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THRU THE GREEN

Published monthly by the
Golf Course Superintendent's
Association of
Northern California

From The President

Many thanks to Pete Dempsey, Golf Course Superintendent and the staff at Adobe Creek Golf Club. Once again we had an excellent turnout for our monthly meeting and program. The Media Relations Program was well received and was a topic of conversation later on out on the golf course. Talking about the course, did Pete really want us to play from Blue Tees? Anyway, everyone I talked to thoroughly enjoyed the course and how it played. Thanks again, Pete, for hosting our monthly Association Meeting, it is appreciated.

Start making plans for our Annual Scholarship Tournament to be held on August 20th. The golf course is Diablo Grande which is located in the great Central Valley. Our host will be Pete Bowman, CGCS, past president of the California Golf Course Superintendents Association.

If any of our members do read this column, then I would like to remind them of what our responsibilities as members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California are:

- Adhere to Association Code of Ethics.
- Dressing in good taste at all meetings and when playing golf. It is also your responsibility to notify your guest of the required dress code.
- Members are limited to one guest.
- All members and guests must attend meeting and meal in order to have golfing privileges.
- Golf at any other time than a meeting is a special privilege that must be arranged in advance with the superintendent on the course you wish to play on. In order to promote the fact that we are a professional organization it is up to all of us as Directors and Association members to act in a professional manner.

So think about it.

Joseph Rodriguez, CGCS
President

Office Notes

By: Barbara Mikel

I had a call the other day from a Superintendent wondering if he had enough time in service to apply for a Class A upgrade. Your Association bylaws have recently changed regarding the time required for Class A, Class B and Class C. Those revised bylaws are in the new directory you will be receiving. When the workload slows take a moment to review those bylaws if you want to apply for upgrade. Call the office for an application. This



Joseph Rodriguez, CGCS
GCSANC President 1996-1997

Scholarship Committee Begins Campaign For Recipients

This year's Scholarship Committee is searching for key individuals who qualify for scholarship funds. These funds are available to you, your employees, or any individual who is taking classes that are related to the Turfgrass industry. These scholarships are directed to those candidates who have intentions to develop their careers toward the management of Turfgrass within the golf course industry or any other related service. Each candidate must be a current resident of Northern California, but may be attending a school outside of our region. Any interested party may contact Gary Carls at 408-453-5330 or Barbara Mikel at 916-626-0931. Further note, an application packet will be sent to each golf course superintendent by the end of August. Please note that we are looking for your input and recommendations to help find qualified students. Thank you.

application doesn't require attestor signatures or fees. It is reviewed by the Membership Committee and approved by the Board of Directors assuming the requirements for the upgrade have been met. There will be a general membership review prior to the dues renewal notice mailing in October and membership classifications will be changed reflecting the new GCSANC bylaws adopted in April, 1996.

USGA

Life At 3/16"

By Pat Gross, USGA Green Section

You've heeded the warnings and raised your putting green cutting height to 3/16" just like all the experts have told you. All the greens are healthy and it looks like you're going to have a good summer. Just when you're proud and confident of your accomplishments, the golfers start complaining that the greens are too slow. "Cut 'em lower" they cry, "turn off the water," "they need more verticutting," and the ever popular "I don't care what you do, but they better be rolling 10' for the big tournament!" Don't they remember all the disease and turf loss that occurred when you tried to keep them fast all summer?

Mowing at 3/16" is a prudent practice for creeping bentgrass/Poa annua greens during the summer. There is no doubt that the increased mowing height improves turfgrass stress tolerance during the summer, and yes, the greens are going to be a little slower. Instead of caving-in to demands to lower the

mowing height, there are several things you can do to improve ball roll and keep the turf healthy at 3/16":

- 1. Keep 'em Sharp** — Greens suffer just as much from a poor quality cut as they do from an excessively low mowing height. Your mechanic should check the cutting units daily when they come in from mowing, and make any necessary adjustments. Weekly or biweekly back lapping along with checking the bedknife will keep the cutting units sharp at all times.
- 2. Proper Irrigation** — Irrigation management is far and away the most important practice for maintaining healthy turf at any cutting height. With creeping bentgrass/Poa annua greens, the goal is to keep the soil uniformly moist, but not wet. If you are on a leaching program to control salinity, go ahead and give the greens a good long soaking when necessary (4 to 6 hours) and then turn off the automatic system and go to hand watering for as long as possible.

Overly wet greens are slow, bumpy, and disease prone.

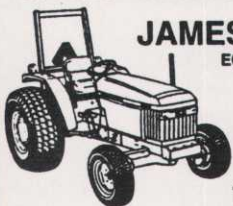
- 3. Double Mowing** — Consider double mowing your greens once a week. This is a good practice to improve surface smoothness without having to lower the cutting height. If you are short on labor, you can use a triplex mower in one direction and hand mow in the opposite direction, or even double mow with the triplex units.
- 4. Light Topdressing** — If the turf is healthy and the temperatures are not too high, it is perfectly fine to apply light sand topdressing to smooth the surface. Many superintendents refer to this as "dusting the greens" with approximately 0.1 to 0.3 cu. yds. of sand per 1000 sq. ft. every two to four weeks. Topdressing should be suspended at the first sign of turf stress or if temperatures are expected above 90° F.
- 5. Grooming** — Groomer attachments are great tools to improve the quality of cut and

Continued on page 7

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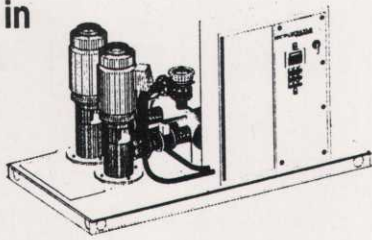
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Boardroom Briefs

- An effort to increase student awareness of GCSANC Turf Scholarships will be the emphasis of the Scholarship Committee this fall. In addition the Committee intends to become more selective in the awards process, choosing only those students who have an interest in Turfgrass Management..
- Research Chairperson, Dave Davies, will tour the research plots at the Santa Clara Field Station and Sunnyvale Municipal Golf Course in August. Dave will be reviewing current projects and establishing the direction of future projects with Turfgrass advisor, Dr. Ali Harivandi
- A "new look" membership card has been proposed for GCSANC members. Concepts for the new card will be reviewed at an upcoming board meeting and may include such member information as club address, years of membership, and GCSANC logo.
- Dave Davies will be representing the Board of Directors when he travels to Lawrence, Kansas, to participate in the Chapter Relations Meeting, Sept. 7 & 8.
- A Recommendation was made and approved to explore the possibility of marketing a limited line of GCSANC logoed apparel.

Northern California Superintendent Receives Professional Certification

Barry Scott Szydoski, Director of Grounds at Blackhawk Country Club, has been designated a Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

Szydoski has been superintendent of the Danville, California course, since 1996. He lives in Discovery Bay, California.

GCSAA instituted the certification program in 1971 to recognize outstanding and progressive superintendents. More than 1,500 active GCSAA members currently hold "CGCS" status.

To become certified, a candidate must have five years' experience as a golf course superintendent, be employed in that capacity and meet specific educational requirements of college credit or continuing education units. The candidate must then pass a rigorous six-hour examination covering knowledge of GCSAA and its Certification Program; the Rules of Golf; Turfgrass Management; Pest Management, Safety and Compliance; and Financial and Organizational Management.

As part of the certification process, an on-site inspection of Szydoski's golf course operation was conducted by two certified golf course superintendents: Ken Williams, CGCS, at Stanford University Golf Course, Stanford, California, and Rafael Barajas, CGCS, at Hacienda Golf Club, La Habra Heights, California.

Naumann's NorCal News

Mike Barber is the new superintendent at Blackhawk Country Club in Danville. Mike will be working with the Director of Grounds, Scott Szydoski. Mike was the assistant under Scott Lewis at Menlo CC Mike Basile is finishing up a total reconstruction of all 19 greens at Santa Clara G & TC in Santa Clara. Flint Construction was the contractor and J. Michael Poellot and Associates was the Architect.

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Select Trees For Quality

Steve Jones - Valley Crest Tree Co.

Trees are a significant resource in a golf course setting, providing both aesthetic and strategic value. Proper selection, including quality and variety, ensures enjoyment for the lifespan of the tree.

Selection for quality begins with an understanding of how the tree has been cared for in the nursery. In general, trees that have been topped should always be avoided. Topping is a random severe cut of the dominant leaders of a tree. Topped trees will send out a spray of new branches from the same location on the trunk. These new branches will have a very weak attachment and may break off in the future. Also, topping removes a large portion of the foliage which deprives the tree of crucial nutrients and shade.

Selective pruning, in contrast, is a well thought out cut, made to the dominant leaders of a tree, promoting side branching increasing the potential for a healthy and strong tree. The cut is made at an angle and performed at the ideal time of year in order to prevent pests from entering the fresh wound. Young trees, which require their leaders to be selectively pruned will have good trunk taper and will not have the negative effects found in trees that have been topped. Common trees that are selectively pruned in the nursery are Raywood Ash, Chinese Tallow, and Chinese Pistache.

Simply because a tree was cut in a nursery is no reason in itself to reject it. Trees should be selected for their well spaced branches, potential for future structure, tapered trunks, and young radiating root systems. Work closely with your sales representative to ensure that the trees you buy have the potential to develop into strong healthy trees. Selecting trees with quality in mind, allows one to avoid unnecessary replacement costs and future maintenance problems. ♦

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The Presidents Report 1932

The year 1932 has now passed into history. It was a year which the greenkeepers will remember as the time when all turf ailments were stacked against him. We had a week of record low temperature which gave most of us another experience in caring for greens. As an Association it should give us great courage and a measure of satisfaction to know that we are gaining in numbers and prestige. After being organized only nine months, and this is but rightly so for our aim is not only to better conditions for ourselves, but for every individual; that plays golf in this section.

The past nine months we have had some very interesting meetings and some good talks on fertilizers upkeep etc. The start we have made in this direction proves that it is practical to arrange a series of lectures on any subject that pertains to our line of work. I would like to call to the attention of every greenkeeper in our organization that the time of one day a month would be well spend in attending these meetings. We must never let up our efforts to make our gatherings worth while so that on leaving we may have attained some knowledge of greenkeeping that we did not have before. I wish at this time to extend my thanks to Mr. Bishop, Mr. Graves and Chas Berg for the efforts they made in demonstrating their various pieces of equipment. I would like to see one meeting day set apart for such demonstrations and invite the heads of the various clubs to be our guests on that day. It would bring to their attention the real value of this organization. Greenkeeping today is something more than pushing a hand mower.

Mother Nature is continually working not for the greenkeeper but against him. Here in California she is at it the year round, bringing on her vast array of pests, such as wire worms, but worms, ants, grubs, red mildew, sorrel, etc. Every one of these could ruin a fine piece of turf in short order if not controlled. And we must know how to do the right thing at the right time. I mention these things to emphasize the fact that delay is dangerous in treating any of the above pests. It is up to the man on the job to act and act quick.

In closing it is a pleasure to mention the fine fellowship that prevails throughout the organization and I cannot overlook the excellent work done by our Secretary, Sam Smith. Wishing you all a very prosperous New Year.

Yours truly,
Will Rogers, President
January Meeting

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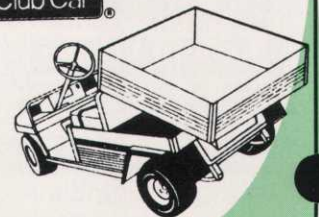
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Life At 3/16" (Cont'd)

ooth the greens, especially at increased mowing heights. The groomers can be used on a frequency of two to three times per week as long as the turf is actively growing. The is another practice that should be suspended at the first sign of turf stress.

6. Rolling — Putting green rollers have proven to be very effective tools to maintain surface smoothness and slightly increase speed without negatively impacting turf health. The rollers should only be used two to three times per week to avoid abrasion injury.

When asked their preference for speed or smoothness, most golfers agree that surface smoothness is most important. Smooth greens with reasonable speed can be achieved without having to lower the mowing height by paying lose attention to the previously mentioned practices. And if the golfers persist in their desire for lightning fact greens during the summer, remind them that "slow grass is better than fast dirt." ♦

Management Books Available to Superintendents

Two books, recently released by Arbor Press in conjunction with the GCSAA have been published to assist superintendents with frequently encountered management issues.

Human Resources for Golf Course Superintendents by Robert A. Milligan and Thomas R. Maloney (\$34.95) includes sections on organization and planning; goal achievement; attracting, choosing, training and managing employees; leadership; communication and motivation. The text is clear and filled with case studies and anecdotal material, listing questions and answers, and points to ponder.

It's companion piece, is the **Superintendents Handbook of Financial Management** by Dr. Raymond S. Schmidgall (\$34.95). Besides basic accounting principles, the book steer into financial statements, budgets and break-even analysis. Working problems and multiple choice tests are included. For more information, contact the GCSAA Information Services Department.

Audobon Cooperative Sanctuary Program —A Story of Success

Golf Courses continued their strong involvement in the Audobon Cooperative Sanctuary System in 1995. At an average of 120 acres or more, they represent some of the most extensive sanctuary areas in the country. The results of the Audobon Cooperative Sanctuary Program are dramatic. ACSP members are literallly transforming their courses to improve habitat, protect water sources, and reduce water and pesticide use. ACSP members are also documenting the valuable role that golf courses play in providing habitat, particularly in urban and suburban areas. In 1995, the number of courses fully-certified grew to 57, while 61 began the certification process by completing environmental plans. These courses are leading the golf industry by making habitat protection and environmental conservation the standard for golf course management.

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Don Allen, Manager
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Institute Returns To The Beach

The GCSANC educational showcase, The Superintendents Institute, is ready to rumble with the recent finalization of the seminar program. This year's event, to be held in the ever popular Coconut Grove, is scheduled for Monday, November 11th and Tuesday November 12th. This year's format offers a new twist with golf preceding the seminar on Monday at 12:00 noon. Eighty golfers will enjoy one of the legendary Golf Course Architect, Allister McKenzie's finest, Pasatiempo Golf Course.

This year's program will feature two central themes; drainage and waste management. Attendees will be exposed to the principles of drainage, water movement in soils and drainage solutions in the morning session, and topics such as managing liquid and solid waste in the afternoon. The seminar will conclude with an informative panel discussion on drainage, featuring three talented superintendents. Look for more information and registration forms in early fall.



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