

Nichols' reign begins, as GCSAA moves forward

By PETER BLAIS

Randy Nichols prefers to look at the overwhelming rejection of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America proposed bylaw changes in a positive light.

"I didn't see it as a negative. As far as I'm concerned the members were saying they are happy with the way we've done things so far, so why change," said the new GCSAA president.

That mindset should stand the head superintendent of Dunwoody, Ga.'s Cherokee Town & Country Club in good stead as he leads the association into a new year.

Some good intentions, like getting members more involved in GCSAA affairs, were contained in the proposed bylaw changes, Nichols said.

Incorporating those lofty ideals while modifying the proposals to make them more palatable to members is one of Nichols' priorities.

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Among Nichols' other priorities are moving forward on the superintendent



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mortality study seeking to determine if there are any links between long-term pesticide exposure and certain diseases, and collecting data on ground water contamination studies being conducted at many courses around the country.

The new GCSAA president expects the controversial field staffing program to be instituted on a regional trial basis later this year rather than the nationwide plan origi-

nally proposed.

He also looks for steady growth in Asia, where GCSAA opened a Singapore office last year and will conduct its first Pacific Rim Conference and Show in March.

Nichols said he looks forward to working with new board of director members David Fearis of Blue Hills Country Club in Kansas City, Mo., and George Renault of Burning Tree Club in Bethesda, Md.

"I think they'll both do very well," Nichols said. "Dave has been involved with GCSAA a long time and has spoken often at the Club Managers Association of America annual meeting. George has been very involved in the GCSAA, too."

As for the directors they unseated, Charles Passios and Joseph Hahn, Nichols said:

"I have the utmost respect for both of them. They felt passing the bylaws was important. They were sort of victimized by their support for them."

Nichols has hit the turf running since replacing Bill Roberts as president during late January's GCSAA Annual Conference and Show.

From Anaheim, Nichols immediately headed east for the U.S. Golf Association's annual meeting in Nashville, Tenn.

His schedule over the next two months had him going back to the Club Managers Association of America's Annual Conference and Show in Nashville, the Pacific Rim show in Singapore, GCSAA's spring board meeting in Lawrence, Kansas, and the GCSAA planning meeting at the Masters Tournament in Augusta, Ga.

"Hopefully things will slow down a little bit this summer," Nichols mused. "There's a lot going on around here [Cherokee Town & CC], too. We're building a new clubhouse."

"It's going to take over the 10th tee, so we're rebuilding that hole. We're installing the irrigation, landscaping around the clubhouse and putting in a new pool center."

Fortunately, Nichols said he has two capable superintendents heading the club's two courses — Jim League at the Joe Lee-designed River layout and Brian Holshouser at Willard Byrd's Hills track.

Nichols also plans to touch base with many of the regional associations. Board members appeared at meetings conducted by 35 regional associations last year and Nichols expects to be among the board's representatives at an equal or greater number of meetings in 1993.

As for the annual show in Anaheim, Nichols said he was pleased with the attendance, which preliminary figures showed standing at a near-record 16,000.

"From what I saw and heard, there was a lot of interest in what was happening on the show floor," Nichols said. "Most booths had 10 to 15 people lined up every time I passed by."

"We went through a couple of years there where people didn't have as much money to spend. But if that [show] activity is any indication, things are looking up."

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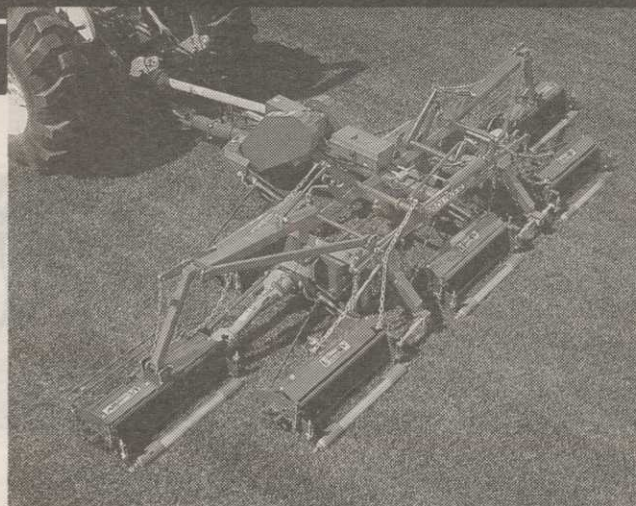
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