

## **JB VISITATIONS:**

### **March-Connecticut.**

Presented a Basic Turfgrass Botany and Physiology Seminar along with Dr. Jeff Krans before a group of New England golf course superintendents. This seminar was under sponsorship of the GCSAA. One of the key topics of interest was the types and causes of winterkill and their prevention. As it turned out, winterkill was a scattered problem around the United States extending all the way into north Texas where both Tifdwarf and Tifgreen bermudagrasses grow on closely-mowed putting greens were injured.

### **May-England.**

Three weeks in May were devoted to a literature search in the key libraries around England. This effort was focused on some missing historical dimensions needed to a complete a book entitled **The History of Golf, Sport, and Lawn Turfs**. The libraries included the Lindley Library of the Royal Horticultural Society, Kew Botanical Gardens Library, National Playing Fields Association Library, Football Association Library, and the Victoria and Albert Museum Library; plus visitations to the University of Cambridge, the Institute of Groundsmanship Library in Wolverton, and the Sports Turf Research Institute Library in Bingley.

Unusually cold weather conditions were experienced throughout May in England, similar to most of the United States, with new leaf initiation on trees being 3 to 4 weeks late.

The UK normally is a relatively mild climate with frequent, light rains. However, in 1995 much of the country experienced a severe drought with water rationing being experienced in northwestern England. In some of these locations, such as Lancaster, water rationing has continued throughout the winter period. Due to the very favorable precipitation distribution patterns of the UK, irrigation is not practiced as extensively as in other parts of the world. However, this changed drastically during the summer of 1995. The most striking problem experienced by groundsmen was the lack of uniformity in water distribution from their existing irrigation systems.

### **June-Italy**

A week was spent in Italy including seminar presentations before a golf group in Milan and a groundsman-parks-sport field group in the Rome area. The latter was the first organized seminar effort before this particular segment of the turfgrass industry in Italy.

A visitation was made to the Italian Golf Federation Bentgrass Cultivar Assessment Study plots in Torino, Italy. The new Penn series of bentgrass cultivars continue to perform quite well in terms of shoot density and turf quality under a very close mowing height, with Penn A-1 and Penn G-2 being particularly notable. As this research progresses in the fourth year certain cultivars, such as SR1020, are declining in quality in terms of a reduced shoot density and increased *Poa annua* and moss content. In contrast, Penncross is improving in overall turfgrass quality compared to the first two years. In terms of the assessment of bentgrass cultivars at the very close cutting heights typically used on putting greens, this is the most representative study now being conducted in Europe.

A site visitation assessment also was made to the Fairway-Sports Field Cultivar Assessment Study just west of Roma on a sandy-soil site. A full range of warm-season turfgrass cultivars have now been planted, including both seeded and vegetative types of bermudagrass (*Cynodon* spp.) and zoysiagrass (*Zoysia* spp.), plus a select group St. Augustinegrass (*Stenotaphrum secundatum*), seashore paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*), and buffalograss (*Buchloe dactyloides*) cultivars. Particular emphasis is being placed on the warm-season grasses for the southern part of Italy where water limitations are a persistent problem and water conservation should be a priority for turfgrass areas.

One set each of perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and tall fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*) cultivar plots will be seeded on an adjacent plot area in the fall.

This project is a cooperative effort involving the Italian Golf Federation, Bindi Nurseries, the University of Pisa Agronomy Department, and the International Sports Turf Institute.