



A Look at GCSAA's Limited Budget Outreach Program

As a director of GCSAA this past year, one of my tasks was to chair a committee known as the Limited Budget Resource Group. This group was formed in 1999 with the purpose of offering assistance to limited-budget facilities in an attempt to aid them in overcoming challenges and, as a by-product, grow the game of golf. In fact, the mission statement of this group is, "To help fellow superintendents enhance course conditions in order to help grow the game of golf."

I am sure that many of us can think of a facility near us that does not employ a GCSAA- or MAGCS-member superintendent. Some of these facilities may not even employ a "superintendent," but instead use summer help under the watch of an owner. It may be a par-3 course, or a small-scale mom-and-pop facility.

I was fortunate to have a committee of dedicated individuals. Most of the committee members were from limited-budget facilities where they wear many hats in the day-to-day operation. For them to give up several days of their time said a lot about their dedication to our profession and the game of golf.

I am now asking for your help in continuing their work and helping to make this program a success. Each chapter is being asked to identify volunteers to implement the program. I am sure that many of us can think of a facility near us that does not employ a GCSAA- or MAGCS-member superintendent. Some of these facilities may not even employ a "superintendent," but instead use summer help under the watch of an owner. It may be a par-3 course, or a small-scale mom-and-pop facility. If you sign on as an outreach volunteer, GCSAA will provide you with all of the necessary resource materials to conduct a course visit. This visit is intended to be an offer of assistance, not a critique of the facility.

It is important to note that this program is not a GCSAA or MAGCS membership drive. If eventual membership in GCSAA or the MAGCS is an outgrowth of this, it would be a secondary benefit. The goal of the program is to match experienced superintendents to those charged with the maintenance at these limited-budget facilities in order to provide technical advice and support as needed.

Essentially, each chapter is being asked to:

1. Develop a list of limited-budget facilities in its area, along with locations and contact numbers.
2. Develop a list of volunteer superintendents in the area.
3. Develop and maintain an inventory list of low-cost equipment that can be purchased by limited-budget facilities.

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4. Publicize the program at most meetings and encourage participation of volunteers.
5. Encourage meeting attendance by those superintendents employed by limited-budget facilities.

I hope that you can find the time to assist in the program's implementation. If you have any questions please contact me, Don Ferreri or GCSAA directly.



To Blend or Not to Blend . . . (continued from page 8)

place?" What characteristics allow for one grass variety to out-compete others in a blended stand? Is rhizome or root aggressiveness more important? Do disease-resistant varieties flourish in stands following disease outbreaks? Furthermore, what factors should be considered in selecting seed to use in a blend? Since the number of seeds per pound and percent germination differ from one variety to the next, and even between two seed lots of the same variety, we should be blending turfgrass seed based on seeds per pound and percent germination to achieve our desired percentages of varieties in a mature stand.

Clearly, a lot of questions remain to be answered concerning turfgrass ecology now that the technology for identifying individual plants has been developed.

Some of these questions will be answered soon, but using blends may still have some usefulness until we learn more about the subject. Determine the worst threats to turfgrass survival at your site and then choose grasses that have improved resistance or tolerance of those forms of stress. Make sure you consider the number of seeds per pound, percent of germination and aggressiveness of the variety before choosing your blend. A turfgrass manager must know what species are present in a given stand to achieve optimum performance. The same is true for varieties. Varieties differ greatly in their performance from one environment to the next, and not knowing the composition of a blended stand is a handicap preventing management from optimizing turf performance.



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