

BRIEFS



**HAZARD COMMUNICATION COURSE SET**

A self-paced Hazard Communication Correspondence Course is now available from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

The \$50 course features exercises on developing a written hazard communication program and how to write and conduct the training program.

GCSAA said superintendents completing the course should be in complete compliance with the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard. The course can be ordered from the GCSAA Education Department at 913-832-4444.

**TREESDALE HIRES NAPORA**

PITTSBURGH, Pa. — Larry M. Napora has been appointed director of greens and grounds at Treesdale, a new master-planned community here.

The appointment was announced by developer representative Jess Gift, president of Trees Development Co.

Napora is responsible for supervising construction of the 18-hole championship Arnold Palmer-designed course and, upon completion, will manage daily maintenance operations of the course and community grounds.

Previously, Napora was director of greens and grounds at Philadelphia Country Club. He gained recognition as superintendent at Oakmont Country Club.



Larry Napora

**JACKLIN GUIDE AVAILABLE**

POST FALLS, Idaho — A step-by-step guide for selecting, planting and maintaining top turfgrass varieties is available from Jacklin Seed Co. here.

The manual is designed to assist golf course superintendents and turf professionals in identifying the varieties, blends and mixtures, recommended seeding rates and planting instructions best suited to a variety of golf course applications.

Also listed is "troubleshooting" information to assist in diagnosing and treating common turfgrass disease and maintenance problems.

Contact Jacklin's marketing department, 5300 West Riverbend Ave., Post Falls, Idaho; 208-773-7581.

**GCSAA NOMINEES BEING ACCEPTED**

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is accepting nominations for the offices of president, vice president and director.

Deadline for nominations is Sept. 1, according to Nominating Committee Chairman Gerald L. Faubel.

Nominations should be sent to Faubel at GCSAA headquarters, 1421 Research Park Drive, Lawrence, Kan. 66049-3859.

# USGA specs undergoing facelift

By PETER BLAIS

Changes in greens construction recommendations and soil laboratory testing procedures are on the horizon as a result of a recently concluded study by the U.S. Golf Association.

The biggest change could make the previously mandatory 2-inch intermediate coarse-sand (choker) layer optional in areas where appropriately sized gravel is available to place under the top 12 inches of amended soil, according to Dr. Norm Hummel, a Cornell University turfgrass researcher who conducted the year-long study financed by the USGA Green Section.

The newly proposed specifications recommend that to forego the choker layer, 80 percent of the underlying gravel particles must be between 2 and 6 millimeters in diameter, Hummel said.

"I just got a note from a developer saying removing the intermediate layer would save him \$150,000 in construction costs. That's money that could be invested elsewhere on the course," Hummel said.

How about those unable to find the right gravel size who still need the choker layer? Don't totally despair, Hummel advised. Savings could be on the way there, too.

Hummel recommended increasing the range for intermediate sand layer particle sizes from their current 1 to 2 millimeters up to 1 to 4 millimeters. Builders are more

likely to find the larger diameter sands and fine gravels locally than they were before, saving transportation charges to truck in the finer sand from great distances.

"Developers have banged their heads against the wall trying to find the right intermediate layer sand for years. It shouldn't be a problem with the new specs. Many fine gravels fall between 1 and 4 millimeters," the university researcher said.

It is important to remember that these and other suggestions have not yet been accepted by the USGA, according to Green Section National Director Jim Snow. The Green Section Advisory Committee reviewed Hummel's recommendations at its June 8 meeting.

Snow planned to forward them to golf industry officials worldwide late last month and invite comment. Those comments will be collected by mid-August and reviewed by the Advisory Committee. The Green Section could act on them when its full staff meets in mid-October.

"I'd be surprised if most of the recommendations aren't adopted," Hummel said.



Dr. Norman Hummel

"There was some discussion at the Advisory Committee meeting, but not much disagreement. Europeans have some different ideas and different materials available, so they may want to modify some things. But I'd be disappointed if the recommendations changed greatly."

Among Hummel's other suggestions are:

- Changing the gravel layer from a uniform depth of 4 inches to one that is a minimum of 4 inches, but varies with the contour of the green.

- Allowing the top 12-inch amended soil layer to have 3 percent of its sand particles more than 2 millimeters in diameter and 10 percent more than 1 millimeter. "That tightens things on the upper end. More coarse material is allowed in the current specs," Hummel said.

On the finer end, the new recommendation would have 80 percent of the top-layer sand falling between 0.15 and 1 millimeter, with a minimum 60 percent between 0.25 and 1 millimeter. That leaves 10 percent that can be less than 0.15 millimeter.

"It would allow more fine sands than the current specs," Hummel said. "The idea is to allow the use of more local materials."

- Introducing specifications on soil selection and organic matter in the top layer. The final amended soil mix could have up to 3 percent clay and 5 percent silt. Organic matter in the top layer should contain at

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## USGA unveils research progress

New bentgrasses on horizon due to USGA-funded turfgrass breeding



Environmental projects mostly in initial phases of preparation

Two new heat-tolerant creeping bentgrasses are expected to be released this year, and major strides have been made with native grass species — tangible results of ongoing research being supported by the United States Golf Association.

USGA Green Section National Director said in his 9th-year report on the 10-year turfgrass research effort that "important strides have been made in improving major turfgrass species for golf, including bentgrass, Bermudagrass, zoysiagrass and even poa annua."

He also said great improvements have been made with native species such as buffalo grass, alkaligrass, blue grama and curly mesquitegrass.

Snow said the expected bentgrasses will come from Texas

A&M University's breeding program, conducted by Dr. Milt Engelke.

One of these new cultivars will be named 'Cato' bentgrass, in honor of Paul Cato, a long-time supporter of golf, former president of Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth, Texas, and founding president of Bentgrass Research, Inc., which has contributed at least \$20,000 per year to Texas

Definitive information from the 21 USGA-sponsored three-year environmental research projects that began last year will not be available, for the most part, until the end of the study, late 1993 or early 1994, according to the United States Golf Association.

USGA Green Section National Director Jim Snow said in his first-year summary of the research that for most projects "1991 was a year of constructing facilities, developing and testing experimental procedures, and collecting preliminary data.

"It also should be pointed out that an ambitious quality assurance/quality control program was established for all of the pesticide and nutrient fate studies, ensuring data that can be validated under the closest of scrutiny."

The USGA donated \$3.2 million to the projects to investigate the effects of golf courses on the environment. Its Executive Committee determined to focus research on:

- the fate of pesticides and fertilizers applied to golf courses;
- development of alternatives to using chemical pesticides to control certain pests; and
- impacts and benefits of golf courses on

*Little the USGA does, or is likely to do, will have more effect on the future of golf than funding and monitoring turfgrass research.*

— David Fay

USGA executive director

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## Brooks takes helm of Lawn Institute from retiring Roberts

James R. Brooks has been named executive director of The Lawn Institute, replacing Dr. Eliot Roberts, who retired May 1.

The announcement was made by Mike Robinson, president of The Lawn Institute and Seed Research of Oregon.

Brooks, 52, has held positions with the Professional



James Brooks

Lawn Care Association of America, Edgell Communications and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America during the past 18 years.

Robinson said, "We are extremely pleased to have an individual of Jim's stature and reputation assume the leadership role for the institute.

"His proven expertise in marketing, public relations, and association management will enable The Lawn Institute to become even more active and visible in educating the public as to the environmental benefits of improved lawns and sports turf through use of better turfseed varieties, and in promoting the important role the turfgrass industry plays in helping to protect and enhance our environment."

The administrative headquarters will now be in Marietta, Ga. The new address is The Lawn Institute, 1509 Johnson Ferry Road, NE, Suite 190, Marietta, Ga. 30062; 404-977-5492.

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# Soil laboratory tests will be standardized nationwide

By PETER BLAIS

The U.S. Golf Association Green Section plans to use the year-long work of Dr. Norm Hummel to standardize laboratory testing procedures on soil samples for golf course construction, hopefully ridding the industry of inconsistent lab results and helping ensure quality construction.

The USGA plans to adopt the testing procedures and seek their approval from the American Society of Testing and Materials this summer, according to Green Sec-

tion National Director Jim Snow.

The Green Section Advisory Committee discussed Hummel's recommendations June 8. Snow declined to discuss the specifics of the new testing procedures until "a couple loose ends" are straightened out in late June or early July.

"I'd rather not say something now when we're not sure exactly how they will read," he said.

Developers have long been frustrated by sending identical soil samples to different labs and getting different results.

*No one has overseen testing procedures for soil samples, so individual laboratories evolved their own techniques. That's why builders can send off the same soil sample to different labs and get different numbers.'*

— Jim Snow, USGA Green Section

"No one has overseen testing procedures for soil samples," Snow explained, "so individual laboratories evolved their own techniques. That's why builders can send off the same soil sample to different

labs and get different numbers."

Once the testing procedures have been adopted, the Green Section will begin sending out blind tests once or twice yearly to make certain soil laboratories are using the

standardized tests. If the results are far different than expected, the Green Section will work with the laboratory to correct its procedures.

Snow said about eight labs are doing only golf course soil testing, while another eight would like to either become involved or currently test golf course samples as part of their overall business.

"We'll encourage builders to use experienced labs employing the standardized tests," Snow said.

Snow said the Green Section will also make available soil-testing equipment that can be used to test soil mixes on site, making it unnecessary to send samples to a lab.

"Many builders don't have time to take samples and send them to a lab," Snow explained. "That has caused problems. For instance, some courses have ended up with half as much organic matter in their soil mix as they wanted. Others have had twice as much."

Unlike laboratory equipment, on-site test apparatus measures weight rather than volume, Snow said. It costs less than \$1,000 or can be borrowed from regional Green Section offices as part of their Turf Advisory Service.

## USGA green specs about to change

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least 80 percent organic material and a fiber content of 20 to 50 percent.

"Compost is becoming more readily available throughout the country and is being used in golf course construction," Hummel noted. "Finely ground bark, rice hulls, sewage sludge and other organic waste products can be acceptable if composted to the curing or stabilization state. The use of compost will have a precautionary note because of the variability of different products."

- Returning infiltration rates to the specifications. The USGA would recommend two sets of numbers — a normal range for the favored grass species in that geographic area and an acceptable range in unusual circumstances, i.e. poor water quality or a cool-season grass used in a warm-season climate.

- Moving fertilizer recommendations out of the Green Section's "Tips for Success" and into the USGA specifications.

"Everyone I've worked with has been very cooperative and felt the specifications review and standardization of lab procedures needed to be done," said Hummel, who will return to his Cornell post in July.

Hummel said he was surprised at his historical review of the scientific literature that led to some of the USGA specifications. For example, no research was done to support the use of the choker layer, he said.

"It seemed to be an arbitrary decision that it should be there," Hummel said. "It worked and served a purpose, so it became an accepted part of the specs."

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