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Seven Bridges G.C.

February again? I thought we just had one. What does February mean to you? To me it means GCSAA National Conference. Another year, another convention, the 70th Conference and Show to be exact.

Everyone has a variety of purposes the conference fulfills for him or her: Listening to a particular speaker or seminars, in general. Researching equipment for a special need or replacement. The camaraderie we share with old friends or meeting new acquaintances in conferences or on the golf course. In my case, those reasons are fine, but following my mentors in the industry to the after-show activities in the various cities has always been a highlight. Who knew I could learn so much!

I bring this up because I have taken the show, conference and golf tournament for granted. It is part of my job and is included in my employee package. I always have appreciated the opportunity to attend the show but never put much thought into how or who assembles such a large production. I am very proud to serve as one of your directors on the MAGCS board and understand all the aspects of our association. However, I never put a

lot of POSITIVE thought into our national association.

Last September, I had the privilege of traveling to the national headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas. I attended the 1998 Chapter Delegates Meeting with Bob Maibusch. It was my first trip to GCSAA headquarters, and I was amazed. Many of you have been there and will know what I am talking about. If you have not been there but receive the opportunity, you owe it to yourself to go. We have a tremendous, professional national association.

A full-time staff leads us along with our elected officials to create a first-class organization. This took time to build, though we have gained great strides. No one in Lawrence is resting on his or her laurels.

If I were to recap the entire delegates meeting, it would take pages. There were two solid days of meetings and conferencing. Representatives attended the meeting from 86 affiliated chapters, along with the entire Board of Directors; Steve Mona, CEO; Joe O'Brien, COO; and Julian Arrendondo, CPA. The assembly of people was very vocal on many topics and concerns. Very intelligent, motivated and innovative leaders are guiding us. I will list a few of the highlights. If you would like a complete report, please contact me, and I will forward you a copy:

1. A lengthy discussion on our current Affiliation Agreement: It was good before, but there is still opportunity for it to benefit local chapters in a variety of ways.
2. A "Meet the candidates" session allowed all the members running for office an opportunity to address questions and

concerns. This occurred twice, once in an open forum. The other session was held in small question-and-answer groups.

3. Discussions on campaigning in a uniform and standard operating procedure were addressed. This topic will go to committee for further review.
4. The First Tee Program was highlighted by slides. The GCSAA was asked to be a partner in the worldwide commitment. Our professional image will be spotlighted in this program as we help the operation become a success. George Bush chairs the program. Other members of the coalition are the PGA, LPGA, USGA and Augusta National. The object is to allow economically disadvantaged youth, ages 18 and younger, with an opportunity to play golf at affordable facilities. The children will learn the rules of golf, how to play, golf course etiquette, agronomy and the positive impact of golf on the environment. There will be more information on the First Tee Program locally in the future.
5. The Environmental Steward Award Program was questioned and redefined for future consideration.
6. Membership standards were discussed and challenged.
7. The need to write letters to Congress was examined. There are many issues to remain focused on. This will allow superintendents to manage their courses with pesticides and fair labor laws in the future.
8. The GCSAA web site was evaluated and recommendations were made.

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Poa annua reptans — Creeping Bluegrass

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The first commercially available creeping bluegrass cultivar is now available for purchase. It has been named "DW-184." DW-184 is a dense, upright, dark green turf that holds its color even under extremely low nutrient levels. Once established, it produces very few flowers and for only a short time in the spring. DW-184 has also displayed good resistance to a variety of diseases.


Now that the initial goal of producing a high quality *Poa annua reptans* has been met, the Creeping Bluegrass Breeding Project continues to work on developing other new cultivars with still improved disease resistance, reduced flowering and winter hardiness.

Numerous creeping bluegrass trials continue to be evaluated. One of the selections in the trials has not flowered for two consecutive years. Another trial will be initiated this spring with a portion of a sand green constructed in 1997 to be seeded with new creeping bluegrass selections from the breeding program.

You can visit our web site for more information about the breeding project and DW-184. You may visit our web site at: <http://www.hort.agri.umn.edu/cbg/cbhome.htm>.

Creeping Bluegrass And Creeping Bentgrass Competition — Compatibility

The turfgrass population on golf course greens is continuously changing in adapting to the changing environmental conditions. Most greens have a mixed population of creeping bentgrass and *Poa annua*. Each species seems to perform better in particular niches and during different periods of the growing season. Since it seems inevitable that most greens will have a mixed population, we have initiated research to track population changes over time and to ascertain compatibility of creeping bluegrass and creeping bentgrass mixed seedings. One objective of this research is to identify population ratios that result in high quality turf.

The first planting was seeded on native soil, top-dressed with sand, in the fall of 1997 with mixtures consisting of two creeping bentgrasses and three creeping bluegrasses in ratios of 100:0, 75:25, 50:50, 25:75 and 0:100, by seed count. A second seeding, on a sand green, is planned for the spring of 1998 with two creeping bentgrasses and two creeping bluegrasses using the same ratios. 

Director's Column

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9. A uniform association logo for affiliate chapters was discussed and had merit. In order to compete as a top organization in the golf industry, we need to become as recognizable as possible.
10. Compensation survey and employer relations: Overall, the results of the 1998 survey show that superintendents are comfortable with their compensation. Chapters were asked to help define what information should be gathered for future surveys. Efforts are continuing to ensure that employers have a greater appreciation for golf course superintendents and their contributions to the game of golf.

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is much like our own MAGCS. It will only be as good as we the members want it to be. Make time to read the President's message, News Line, Brieffax and other publications sent out by GCSAA. A great deal of work by staff and volunteers go into producing these materials for our use. If you are really ambitious, sign up on a committee at chapter or national level. We have vehicles to make our profession even better than it already is. All it takes is fresh ideas, a positive attitude and a willingness to get involved. I will see a lot clearer this conference and show how much energy and time was put into the convention; I will also reflect as a whole on the GCSAA. That it is one of the finest associations in the world. Have a safe trip, and I will see you at the show. 