

BRIEFS



SHIRLEY IS GEORGIA PRESIDENT

William Shirley of Idle Hour Club in Macon is the new president of the Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association. Shirley is joined on the board by Vice President Mark Esoda of Atlanta Country Club and Directors Jim Dusch of Atlanta National Golf Club, Mike Hamilton of Harbor Club, Ralph Hinz of The Landings, Bob Perry of Griffin Country Club, Chuck Underwood of Northwood Country Club, Stephen Wilson of Druid Hills Golf Club, and Franz "Buck" Workman of Valdosta Country Club.

N.C. TURFGRASS EVENT PLANNED

RALEIGH, N.C. — The Professional Turf and Landscape Field Day will be held at the Turfgrass Field Laboratory (Field Center) on May 12. This North Carolina State University event is jointly sponsored by the Turfgrass Council of North Carolina and the North Carolina Landscape Contractors Association. For more information contact TCNC at 919-695-1333.

LONGVIEW TURF PROGRAM ACCEPTED

Longview Community College's grounds and turf management program has been officially accepted as an associate degree program by the Coordinating Board of Higher Education in

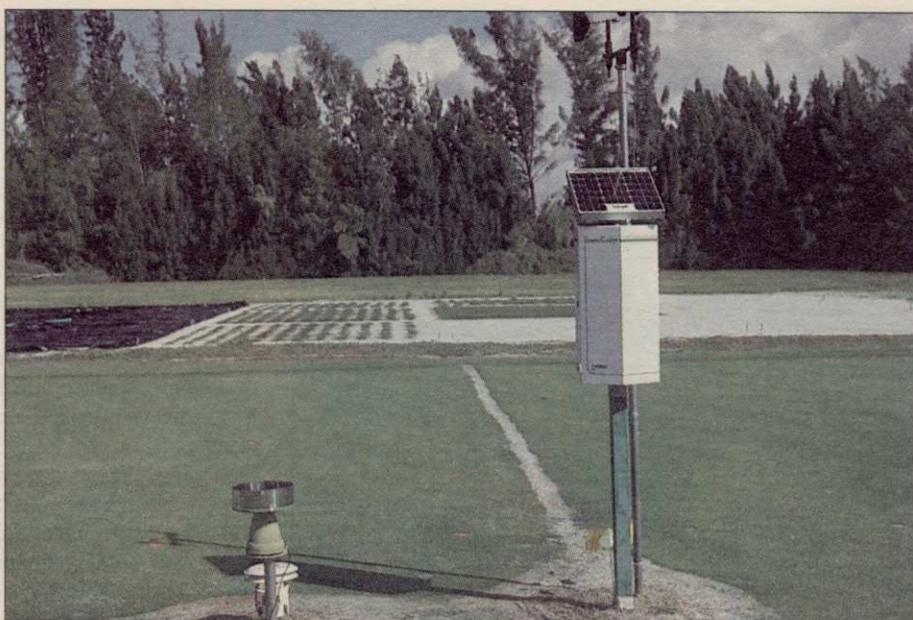


the state of Missouri. Training coordinator Allen L. Earle said: "I feel very strongly that this program will be very beneficial to anyone involved in the 'green' industry. Currently, there is no horticulture degree program in the Kansas City area. It is our desire to present the highest quality training that will be pertinent to 'real-life' experiences."

N.C. EVENT BREAKS RECORDS

The 31st Annual North Carolina Turfgrass Conference & Show shattered all previous records, according to Tom Bland, president-elect of the Turfgrass Council of North Carolina. Bland attributed the success to a combination of factors, a total-event marketing plan. Twenty-two hundred and fifty turf industry professionals participated in more than 20 hours of educational programs focusing on effective turf management and environmental stewardship based on integrated pest management. Attendance was up 501 over last year's event. The 10th Anniversary industry Trade Show boasted 159 companies exhibiting in 350 booth spaces. The previous show record was 302 booth spaces. Bland said most significant, he said, was the \$66,000 in cash contributions to the Research Endowment and Foundation

Photo courtesy of the Univ. of Florida Fort Lauderdale



The University of Florida's new research green in the background was added last fall next to the old green. The Envirocaster system in the foreground, which collects weather data, is in the center of the old green. The hybrid Bermudagrass cultivar Tifgreen 328, on the left, and Tifdwarf, on the right, are maintained at 3/16-inch height. The new green is being planted with Tifdwarf.

Florida research green sheds light on effects of maintenance

By PETER BLAIS

The University of Florida's research green in Ft. Lauderdale has yielded interesting findings regarding the effects of nitrogen levels, various fungicides and maintenance practices on Bermudagrass putting surfaces, according to researchers and course superintendents.

New and ongoing studies involving pesticide movement through turfgrass, organic biostimulants and experimental Bermudagrass cultivars should help Southern superintendents grow stronger turf in the not-so-distant future, according to Monica Elliott, the university's Research and Education Center coordinator.

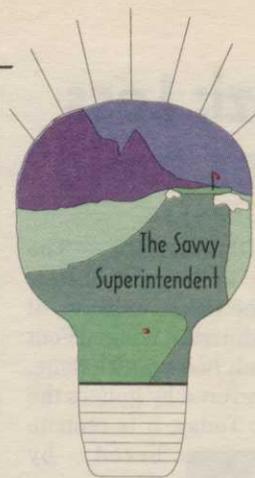
"The research green project has been very well received and well supported so

far," said Kevin Downing, superintendent at nearby Willoughby Golf Club. Downing is also chairman of the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association committee that spearheaded development of the Otto Schmeisser research green. The facility opened almost two years ago.

Elliott listed some of the early findings on the original 20,000-square-foot USGA-spec green and the new 10,000-square-foot, 85-15 (sand-to-organics) root-zone mix addition added last fall:

- Synthetic nitrogen levels can be reduced a moderate amount without adversely affecting turf characteristics, although extremely low application levels do cause a dropoff in quality. Researchers tested low-, moderate- and high-

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Of putting greens and reel grinders

By TERRY BUCHEN

One of the more "fun" aspects of being a golf course superintendent is to modify equipment to suit personal tastes, sharing tricks of the trade with our peers, and the art of time/motion studies.

With these thoughts in mind, I'd like to share a few new ideas in golf course management.

PUTTING GREEN CONSTRUCTION

One easy way to be able to locate the delineation of the native soil and USGA greens construction profile is to lay a 14-gauge irrigation wire completely around the green subsurface and attach both ends to the left-front irrigation head. Whenever the greens/collar edge is needed to be located, attach a wire-locator instrument to the wires and the exact edge can be found fast and easy, instead of using a soil probe to try and find the greens soil mix. We did this at Double Eagle Club on all of our greens during construction two years ago and it works great. In years to come, as any mowed edge gets

*Editor's note: This is the first installment of a new monthly column we will print to provide helpful hints to golf course superintendents.*

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Tour of Duty

**RICKY WIDEMAN**  
Harbor Town Golf Links  
Hilton Head Island, S.C.  
MCI Heritage Classic  
April 15-18, CBS

Ricky Wideman was familiar with the nooks and crannies of Harbor Town long before he arrived in Hilton Head two years ago from Palmetto Dunes. Wideman used to crew at Harbor Town during the Heritage Classic while a student in the turf program at Horry Georgetown College in Myrtle Beach.



Now the 33-year-old native of McCormick, S.C. is running the show. He says the best/worst things about hosting a PGA tournament are closely related. "The best thing is everyone coming together to do the job right. The worst thing is the letdown afterwards. Everybody works so hard, and when it's over, we all get the post-tournament blues."

**Things to look for:** "We just went through a three-month renovation project, installing a new irrigation system and cart

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**DEAN CROUCH**  
Forest Oaks Country Club  
Greensboro, N.C.  
K-Mart Greater Greensboro Open  
April 22-25, CBS

Dean Crouch, 31, came to Forest Oaks in 1989 from the prestigious Atlanta Athletic Club, where he served as assistant superintendent. Prior to that, he cut his teeth at Indian Hills Country Club in Marietta, Ga. Though he's a native of Columbia, S.C., Crouch is not a fan of University of South Carolina Gamecock red & black. He greatly prefers the bright orange of Clemson University, where he earned his B.S. in plant science.

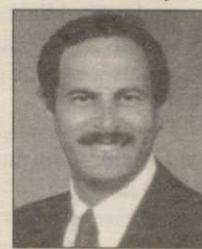
**Things to look for:** "The biggest difference in the course is we just reconstructed the 18th green this past fall. Architect Clyde Johnston handled it with Fuzzy Zoeller consulting. We tried to do several things. We wanted to pick up more pin placements, and we lowered the green 3 feet to give players the feeling they were



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**MIKE LINK**  
TPC at the Woodlands  
The Woodlands, Texas  
Shell Houston Open  
April 29-May 2, ABC

Mike Link, a 34-year-old native of Ponca City, Okla., came to the Woodlands after serving as assistant superintendent at the 27-hole River Plantation Country Club in Conroe, Texas. He is a 1980 graduate of Oklahoma State University with a B.S. in agronomy.



**Things to look for:** "It's been awfully wet here the last three years. I've been trying to apply a pre-emergent herbicide this week (March 5-9) and the rain has delayed that. Weather is the biggest headache for us. I have a game plan that I go by and, if the weather cooperates, everything goes like clockwork. If it doesn't you go to plan B, which can be pretty hectic. I've worked 12 events, so I've gotten to know the Tour officials pretty

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## Bator to draw on past while building future as consultant

PENFIELD, N.Y. — Richard M. Bator, who has earned acclaim for his work as superintendent at Oak Hill Country Club and Pine Valley and Merion golf clubs, has opened his own consulting business.

Bator, who has also designed and built two golf courses, said he will offer expertise on conversion programs from poa annua to bentgrass; course restoration; new course construction, from pre-construction to grow-in specifications; and customized programs to fill particular needs.

"My intention is to service all ranges of

clubs, from low- to medium- and high-profile clubs, along with a special interest in public or municipal courses," Bator said. "I will also work with an architect of a new club for grow-in specifications and in preparation of operating and capital budgets for the club and future maintenance program schedules."

Bator said he expects to help especially

"private ownership clubs, mom-and-pop courses — lower-budget clubs where the superintendent needs more guidance.

"There is a big need [for consultants] at public courses, maybe moreso than at the high-profile private clubs."

Bator said he often called in other superintendents and university scientists when he

had agronomic trouble on his course. He hopes to pass along the knowledge he gained the last 25 years.

"A second set of eyes, a fresh face is very important," he said.

Bator was superintendent at Oak Hill from 1977 until moving to Pine Valley in 1983. He left in 1986 to design and build Blue Heron Hills Country Club and Gypsum Mills Country Club, then took the superintendent post at Merion in 1989.

Bator is located at 210 Willow Pond Way, Penfield, N.Y. 14526; telephone 716-377-3026.

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## Tour of Duty

### Wideman

paths. The new irrigation system [Network 8000 from Toro] is working out great. We always had a center-line system that didn't get the rough. Now we go treeline to treeline.

"We also have the traditional Harbor Town striping. The same guy has done it for years. Our fairways are very wet so I went to the lightweight mowers last year. It's really helped... Extra mowing is the biggest thing we do. It goes from once or twice a week to everything every day. We have small greens here and our green-side slopes, up until last year, were pretty long. Now we mow 'em tight so the ball rolls away from the green."

**Made-for-TV preparations:** "The old cart paths were 25 to 30 years old and pretty beat up. We tried to keep the new ones out of sight of TV, but most of them don't come into play on the TV holes anyway... On our 14th hole — a par 3 over water — we always have nursery-grown azaleas. We bring them in on Wednesday night before the pro-am day. We have a lot of azaleas growing naturally on the course, but they're never in bloom during the tournament."

### Crouch

hitting down to the green. You couldn't see the whole putting surface before. We also wanted to create more spectator mounding. Eventually we'll be doing the same sort of renovation on most of the greens here.

"We also redid the bunkers around 18. We have steep, sand-faced bunkers here. They look great, but we decided to flatten them out and grass the faces. The wash down is awful with the steep faces and it hurts the consistency of the sand, which is one of our biggest complaints. Eventually, we'll be redoing all of the bunkers like this."

**Made-for-TV preparations:** "Our course changes a great deal for the tournament. When people see it on TV, it's not what's here most of the year. Because we play on overseeded ryegrass, we have 4- to 6-inch rough, U.S. Open-type rough. We also use lightweight fairway mowers for striping.

"We're actually fortunate with the weather because our tournament got moved. We used to be the week before the Masters. Now we're two weeks after, which means much better weather. But the new schedule does mess up our aerifying schedule."

### Link

well."

**Made-for-TV preparations:** "I try to establish my mowing patterns early, about the middle of March, well in advance of the tournament. If you establish different cuts early — like with the intermediate rough — the distinction is really there for TV. On the par-3 16th, during tournament week, I mow with a triplex in the direction of the camera, which is set up right behind the green. That way the TV really picks up the striping effect.

"We also add sand to the bunkers in December, so it will have time to firm up. We don't do a whole lot of extra landscaping [for the tournament] because the motif here at the Woodlands is very natural. But the Shell people put some flowers around the 14th tee box in the shape of a big shell."

**Editor's note:** "Tour of Duty" is a regular feature this year in Golf Course News. It is designed to celebrate the PGA Tour's unsung, underpublicized hero: The superintendent.

# What You See.



Photography location courtesy of Marriot's Marco Island Resort and Golf Club.