



Ted Soenksen,
President TETA

The Turf Equipment Technicians go to Atlanta

TETA was represented by six board members at the 2006 Golf Industry Show (GIS) in Atlanta. In attendance were Tim Johnson (Arrowhead G.C.), Glen Peters (Sunset Ridge C.C.), Don Briggs (White Deer Run G.C.), Matt Pasantino (Stonebridge C.C.), Gus Santos (Country Club of Detroit), and I. We had set goals to meet for TETA, and another set of goals for our own course needs. Whether to scope out future equipment or to get ideas on replacing items that are outdated, there was little time because there was so much to see. The GIS is by far the best opportunity to see everything pertaining to golf equipment. All of the manufacturers are well represented by sales, service, and engineering personnel. They are always eager to meet and talk with the service technicians who actually have to maintain their product. Our input is appreciated by those who can take our ideas and comments back to the drawing board to better improve or even redesign their product.

Another of our goals was to search out and find new contacts for future educational seminars for our members. We also want to broaden TETA's recognition in the golf and turf industry: for striving to better ourselves by seeking out education to help us find the timeliest materials and training available in the industry.

Yet another one of the missions we achieved was to talk with a representative from John Deere's educational training department to address the idea of having a Spanish-language presentation, which has been requested by some of our members. I wanted to present this idea to Gary Carpenter, manager of training at John Deere, who welcomed a meeting with us on trade show floor. We discussed the idea of conducting a factory seminar presented entirely in Spanish by one of our own members, who had successfully attended and completed the factory school. The instructor at the factory, John Schumacher (who is fluent in Spanish and also was at the GIS show), joined us. Both he and Carpenter were intrigued by the idea, and it was decided the idea is well worth pursuing. A survey will be composed and sent out in the future to all members on this topic.

The highlight of the trip was the TETA session on Saturday, the 11th. The topic this year, "The Real Story on Reel Maintenance," was well attended. This was our sixth opportunity as an allied association of the GCSAA to contribute to the educational offerings of national show. The presentation covered everything from the basics of day-to-day adjustments and maintenance, to troubleshooting cutting unit problems. Of course, quality of

cut issues and failure analysis also were of great interest. Audience input augmented the open discussion, thanks to their varied geographical climates and locations. Representatives from Colorado and as far as the tropics were in the room and actively participating. We had positive comments and requests for future contacts from those in attendance. Of the 36 people seated, only eight were actual equipment technicians. I hope that every year, more golf courses will be able to realize the benefits of sending their technicians to the national or at least the regional show.

I welcome any response or inquiries about TETA's involvement with the GIS.



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