



The Changing Face of PDI

Editor's note: By now all Class A, B and C GCSAA members should have received a set of the revised PDI recommendations. (See the Meeting and Time line schedule at the end of this article.) This article shows some of the questions raised nationwide by PDI and the responses and changes implemented by the MSRG. The PDI issue was discussed at the FGCSA board meeting in August, and each chapter was asked to come to its own decision concerning the PDI and to take the consensus of the individual chapter to Lawrence for the September GCSAA Delegates meeting.

BY CHUCK BORMAN, CAROLINAS GCSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AND HANNES COMBEST, GCSAA DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

The MSRG has struggled for almost three years with developing a classification system that will provide us a means to better market ourselves in the industry.

-BRUCE R WILLIAMS, CGCS
CHAIRMAN
Membership Standards Resource Group

As we have seen in the last two issues of *Carolinas Green*, the GCSAA Professional Development Initiative has generated much comment and debate within the association. This article will inform you of changes to PDI that have been recommended by a cross-committee meeting of the GCSAA's Education, Certification and Career Development committees in Lawrence on April 15-16.

Along with the above-mentioned committees, the Membership Standard Resources Group was in attendance to discuss the MSRG's proposal and the feedback received to date from members.

The 80 committee members present were asked to review, revise, and define the MSRG recommendations, define ongoing requirements and identify specific responsibilities for committees.

Bruce R. Williams, CGCS, chairman of the MSRG, led the two-day cross-committee meeting and began with a summary of the process the group was using in communicating this

information to members. By the time this group met, the MSRG had made more than 70 presentations and several themes were recurring as questions or comments: required formal education; mandatory use of HR Web; required validation of self-assessment; required pesticide license; a need for better definition of ongoing requirements; ensuring continuing education is affordable and accessible; and grandfathering issues, particularly relevant to Class C members.

During the next two days, each of these issues was thoroughly discussed.

According to Williams, the meeting was very productive.

"The MSRG has struggled for almost three years with developing a classification system that will provide us a means to better market ourselves in the industry. This meeting provided valuable feedback to the prototype we developed and I believe the final product will be much stronger because of it."

Following are the outcomes related to this meeting and these issues:

Formal education

Some members expressed that no formal education should be required or if one was required, an alternative path should be developed to give opportunities to those individuals who were not able to obtain a degree.

Outcome: the participants of the cross-committee meeting recommended that a two-year turf degree be required but that an alternative path to meet this requirement be developed. This alternative path should be stringent and should include continuing education, service and tenure.

Mandatory use of HR Web

This issue was raised in three ways during the presentations: 1) the security of the HR Web; 2) employers will misuse the information on the HR Web; 3) why should we mandate this tool. Some people during the presentations expressed the belief that the HR Web is not secure; that people will be able to obtain individual competency profiles without permission.

The author of the HR Web, Chris Bjorling, assured GCSAA that unless a member gives out their password, the HR Web is secure.

Williams said that the members of the MSRG believe the HR Web will help members communicate with their employers. However, that is and should remain a private decision. Williams noted that the issue really could be summarized into one question: should GCSAA mandate the use of this tool?

Outcome: the participants of the cross-committee meeting agreed that for all new and existing Class A members, the HR Web should not be required but should be encouraged. However, for new and existing members seeking certification, it should be required.

Required validation of your self-assessment

Jim DeMoux, a consultant from Franklin Covey explained that individual competency profiles should not be vali-

dated because of the difficulty in creating one test that would validate the skill levels of various individuals. He suggested that a better position would be to test how well an individual performs against an aggregate competency profile, similar to how certification exists now. The certification test is based upon a set of knowledge, skills and abilities that the certification committee believes a certified superintendent needs to know.

Outcome: the participants of the cross-committee meeting agreed that no assessment should be developed for new or existing Class A members, but that an assessment based upon the competencies outlined in the HR Web should be developed for members seeking certification.

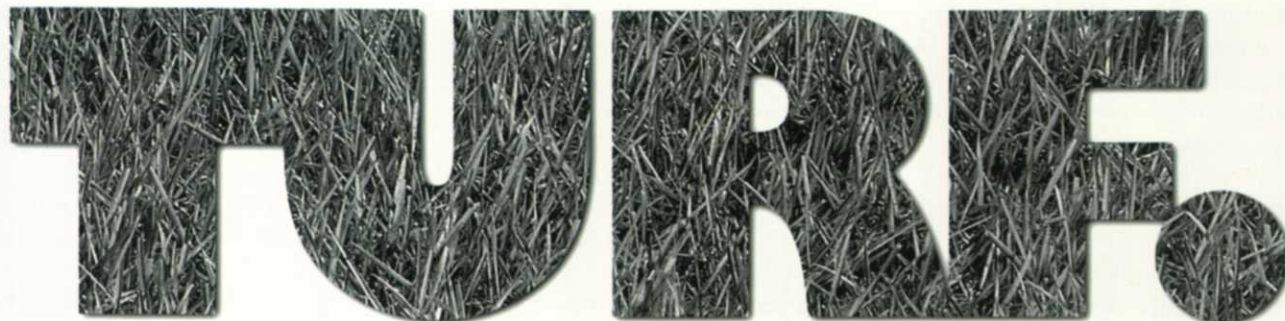
Required pesticide license

During the presentations, some people raised the issue of whether GCSAA should require a pesticide license. Some superintendents live in states or

PDI Time Line

- June 9-10, 2000- MSRG meeting
- July 15-16, 2000- Education, Membership, Certification meeting to review MSRG recommendations
- August 2-3, 2000- Board of Directors reviews all recommendations
- Mid-August, 2000- General mailing to all A, B and C's
- September 9-10, 2000- Chapter Delegates meeting
- October 24, 2000- Fall Board meeting to review all recommendations for action.
- November, 2000- By-laws meeting
- December 31, 2000- Members receive by-laws language
- February, 2001. Potential vote at conference in Dallas

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countries where a license is not required. Some superintendents don't administer pesticides so they have no need to obtain a license.

Outcome: recommended requiring state pesticide license for class A and certified members or to have those individuals pass a GCSAA-developed test.

Ongoing requirements

The MSRSG supported ongoing requirements for both Class A members and certified superintendents which would require a combination of service and continuing education. No details had been recommended.

Outcome: members of the cross committee meeting supported ongoing requirements for Class A and certified members. They recommended that Class A members be required to obtain three points within a three-year renewal period. These points can be a combination of service points and continuing education points with a minimum of one education point.

Furthermore, they recommended that certified superintendents be required to obtain nine points within a three-year renewal period. These points can be a combination of service points and continuing education points with a minimum of three education points.

Committee members recommended that education provided by GCSAA, chapters and non-vendor turf organizations should be valued the same. All other education should be valued at half the equivalence of the turf organizations.

During the two-day meeting, several alternatives were discussed including, the Career Development System, a program proposed by Al Jansen, superintendent from Barbaroo County Club in Baraboo, Wis. Jansen's proposal integrates experience and education into a multilevel classification system.

Participants of the cross-committee indicated that they liked the simplicity of the system. However, they expressed concern relative to the lack of ongoing requirements and that the system was not tied to competencies.

The recommendations developed by the participants of the cross committee

meeting will be sent to the MSRSG and other appropriate committees (Certification and Membership) for further action.

48 Attend Reclaimed Water Seminar

Golf course superintendents from all over the state met at the Orlando Airport Marriott hotel July 28 for a GCSAA Regional Seminar on Reclaimed Water Irrigation presented by Dr. Ali Harivandi, a regular member of the GCSAA teaching faculty at national conferences.

Since water issues are becoming more important all the time and the likelihood of more use of reclaimed water becomes a reality, 48 superintendents were present to learn about the nuts and bolts of this alternate source of irrigation water. Some courses are converting to reclaimed water and some are being built only because they will be hooked up to a waste water plant.

Dr. Harivandi shared some to his key take-home messages from the presentation:

- Reclaimed water is not "bad." It is a great resource and in this day and age of growing water shortages we should be glad to have access to it.
- The water should be evaluated thoroughly so you know precisely what you're getting. No two municipality sources are the same and processing problems do happen. The water needs to be tested on a regular basis.
- There are many ways to deal with the challenges that accompany the use of waste water. The challenges can be overcome. You just have to know what they are and how to deal with each case.
- Agronomically, the most critical thing to know is the dissolved salt content of the water so counter measures and programs can be employed to combat sodium-related issues in the soil.
- Good training and education are a must for the staff and golfers alike., mostly to de-mystify the stigma attached to using waste water. You must make certain you know what the health-related issues



Dr. M. Ali Harivandi of the University of California Cooperative Extension Service recently presented a day long seminar on Reclaimed Water Irrigation to 48 FGCSA members in Orlando. Photo by Joel Jackson.

are just to be proactive about the subject. There haven't been any known problems so far.

• Supply and delivery issues need to be understood and worked out. Correct pump and pipe size engineering is necessary to take full advantage of this resource.

• Lakes and holding ponds may need aeration systems or treatments for algae growth from increased nutrient loading.

• Golf courses using reclaimed water provide a service to the community by disposing of and filtering the city's waste water and recharging the aquifer. This is a great public relations message and should be used.

• Politics and pricing are difficult issues. You may not have a choice. But when you do, do your homework on current costs, lake management, irrigation system modification. Then sit down with the course owners and utility company and figure out the cost and value. Reduce it down to a sound business decision.

Special thanks to Scott Jamros, Hawks Landing G.C. of the Central Florida GCSA and the GCSAA Education Department for organizing and providing this seminar.

JOEL JACKSON, CGCS

The State of the Association

Synopsis of CEO Report by Steve Mona

With continuing mergers and acquisitions in the industry, GCSAA is focusing on additional ways to add value, to maintain non-dues revenue growth.

Editor's Note: *I had heard Steve Mona give this message at the Publications Committee meeting in Lawrence and at the Harrell's Turf Academy this past June. This was the first time I came across a printed version, so it was easy to share with everyone.*

Our national PR campaign this year includes a series of video news releases to highlight the start of the golf season and to showcase the preparation for the U.S. Open Championship at Pebble Beach, featuring Ted Horton, CGCS.

We also have more than 100 airings of GCSAA's TV commercial booked on The Golf Channel, and are working on plans for our TV commercial for the John Deere Classic on CBS in July.

Our two-page image ad appeared in *Golf Magazine* and *Golf Digest*, reaching millions of golfers and golf enthusiasts with an example of what superintendents do to provide the best conditions possible. Infographs depicting the results of the 2000 Leadership Survey have appeared in *USA Today* and numerous other publications.

Fifty GCSAA-affiliated chapters have assigned First Tee liaisons to work with local First Tee chapters and facilities.

GCSAA also has 50 student chapters, and we will be working to improve the linkage between student chapters and the local affiliated chapters.

The first "Footsteps on the Green" scholarships will be funded by the Trans-Mississippi Golf Association. The scholarships are for golf course management students following in the footsteps of a GCSAA-member superintendent parent or grandparent. (GCSAA Legacy Awards are for children or grandchildren of GCSAA members who are seeking a degree and career in another field.)

Communications

Interviews with host superintendents for PGA Tour events are available on the Web via PGA Tour Radio's "Broadcast Booth." GCSAA's home page will offer links and more information about the interviews. Director of Communications Jeff Bollig has secured a commitment from the Senior PGA Tour to list host superintendents on Senior Tour event leader boards and involve them in various media activities. (The PGA Tour already involves the host superintendent in these ways.) Bollig also addressed a group of TV golf announcers at the Players Championship.

GCSAA *News Weekly* now has 11,000 subscribers and receives more than 80,000 hits per month. The online industry newsletter also received first place in the online publication division in the annual Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association competition.

GCSAA will be the presenting sponsor of the American Junior Golf Association national girls' championship, which will be played at Eagle Bend Golf Course in Lawrence, Kansas. GCSAA also will host an event at GCSAA headquarters for players, their parents and tournament officials. This is also the second year that GCSAA has supplied the paint for course marking for all AJGA events.

Corporate Marketing and Sales/ Conference and Show/Foundation

Better-than-expected advertising sales, exhibit sales and conference registrations generated significant extra revenues to support the association's programs and activities.

Golf Course Management continues to compete very favorably with newer publications aimed at golf course superintendents. With continuing mergers and acquisitions in the industry, GCSAA is focusing on additional ways



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The 2001 Dallas conference and show will feature a new schedule, with the trade show running Thursday through Saturday.

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Staff also is working on logistics to help competitors in the San Antonio tournament get to Dallas in time for all the conference events. Information will be included in the registration packet.

Pledges to the "Investing in the Beauty of Golf" campaign have surpassed \$4 million. Many Senior PGA Tour players have agreed to donate their time for playing a round with successful bidders in cyber auctions to support The GCSAA Foundation.

Education

Ninety-one members participated in the April cross-committee meeting to review and improve the Professional Development Initiative proposal. Staff will be contacting the three chapters that have not scheduled a chapter meeting to learn about the proposal.

The GCSAA Chapter Leadership Institute is scheduled to begin with a two-day meeting in November.

Information Services

GCSAA's Washington, D.C.-based lobby firm has provided outstanding assistance in the areas of the Food Quality Protection Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The firm also is working on developing a golf course-specific manual regarding compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations and standards. In addition to posting alerts on the GCSAA Web site when urgent state or local issues arise, government relations staff will begin sending e-mails to members in the area.

The information services committee is working on a mission statement and strategies to develop a more cohesive environmental program. Staff is working with USGA regional agronomists and university professors in anticipation of widespread drought conditions this summer to develop communications and materials to help members deal with concerns of employers and patrons.

Retired member Gordon Witteveen and golf writer Bob Labbanca are collaborating on the official history of the association, which will be published in conjunction with the association's 75th anniversary next year. A new mezzanine level for displaying elements of GCSAA's historical collection in GCSAA's headquarters lobby was scheduled to be completed by early September. GCSAA will continue to lend items to secure venues such as the World Golf Village and the World Golf Hall of Fame.

Pursell Technologies is interested in

developing a research program to monitor the environmental impact of golf course construction during the development of Pursell's new course in Alabama. The course is being designed by Michael Hurdzan, Ph.D.

Internet services

More than one-third of all GCSAA members are registered on GCSAA's Web site, including 35 percent of all superintendents and assistant superintendent members. GCSAA will be encouraging the 1,500 members who have provided e-mail addresses but have not already registered to do so in order to take advantage of content available to registered members only.

Publications

GCSAA received first place in the writing, use of photography and newsletter design categories in the annual Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association awards competition.

Golf Course Management has published 21 superintendent-written articles since July 1999. The magazine also is adding additional technical information to each issue, and is seeking opportunities to cover more limited-budget courses in stories and photography. A design consultant has been engaged to help improve the magazine's readability.

GCSAA will be testing an online version of *Newsline* to provide readers with a more interactive, functional publication. If the online version is adopted, all members will continue to receive the printed version unless they ask to discontinue it.

Executive management

GCSAA is continuing to monitor maintenance company activity, leadership changes in key industry clients and opportunities to partner in the development of technician training programs. I continue to serve on the Golf 20/20 executive board, The first Tee advisory committee and the National Golf Foundation board of directors.

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