

New USGA president pledges research will continue

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Bloch said the USGA is "on the cutting edge of a lot of exciting programs."

Environmental and turfgrass research is at the top of the list.

"The service we're providing golfers will only get better in the area of agronomy," he said. "Environmental research projects are overdue and hopefully we'll stimulate other people, other companies outside the sphere to invest.

"As long as we can see results, we

are not going to back away from it."

Noting that the USGA is in the beginnings of a 10-year turf research program, Bloch said: "We're beginning to see the results. New and improved grasses is a tremendous asset in the hands of superintendents because they are region-specific.

He cited:

- Buffalograss improvements, which is "exciting when you consider we're going to have a water shortage on this planet some day."
- Seeded Bermudagrass, which

is "long overdue and it came from our efforts."

• A lot of improved bentgrasses that will be introduced.

• Zoysiagrass, which "will be much more a grass of choice over the next few years."

• Poa annua, which he called "the real kicker."

"The result of this research is that we are going to be able to seed poa annua. And if you can seed it you can do a lot of things with it. You can develop species that are

really resistant to heat in the transition zone. Just think of what use there might be for overseeding Bermudagrass greens with poa annua instead of ryegrass. Poa gives better putting surfaces."

Bloch said the USGA is doing "a lot of exciting things that will help the superintendents and architects.

"We're working together with them. There is a lot of give and take on what they need and what we're trying to do, and how we can help each other. We're basically there to help them."

Bloch also pointed to environmental studies.

"The fate of chemicals and the need to know is getting more and more intense," he said, "because the lead time to build golf courses is getting longer and longer as the environmentalists demand this information."

Ultimately, Bloch said, the golf industry must show environmental and governmental bodies that building golf courses is a positive, not negative force for nature.

"The effect on the water table is one area of study. Another area is the use of effluent. It's a reason to build golf courses... The more research we can provide on what happens with fertilizers and pesticides, the more environmental and governmental bodies will be comfortable with building golf courses," he said.

"We've just completed the first year of fate studies, and I think people will be surprised just how little effect there is. But it's too early to report that. Within the bounds of capable use, this research will show that a golf course is not a contaminant.

"As a matter of fact, with the Audubon (Wildlife Sanctuary) program we may be able to show that we're a wildlife refuge and a place that is adding rather than subtracting."

Bloch foresees that in the next few years, the industry will see:

- speeded-up approval for construction permits;
- new grasses that will use less fertilizer and water, saving golf courses money; and
- better conditions on which to play the game.

"I think we're at about the level of spending that will get that done," he said.

But Bloch said it is time for the Turfgrass Information Service (at Michigan State University) to stand on its own.

"There are other organizations that should step in, like the GCSAA, architects and builders. GCSAA has large membership and the financial capability to provide this service for their members as they become more computer literate," he said.

Resort community wins town OK at Mammoth Mtn.

MAMMOTH MTN., Calif.—The town council has approved a 210-acre resort community at Mammoth.

The \$50-million first phase will include an 18-hole golf course, 200-room full-service hotel with restaurants, conference and convention facilities, golf clubhouse amenities and 40 to 60 single-family homes.

When Lodestar at Mammoth is finished, it will include two resort hotels and many year-round activities, as well as retail shops and restaurants along a lake.

The 6,400-yard, par-70 golf course is designed by Cal Olson Golf Architecture of Costa Mesa.

Revolutions Underground.

This means greens dry faster after rain or irrigation. And it causes less injury to the grass. Result?

Deeper roots, as confirmed by four years of independent research at Michigan State University. This should lead to healthier, stronger turf.

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