's Mid-Atlantic region: "There aren't any magical cures out there ... no matter how many guys try to find that wonder drug in a bottle. It goes back to the basics. The research is pretty clear on what works best."

The basics, says James Skorulski, senior agronomist for the Green Section's Northeast region, mean the need to get smarter with cultivation practices. For some superintendents that could indicate a return to doing things from which they've gotten away.

The time to achieve healthy root growth is now, says Charles "Bud" White, senior agronomist for the Green Section's Mid-Continent region. White advises superintendents in the area he serves — including Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma — that they should prepare in the spring for the worst summer growing conditions possible (read: stifling heat and humidity) in regard to maintaining healthy roots.

**Poking holes**

Back to agronomy 101, which begins with the importance of air movement, Gross notes.

"Roots need air as much as they need water," he adds. "The diagram shown in every class about soil mentions that soil should have 25 percent water-filled pores, 25 percent air-filled pores and the remaining portion is the mineral content of the soil. Shallow rooting starts to develop when many of those air-filled pores are lost."

Aeration, of course, is vital to achieve proper