

## THRU THE GREEN

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## THRU THE GREEN

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Back to the Future" appears to be on the horizon for the golf course superintendent in his quest for the perfect putting green. As we all know, the recipe for speedy, healthy putting greens is simply to lower the mower and limit the fertilization, then throw on the pesticides to help the turf stay healthy.

Herein lies the key: healthy turf is not scalped down to the crown of the plant. The height of cut going up is the only place for variation in this recipe. It is a foregone conclusion that using pesticides will soon be a thing of the past. So, without them how could we be expected to maintain healthy putting

greens?

Dr. Noel Jackson is quoted as saying "Everyone mow at 3/16 (inch) and no less, and to heck with the golfers. Do this and you'll grow great grass." Three sixteenths of an inch probably equates to about 7-7.5 on the stimp-meter. How do I sell that to my Board, Green Chairman, Golf Pro, and members? It is going to be a slow, tough sell, yet unless we begin to make this point, while we still have a few of our tools (pesticides), we will find ourselves frustrated and probably looking for a job when our greens are dead.

We can probably maintain those excessively low mowing heights for a few weeks of the year, while we accommodate an important tournament

or two. But we must learn to back off as stress approaches.

Begin to get your decision-making bodies at your course to establish a written document to protect you. This document should first and foremost establish the precedent for healthy turf, followed by criteria for acceptable speeds and mowing heights of cut. Frankly, this document might need to go into the bylaws to keep it bullet proof from aggressive scratch golfers who will continue to push you for faster greens.

Unless we start now, Back to the Future could be a recipe for disaster.

See you on the tee,  
Randy Gai  
President

## Bentgrass Variety Trials

## FINAL RESULTS

Ali Harivandi and William Hagan  
UC Cooperative Extension

In cooperation with GCSANC, the Northern California Turf and Landscape Council, and the Sunnyvale Municipal Golf Course, the University of California Cooperative Extension conducted a three-year bentgrass variety evaluation at Sunnyvale Municipal Golf Course. This location is one of sixteen locations in the U.S. for the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program under the auspices of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Preparation of the sites at the Sunnyvale Golf Course began in 1989. Two of the three sites were prepared by mixing 2 inches of organic matter into 6 inches of top soil with a rototiller. One of these sites was managed as a golf tee/fairway and the other site was managed as a golf green. The third site was prepared by replacing the native soil with one foot of pure sand. The sand was low in calcium and phosphorous. This was corrected by adding the appropriate amounts of gypsum and single superphosphate. The sand base site was also managed as a golf green. Varieties were planted (1 lb/1000 ft<sup>2</sup>) in March, 1990, in a randomized complete block design, in 10 ft x 10 ft plots and 3 replications. Fertilization and irrigation was done as needed. The tee site on the soil was mowed at

Continued on page 4