

# TURF NEWS

## ROUNDUP

### 1991 Golf Course Supply — Top 10 States

| Rank | State             | Daily Fee    | Municipal    | Private      | Total         |
|------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1.   | Florida           | 459          | 100          | 473          | 1,032         |
| 2.   | California        | 374          | 178          | 310          | 862           |
| 3.   | New York          | 400          | 119          | 260          | 779           |
| 4.   | Michigan          | 525          | 84           | 150          | 760           |
| 5.   | Texas             | 234          | 156          | 359          | 749           |
| 6.   | Ohio              | 425          | 96           | 192          | 713           |
| 7.   | Pennsylvania      | 374          | 39           | 232          | 645           |
| 8.   | Illinois          | 257          | 157          | 201          | 615           |
| 9.   | North Carolina    | 257          | 35           | 192          | 484           |
| 10.  | Wisconsin         | 276          | 70           | 77           | 423           |
|      | <b>Nationwide</b> | <b>6,764</b> | <b>2,259</b> | <b>5,113</b> | <b>14,136</b> |

Source: National Golf Foundation

#### ALSO

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#### TURF QUIZ

##### ANSWER

Hailstone damage on all 18 greens. Golf-ball-size hailstones created a great deal of damage.

After the storm, clean-up and repairs on top-dressings finally made greens playable again.

## Florida leads nation in new golf course openings but trend unlikely to continue

Florida led the nation in new course openings in 1991 for the seventh consecutive year, according to the National Golf Foundation. But the string is likely to end.

With 35 courses added to the state's inventory last year, Florida widened its lead over California as the state with the most golf courses: 1,032 to 862. California opened 21 new courses last year.

Michigan is likely to capture top honors for 1992, however. According to the NGF, 45 courses are under construction in the Great Lakes state while Florida, which led the nation in this category in 1989 and slipped to third in 1990, dropped into a tie for seventh with Alabama and Texas in 1991. Each state had 24 courses under construction at the end of the year.

Nationally, golf course construction reached a 20-year high-water mark as 351 new layouts opened for play. That's the highest total since 1971, when 371 came on line and comes close to the goal of opening a golf course a day set at the NGF's Golf Summit 1986 at Westchester CC in Rye, N.Y. The totals for 1989 and 1990 were 289 and 290, respectively. The nation had been averaging 150 per year over the previous decade.

These and other statistical insights are contained in the 1992 edition of the NGF's annual *Golf Facilities in the U.S.* report which examines the nation's golf course supply as of Dec. 31.

While 351 openings are certainly good for the industry, NGF officials say this level of activity will be difficult to maintain in light of current development conditions, including:

- ◆ High cost of land.
- ◆ Decline of the real estate market and its impact on the number of future golf courses that will be real-estate related.
- ◆ Availability of financing that does not require a high percentage of equity participation by the borrower.
- ◆ High cost of meeting environmental regulations.

NGF research shows that it takes an average of three years for most golf course development projects to move from conception to completion.

"I seriously question whether we can sustain this level of golf course development activity throughout this decade," says Joe Bedit, NGF president. "Current conditions being what they are, I'd say a rate of 250 a year seems more likely."

The rate probably won't drop all in one year, however. NGF analysts predict that more than 300 courses will open in 1992 because 450 courses have been scheduled to open this year and, historically, about 65 percent of the courses scheduled to open actually do so.

But the number of courses in the planning stages is down 13 percent from 1990 (781 to 681),



so a further drop in openings appears likely.

Richard Norton, NGF's vice president of golf course development, also points to the current decline in the number of golf course development projects that are real estate-related.

"Three to four years ago, upwards of 50 percent of all golf course construction was associated with new housing," he said. "It was simply a reflection of the number of developers who were using golf courses to increase the value of their homesites."

At the end of 1991, however, only 34 percent of the 583 courses under construction — and only 33 percent of those that opened — were related to real estate.

Among other findings in this year's report:

- ◆ The total number of courses in the U.S. stands at 14,136 — the highest number ever.

- ◆ Many new courses have been opened or are being planned and built in the NGF's "Hot Spots" — metro areas where conditions seemed especially favorable for golf course development.

- ◆ Golf in the U.S. remains a predominately public game: 64 percent of the nation's total of 14,136 are public courses as are nearly 80 percent of the 351 that opened last year.

*Golf Facilities in the U.S.* is one of two major baseline research studies which the NGF conducts annually. The other is *Golf Participation in the U.S.*, which was scheduled to be released as *The Florida Green* went to press.

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## GCSAA will add new Pacific Rim office; slates Conference & Trade Show for 1993

The GCSAA has announced it will open a fully-staffed extension office in Singapore to manage membership activities and services in the Pacific Rim countries. And, GCSAA has simultaneously announced that it will sponsor the Pacific Rim Golf Course Conference and Show in Singapore on March 15-21, 1993.

Services provided by GCSAA's Pacific operations will include educational training, certification, publications, conferences, trade shows and research — the same range of activities as in the United States.

The organization's Pacific operations will cover Japan, Guam, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, Korea, The Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indone-

sia, Australia, New Zealand and India. GCSAA President William R. Roberts, CGCS, said emerging governmental interest and concern over environmental and development issues are driving the need for long-term education and quality control throughout this region.

"No other single organization exists anywhere in this area with the resources to provide the services that GCSAA does. Our long-respected position throughout the world as a leader and standard-bearer for golf course superintendents will give us a competitive edge," Roberts said. GCSAA currently has a growing number of members in this area. Nearly 4,000 golf courses are in operation, with hundreds more under construction or planned. "Because golf is booming in this area of the world, a window of opportunity exists for GCSAA to provide these services to ensure that the standards of world-class golf are being met," Roberts said.

Meeting the educational needs of Pa-

cific Rim golf course management professionals and offering manufacturers and suppliers a cost-effective way to sell their products internationally is the force behind GCSAA's new Conference and Show, said Roberts.

"The booming golf market in this area of the world presents an excellent opportunity for GCSAA. It is our intention — as it has been with our domestic activities — to produce a first-class conference and show with the highest quality level of education possible, and to make the event professionally rewarding for all," he said.

The association already sponsors the largest annual trade show in the industry — the International Golf Course Conference and Show — scheduled for Jan. 23-30, 1993, in Anaheim, Calif.

The Pacific Rim event will be sponsored and operated identically to GCSAA's U.S. conference. A full program of educational sessions, seminars, a distributor program and trade show —



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all planned with multiple-language interpreting — will be offered to exhibitors and attendees. International representatives from Toro, Jacobsen, Ransomes/Cushman, John Deere, Rain Bird, Robert Trent Jones II and Club Car have already committed to participate in the Pacific Rim event. Exhibitor information will be mailed to industry representatives in July. Attendee information will be sent in August.

### Corporate rebates to add funds to GCSAA S&R foundation

An exclusive new rebate program offered by Lebanon Turf Products will bring at least \$20,000 in donations to GCSAA Scholarship & Research, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's non-profit foundation.

According to William R. Roberts, CGCS, president of the GCSAA and its S&R board of trustees, Lebanon has agreed to donate 50 cents for each bag of its new Country Club 18-3-18 fairway fertilizer sold between April 6, 1992 and December 31, 1993 to GCSAA S&R.

Lebanon's professional group has committed a minimum of \$20,000 in donations to the 20-month program.

"It's a creative and generous way for a corporation to help us fund some important work," said Roberts. He said the unrestricted gift will be targeted for use in a planned groundwater monitoring program.

Based in Lebanon, Pa., the company supplies fertilizers, and a variety of other plant protectants for golf courses, lawn care professionals, agricultural and home uses. GCSAA Scholarship & Research is a 36-year-old foundation dedicated to providing educational and scientific advancements for the golf course industry.

### ASGCA annual meeting focuses on environment, financing of new courses

The first draft of a position statement and guide on environmental impact was presented at the ASGCA's 46th annual meeting scheduled May 3-7 at the Southhampton Inn on Long Island. The other major development seminar focused on the lack of ready financing for golf course construction.

### Golf Course Architect Howard Watson Dies

Howard Watson, 84, a former president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, died on April 25 from natural causes at his home in LaChute, Quebec. Watson began designing golf courses in 1930, and designed more than 150 golf courses throughout North America. Among his projects are Carling Lake in Pine Hill, Que., LaChute Nos. 1 and 2, LaChute, Que., Pinegrove Country Club, St. Luc, Que., Toronto Board of Trade, Woodbridge, Ont., and the Players Club in Pickering, Ont. Two Canadian Opens, Canada's major championship, have been played on the Pinegrove course. The Canadian architect was elected a member of the ASGCA in 1954 and served as president in 1959. He was elected a Fellow in 1977.



Howard Watson

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**GCSAA's Roberts tells Greenskeepers Assn. that education is vital**

Continuing education is vital to the rapidly changing golf course management profession — not just in the U.S., but around the world — said GCSAA President William R. Roberts at the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association national education conference in England March 27-29.

About 150 greenkeepers and golf/turf industry associations, mostly from England and Scotland, participated in the fourth annual conference at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester, Cotswold.

British and American golf course managers share the need to deal with environmental, human safety and land uses, Roberts said. He emphasized the importance of continuing education for golf course superintendents to keep up with changing regulations, technological advances and new research on turf management

practices.

"Participation in continuing education is a personal responsibility each of us bears to our profession," Roberts said.

"And it is our profession's responsibility to provide the kind of continuing education opportunities that golf course managers need today, and will need tomorrow."

Roberts said he learned during his trip that only a few British schools offer greenkeeper training, and that this education is more "hands-on, practical" training than the business and turf management programs that U.S. golf course management students typically undertake. He also said that some of those programs may be in danger.

In Britain, as in the United States, tighter funding for public education means the private sector will have to play a larger role in education, training and retraining, he said.

He outlined the GCSAA's education program that includes an accredited curriculum of seminars and correspondence

courses, plus a professional certification program, and environmental management program, an annual conference and trade show, and a series of publications.

**Golf House fetes Spitzmiller**

Golf House, the museum and library of the USGA will exhibit the paintings of Walt Spitzmiller through Aug. 30.

Touted as a "traditional look at the modern game," the exhibit includes images of such courses as Cypress Point, the Old Course at St. Andrews and Augusta National; and such players as Bob Jones, Ben Hogan, Arnold Palmer, Patty Berg, Jack Nicklaus and Nancy Lopez.

A native of St. Louis, Spitzmiller works from his country home in Connecticut. His work has appeared in Golf Journal, Golf Magazine, Golf Digest, People, and TV Guide.

The USGA exhibit includes works from the private collections of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Murphy, Melbern Glasscock, Thomas Mendell and Jack Nicklaus.



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## ASGCA: Developers should involve superintendents in construction

The president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects has called on developers to involve golf course superintendents in the construction of their courses.

"We try to get a superintendent involved at the start of construction so he can act as a project liaison, help interpret plans for the contractor and make suggestions that will ease maintenance," said Clark. "For example, if we create a design that is difficult to maintain, he can bring it to our attention while changes can still be made."

With the superintendent present from the start of the project, it becomes easier to maintain the course according to its design, Clark said.

"Working together during the design and construction phase enables the superintendent to learn the intent of the original design," he said. "As the golf course evolves, the superintendent can help ensure that the layout remains true to the architect's original intent."

Education also enables a superintendent to become better acquainted with the purposes and perspectives of a golf course architect, Clark added.

"Being informed is 90 percent of understanding each other," he said. "The best ways to stay informed are through continuing education, attending conferences and exchanging information during the construction process."

Although few superintendents have the opportunity to be in on the development of a course from the beginning, they can always check the original plans to learn the architect's design strategy, Clark said.

"We must look to the superintendent to make sure we don't forget that the golf course must be maintained," said Clark. "We sometimes need to be reminded that a slope we've designed has to be mowed twice a week."

Architects also depend on the superintendent to monitor construction progress.

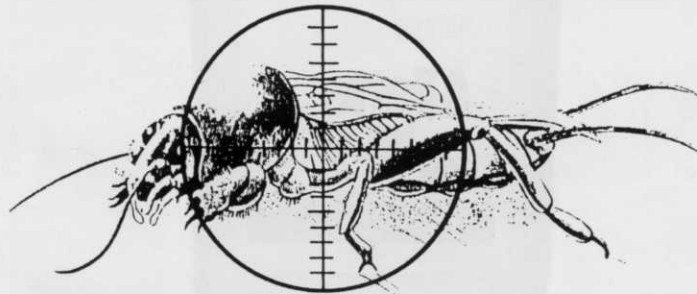
"The superintendent has a lot of authority during construction," said Clark. "The contractor has to realize that he must satisfy the superintendent."

It's also important for the superintendent to be on site so he sees what goes underground, he said. "In particular, he needs to oversee the installation of the irrigation system and confirm that the greens, for instance, have exactly four inches of gravel, two inches of barrier layer and 12 inches of mix. When we leave a course, it's in his hands."

Remodeling projects offer an ideal opportunity for superintendents and architects to work together, Clark said.

"One of the first things we do during a remodeling project is get the superintendent and pro together to ask what they would suggest be improved," said Clark. "They are the ones who are there every day, so they know the course's strengths and weaknesses. We utilize this type of input to develop the master plan which is the blueprint for the project."

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