

More information, more firepower, Snow says

By Brian L. Delgado

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Science, service and sex were prominent seminar topics at the United States Golf Association's recent annual meeting.

The USGA added seminars to the annual agenda to attract more persons to the two-day program. A record 500 persons paid \$25 each.

Thirteen seminars were presented. USGA Executive Director David Fay and President C. Grant Spaeth were among 27 speakers.

Seminar attendees received in-

formation directly from USGA staff and committee personnel. Questions and discussion were encouraged. Topics ranged from museum in Golf House to the pressing issue of environment.

USGA Green Section National Director Jim Snow announced that the USGA recently awarded 15 grants to colleges around the country to conduct research on pesticide and nutrient fate. The USGA is providing almost \$2.8 million for the projects the next three years.

Snow said the more the USGA learns, the better its position to resist allegations that golf courses must be regulated for the good of the environment.

Snow also announced formation of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, a joint effort by USGA and the Audubon Society to promote golf courses as natural habitats and sanctuaries for wildlife.

The Cooperative Program will recognize golf courses for their efforts to incorporate natural sur-

roundings into golf course design.

Director of Green Section Research Mike Kenna updated the audience on other USGA research. He discussed the USGA Turfgrass Information File, a comprehensive collection of all turfgrass research performed since 1921.

The USGA has stored the data in a computer at Michigan State University. Anyone with a computer modem can access and retrieve the data for their own use.

Kenna discussed other turfgrass research. He said five projects in

particular have been very successful in breeding grasses that will withstand stresses like heat, cold, drought and salt. Although these grasses still are being tested, the future of golf could depend on incorporating them into new golf course construction.

Jim Latham, Green Section director for the Great Lakes Region, expanded on green section services and activities during his seminar, "Golf Course Conditioning—Problems and Solutions."

Latham's slide show aroused the interest of Minnesotans, especially the information about the Green Section's agronomy visits which have not been used extensively in the state.

Seminar visitors even were treated to a bit of controversy. Reed Mackenzie, 1991 US Open general chairman, and wife Jane discussed "Equal Access: The Minnesota Experience."

They challenged those in attendance to open golf course tee times to all golf course members, regardless of sex.

The Mackenzies are concerned because they feel that unless golf course memberships act, their state governments will step in.

Such was the case in Minnesota. In 1987, the Minnesota State Legislature amended an open space property tax law to state that courses receiving these tax benefits must allow equal access to the golf course for both sexes.

Those courses that would not allow equal access to tee times would be assessed a higher tax. To date, only one club in Minnesota has not complied.

The USGA will present the seminars again at next year's annual meeting at the Breakers in Palm Beach, Fla.

Brian Delgado is communication director of the Minnesota Golf Association in Edina, Minn.

Irrigation group designs program for certification

A new educational program has been designed to certify landscape irrigation auditors.

Established by the Irrigation Association's Certification Board of Governors, the program is a two-step process.

Step one is a training course that all candidates must complete. The second step requires candidates to pass an examination administered by the National Assessment Institute.

Landscape irrigation auditors gather irrigation water-use data and test irrigation systems.

All certified auditors will be listed annually by the IA.

Further information is available from Gretchen Sears at the IA office in Arlington, Va., telephone 703-524-1200.

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