

THRU THE GREEN

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THRU THE GREEN

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ent's Association of
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well sports fans, the "Big Show" is upon us. The GCSAA membership, 15,000 strong, from golf courses and their support corps throughout the world, will journey into the San Francisco Bay Area to partake in one of the most remarkable educational experiences accessible to turfgrass managers. The 66th International Conference and Show is set to open on Monday, February 20, 1995, in San Francisco, at the Moscone Center. Those of you never before attending this annual event are truly in for an experience.

You will encounter: world renowned educators presenting basic principles to their most progressive ideologies, an equipment show reaching

beyond any expectations, mingling with your peers not only from North America but from across many seas. The USGA presentation, the Society of Golf Course Architects, golf course builders, irrigation designers and installers, and manufacturers of equipment and supplies vital to the continued progression of our livelihood. Attendees will log many miles on foot throughout the Moscone Center and adjacent streets, so be sure to wear comfortable shoes.

The California Golf Course Superintendents Association will open the doors to a spacious Hospitality Suite for your enjoyment during the conference. The Hospitality Suite will be open Thursday, February 24 through Saturday, February 26 beginning at

6:00pm. By being a member of GCSANC you are also a member of the state association, so please "make yourself at home" and enjoy. Sponsorship of the Hospitality Suite will be undertaken by our very supportive affiliate members on Thursday and Friday nights, while CIBA will be the sole sponsor for one night. Please acknowledge their support by sending your business their way if you are given the opportunity to make a choice.

To those of you playing in the golf tournament, good luck and "May All Your Putts Drop."

See you on the
Randy Gai, CGCS
President

Greening of the Golf Green

From their fairways to their trim putting greens, golf courses evoke human perception of the ultimate in natural perfection. Over 100 courses entertain golfers in the Bay-Delta region. Maintaining these emerald islands in the midst of the region's naturally golden landscape can mean heavy use of pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and water. But golf course superintendents claim that a variety of new management methods may now be reducing the game's toll on the Bay-Delta environment.

Critics say a badly managed golf course can cause ground and surface water contamination, nitrogen leading or runoff, chemical drift from pesticide use, and other detrimental effects. In response, the golf industry recently published guidelines for course managers on how to reduce

chemical fertilizer use, dispose of clippings and other waste, and protect and conserve water. It also launched a \$3 million-a-year research effort aimed at developing new turf grasses that thrive on half as much water and require fewer doses of pesticide. An upcoming trade conference will emphasize techniques for environmentally sensitive turfgrass management.

"Golf course superintendents have refocused to ensure they're doing their share of environmental management," says Dr. Ali Harivandi, a turfgrass researcher at the University of California Cooperative Extension.

Manager Tom Thatcher has put some of this theory into practice at the Stanford Golf Course, where two holes play across San Francisco.

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Creek. "We're using integrated pest management," he says.

"We go out and determine what's necessary instead of applying pesticides on a programmatic schedule. As a result, there's no leaching. We've never detected any nitrates going into the water supply. We use water sparingly. There's a computerized irrigation system on the course that's sensitive to weather, so we're only replacing the water that's evaporating."

"Golf courses don't necessarily have to be a bad neighbor to a river or stream," says the Coyote Creek Riparian Station's Mike Rigney, who is helping to develop a watershed management plan for San Francisquito Creek.

"As long as there's no contamination from herbicides, I'd rather have a golf course next door than a housing development or industry," he says. Rigney points to other "green" Stanford course management efforts, such as landscaping with native vegetation, leaving tree snags in place, creating protective berms around small drainage areas, and composting with

grass clippings, techniques he says benefit the creek's riparian habitat. Indeed, one prominent New York state wildlife protection group has such faith in the habitat potential of golf courses that it has developed a sanctuary program to help course managers enhance habitat, conserve natural resources and protect environmental quality.

Beyond its possible value to wildlife, Harivandi says golf course vegetation, particularly in urban areas, can reduce pollution, glare, noise, dust and heat build-up. Golf courses can also serve as wastewater disposal sites. Harivandi says 15 to 20 Bay Area golf courses currently irrigate with reclaimed water, and that number continues to grow. "Besides reducing the need for fresh water, reclaimed water also has quite a bit of nutrient value, so superintendents can reduce the amount of fertilizer they use," he says.

Many dispute the claim that golf courses can provide a net benefit to the environment. "I think you'll always have some problems because in effect, you're creating an exotic landscape over many acres to achieve what people

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**Tips from the USGA
A Farewell Letter**

*by Paul Vermuelen
USGA Agronomist*

During my travels over the past eight months, I have learned to appreciate the importance of clear communication on the topic of environment. Advocates of a pesticide free environment have accused pesticide users of unnecessarily endangering the lives of people around them. To boldly state that these criticisms are either warranted or unwarranted would be in my opinion an oversight by the turfgrass industry. What is needed to appropriately address public concern is valid scientific research that either favors or condemns the continued use of pesticides on an individual basis.

Golfers all across the United States have responded to this need for clarification by giving their financial support to several leading universities. I would like to invite everyone (Superintendents, General Managers, Green Chairpersons, members of the Board of Directors, Sales Specialists, etc.) to one of the following regional conferences where the results of this support will be shared:

March 15, 1995
Sharon Heights Country Club
Menlo Park, CA

March 24, 1995
UC - Riverside
Riverside, CA

April 5, 1995
Spanish Trails Country Club
Las Vegas, NV

April 6, 1995
Arizona Country Club
Phoenix, AZ

If you have not received a registration form for the regional conference in your area, please contact our office and we will send one along ASAP.

This is also my last opportunity to express my gratitude to all those that have educated me during my travels on the west coast. On March 1st, I will be reassigned to the Mid-

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think of as a golf course," says the S.F. Regional Board's Dale Bowyer.

Barbara Salzman of the Marin Audubon Society agrees. "Golf courses are especially problematic for species like Canada geese.

They're grazers, and they've overproduced because there's all this phony food (turf) around. They leave their droppings, so people complain," she says, adding, "Course managers extol the virtues of wildlife until they become pests. You have to realize that a lot of this natural golf courses information comes from the golf course builders themselves."

The lack of independent data hinders regulators' ability to assess success or failure of new management practices. "We haven't done any intensive monitoring of golf courses," says Bowyer. "It's probably a good idea." Adds Rigney, "There are so many proposals for new golf courses. I'd like more good strong evidence of how they impact the environment."

This evidence will surely be needed given the 2,000 new golf courses now in various stages of planning or

construction across the U.S. Locally, a combined golf and luxury housing development proposed for the site of the Renaissance Pleasure Fair in Novato has sparked controversy. Although project sponsors say the golf course is being designed to incorporate conservation practices from the ground up, its construction still raises questions about the best use of the Bay Area's remaining open space, not to mention erosion, loss of riparian habitat, streambed alteration and wetland fill. "After all," says Salzman, "they're developing on diked baylands."

"We're getting into regional planning issues here too," says Bowyer. "At some point, we may have to decide that we have enough golf courses." Or that golf courses, no matter how environmentally sound, aren't Nature.

Reprinted from *Estuary*
August 1994

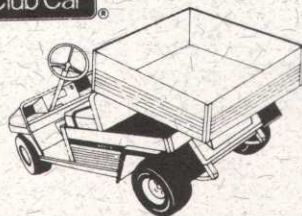


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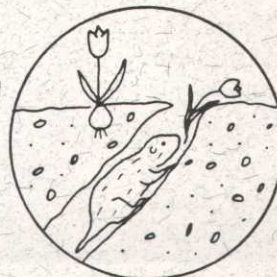
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USGA

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continent Region under the direction of James F. Moore. My replacement here in the Western Region will be Michael Huck, Agronomist.

Mike is a former Superintendent who has faced a myriad of challenges during his years in California. He started at Industry Hills Golf Course in the early 1980s on greens constructed to USGA specifications. In the middle of his tenure the facility was converted from domestic water to reclaimed water. This conversion prompted many changes in the course's management due to the nutrient and soluble salt content of the new irrigation supply. While converting to reclaimed water was memorable, per-

haps the greatest challenges at Industry Hills were the encroachment of *Poa annua* in the greens and the seeping of methane gas through the soil from the decaying landfill underneath the property.

After his successful years at Industry Hills, Mike moved to Mission Viejo Country Club. At Mission Viejo CC, also known as Mission Impossible by many Orange Country golfers, his first order of business was to install a new state-of-the-art irrigation system. To ensure that no stones were left unturned, Mike had every leading model of sprinkler head tested for distribution uniformity. Having determined which model worked the best under his own conditions, the new irrigation system was de-

signed and installed using that model's optimum triangular spacing.

After Mike's departure from Mission Viejo Country Club, he joined the ranks of Southern California Golf Association. At the Association's course in Murrieta, Mike directed the maintenance staff through their first summer without the use of temporary greens.

In closing, I want to thank everyone for having made my years on the west coast so enjoyable. And in the future should you find yourself in Champaign, Illinois, where snipe hunting is legal year round and all the children are unarmed, please stop in and say hello.

Best wishes,
Paul Vermuelen

NAUMANN'S NORCAL NEWS

Carl King at Delta View Golf Course in Pittsburgh recently completed rebuilding 10 greens, six tees and constructing seven lakes. The course was also lengthened. All construction was performed by **Roger Larson...** **Jess Pifferini** and the Spanish Bay Golf Course staff should be extremely proud. They were just named the 1994 National Winner for the Environmental Stewardship Award given by GCSAA in the resort division. Last year they won the same award but just for the west coast.



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Several months ago we began a discussion about tree inventories. There are three levels of complexity to a tree inventory and analysis.

In Level 1, which we discussed before, we identify all the trees on the course by genus, species, and common name, and plot these trees on a map. The purpose of a Level 1 inventory is to help a

the recorded information is to give dimension and analysis for each individual tree. This is a prerequisite to management.

What information do we need before we manage a tree?

We need to know the size of the tree. This is done by taking the diameter, height, and spread of the tree. The **diameter** measured four and one half feet above ground

given in relation to buildings, roads, walkways, etc. Location is very important. A tree next to the pro shop will have a higher priority than a tree growing in the rough. The **type of trimming** required for the particular tree or species of tree should be recorded, if needed. **Tree removals** should be recorded. Insects and/or diseases present need to be identified. Lastly, a general remarks column is included for special items of note.

Once all the above information is recorded for each tree, Level 3 of the tree inventory and analysis can take place. Level 3 involves analyzing the above information in order to prioritize and budget tree care.

We will discuss Level 3 next time.

ATTENTION: All Cal Poly Alumni

Alumni breakfast will be held during the GCSAA Conference. Preliminary date: Saturday, February 25th, prior to Trade Show opening. Check message board or Host Chapter Booth for further information.

On January 13, 1985, ninety-nine year old Otto Bucher aced the 12th hole at the La Manga Golf Course in Spain, becoming the oldest person to make a hole in one.

Arbor Care
TREE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

by Gil Mitchell

superintendent see the variety and extent of their treescape. The map and species list can be the first indication of how intimidating it can be to manage acres of trees on a golf course. At the same time, there is comfort in knowing there is a finite number of trees on the property.

In a Level 2 analysis, various pieces of information are recorded in a spreadsheet for each tree. The purpose of

line is a tree industry standard. **Height** is determined as a function of short (less than or equal to 15 feet), medium (16 to 40 feet) or tall (over 40 feet). The **spread** of the foliage measured from branch tip to branch tip through the center of the tree gives an indication of tree development. The structure of the tree will indicate potential hazards and can be used to prioritize trimming.

The **location** of a tree is

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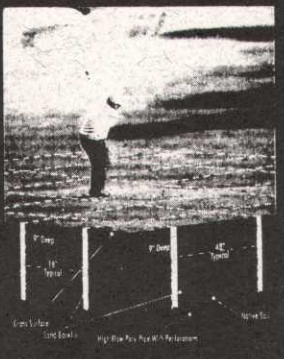
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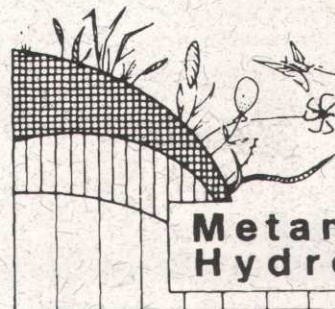
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IN MEMORY

*It is with heavy heart that this newsletter must notify the membership of the passing of **Grady Simril**.*

A member of this association for over 30 years, Grady was the President of GCSANC in 1979. He actively served the Board of Directors and this association for many years.

Grady was employed by the East Bay Regional Park District, overseeing the golf course at Tilden Park. He was also very active in the Northern California Turfgrass Council, having served on that Board of Directors, as well as being instrumental in the successful development of the NCTLC as a professional organization.

In 1991, Grady was presented The George Santana Distinguished Service Award, by GCSANC in appreciation of his year of dedicated service. He is survived by his wife, Helen.

We will miss you Grady. Rest in peace.

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