JB VISITATIONS:

June - Italy

A technical visitation to the Italian Golf Federation sponsored fairway-sports field turfgrass research plots near Rome revealed they are progressing quite well. They encompass *Cynodon, Festuca, Lolium, Paspalum, and Zoysia* species and their cultivars.

I then presented a Seminar on Environmental Issues and Turfgrass Benefits sponsored by the University of Pisa. Their Agronomy Department is the oldest in Europe. Over 150 were in attendance including graduate and undergraduate students, university academicians from around Italy, and key industry leaders. A tour of the turfgrass research plots was conducted.

It is interesting to observe these developments in Italy. Some 10 years ago the Italian Golf Federation initiated a two-year turfgrass education program for Italian golf course superintendents. It has been successful and subsequently they initiated a turfgrass research program approximately 5 years ago. Now there are 3 universities that have initiated new undergraduate turfgrass teaching programs, including the University of Pisa where 4 professors are spending time on the turfgrass aspects, with Professor Marco Volterani organizing the Seminar. There also are 4 graduate students studying for Master of Science degrees in turfgrass. More recently a number of universities are becoming active in developing turfgrass research programs. This evolutionary progression is quite similar to what occurred in the United States, but at a much more rapid rate.

June - Eastern Germany

A visitation was conducted to a recently constructed golf course facility in eastern Germany. A number of problems had been experienced during the initial grow-in that seemed to be associated with some atypical soil chemistry in terms of the levels of both essential plant nutrients and nonessential elements. The lands on which this occurred were used in vegetable production and there is no historical record as to the fertilizers and other chemicals used. This increases the problem in interpreting the causal aspects. In this situation tissue tests become especially important in addition to soil tests.

June - Georgia

I visited the Cloisters and their multi-course golf facilities at St. Simons Island, Georgia. This was very special in that I had the opportunity to view a nine hole course designed by Harry S. Colt (1861-1951) and Charles H. Alison (1882-1952), and constructed in 1929. Many consider Colt to be the pioneering father of professional golf course architecture. One of his proteges was Dr. Alister Mackenzie.

The site is a very flat seaside location where Colt has used very large, dramatic bunkers with steep faces. This is characteristic of his 1920's designs and similar to those observed on several golf courses near Paris, such as the St. Germaine Golf Club. This golf course was extra special in that the original design is quite well preserved. There are a number of golf courses in the United States where Colt was involved in the design but which unfortunately have been significantly modified over the years. The Cloisters management is to be congratulated for their preservation of this Colt and Alison designed nine holes of golf.

July - Sydney, Australia

Participated in the 8th International Turfgrass Research Conference held at the University of Sydney in Sydney, Australia. The conference is held every 4 years and is one of the few opportunities for turfgrass researchers and educators from throughout the world to interact on a face-to-face basis. Research papers presented at the conference will be published in a two volume set by the International Turfgrass Society.