

BRIEFS



BORAX ON WARPATH

CINCINNATI, Ohio — Turfgrass as well as agronomic issues will be addressed at the annual meetings here of the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and Soil Science Society of America, Nov. 7-12. For instance, research out of Iowa State University shows that 20 Mule Team Borax is the weapon to use against ground ivy, known as creeping Charlie, the scourge of mature, shaded turf areas. The meetings will be held at the Cincinnati Convention Center. More information is available from the societies at 677 South Segoe Road, Madison, Wis. 53711; 608-273-8080.

AGRISCIENCE, BIOTECHNOLOGY STUDIED

MADISON, Wis. — The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a \$456,780 grant to the National FFA Foundation to partially fund a study entitled Voluntary National Skills



Standards for Competency in Agriscience/Biotechnology. The 18-

month study, to be matched by the education, industrial and labor communities, will determine the skills employees will need in agriscience/biotechnology occupations. The goal is to develop voluntary educational standards in these fields which will lead to a better-prepared workforce.

TGIF LISTING ARCHITECTS

TGIF (Turfgrass Information File), the industry's largest single source of turfgrass information, has created a new listing containing members of the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA). Information from TGIF is available in hard copy or via a modem, and can be searched by author name, subject, etc. For additional information about TGIF, or the architects' directory, contact Nancy Donati, Medinah Country Club, Medinah Road, Medinah, Ill. 60157-9653; 708-773-1700, ext. 254, or Peter Cookingham.

RECYCLING PESTICIDE CONTAINERS

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio State University instituted a pesticide container recycling program at its Turfgrass Research Field Day here Aug. 17. Superintendents could drop off their clean, empty pesticide containers, which Grower Service Co. will grind, granulating them for further processing. Eventually, they will be made into new containers or be put to other safe uses. The program was supported by OSU Extension, the Ohio Department of Agriculture and Ohio AgriBusiness Association.

Are the seasons getting longer?

Superintendents in the transition zones say 'Yes'

By MARK LESLIE

Playing seasons are getting longer in some areas of the country, causing turfgrass damage of which many superintendents are not even aware.

"We have no winters," superintendent Russell Bateman said matter-of-factly of the five Baltimore Municipal Golf Courses.

"On Thanksgiving weekend at the end of November if you have days anywhere near 50 degrees, this place is packed," said Bill Neus of the semi-private Hobbits Glen Golf Course in Baltimore, president of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents. "When I got into this business, after Labor Day



November

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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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'Ten years ago we had 40,000 rounds a year. Now we're at 55,000.'

— Bill Neus

play just died. That's not even part of the equation any more.

"Ten years ago we had 40,000 rounds a year. Now we're at 55,000. On a mild winter weekend day we'll do 150 to 200

rounds of golf. And public courses will do more."

Play has gradually gone deeper into the winter and started earlier in the spring. The resulting problems are many.

"One major problem is that damage caused by winter play doesn't show until the heat stress of summer, and many superintendents don't associate it with using the course in the winter," said Jim Snow, national director of the U.S. Golf

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Stone gets personal

Honors tests grasses in pursuit of the best

By PETER BLAIS

COOLTEWAH, Tenn. — Under stressful conditions in southeastern Tennessee, many new bentgrass varieties far outperform Pennncross, according to a Chattanooga-area superintendent conducting his own scientific field trials.

"You couldn't twist my arm far enough to make me seed a new course with Pennncross," said David Stone, head superintendent at The Honors Course.

Stone's assertion is based on two years of rigorous testing at his own facility. Stone's studies, in fact, remind United States Golf Association agronomist Pat O'Brien of the days when course managers routinely maintained their own test nurseries. There they grew many vegetatively propagated varieties of bentgrass to determine which performed best in their specific locale.

That practice started to disappear in the late 1950s with the appearance of Pennncross, the Green Section's Southeastern Region turf expert said. Released in 1955, Pennncross soon became the preferred bentgrass seed for golf course greens.

"It's the leading creeping bentgrass in the world today," said Tee-2-Green President Bill Rose, whose company produces Pennncross. "In some climates it's still the best."

With the abundance of new bentgrass varieties introduced in

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Yount honored in Florida

The Florida Turfgrass Association (FTGA) has honored Executive Director Bob Yount, center, with its Wreath of Grass Award, given annually to a member who demonstrates commitment and hard work toward the association's goals. Charles Campbell of DowElanco Specialty Products presented the award, citing Yount's integrity and accomplishments over the years. The head of the FTGA since 1988, Yount was chairman of the 1987 Nestle Invitational Golf Tournament, general chairman of the 1991 USGA Junior Amateur Championship, and the board of directors for the Butler Chain of Lakes Conservation Association from 1982-84. Yount is flanked by his wife Phyllis and son Bobby Jr.

USGA reports on nationwide university research

Turfgrass safer than farmland, research studies confirm

By MARK LESLIE

Major university studies around the country are verifying the belief that turfgrass is a vast improvement to agricultural land in pesticide and fertilizer leaching, and researchers are even comparing differences between grasses in runoff studies.

The U.S. Golf Association Green Section's newly released annual Environmental Research Summary notes these findings along with many others in its review of USGA-funded research projects. The booklet reports results after the second year of the three-year studies.

Objectives of the overall project are to understand the effect of turfgrass pest management and fertilization on water quality and the environment; evaluate valid alternative methods of pest control to be used in integrated turf management systems; and determine

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Environmental findings widespread, report says

From staff reports

Ten years and \$5 million after it was undertaken, new and better grasses that survive on less water and lower maintenance have been developed through the Turfgrass Research Program initiated in 1982 by the U.S. Golf Association (USGA) Green Section and Golf Course Superintendents

Association of America. So the USGA Executive Committee has committed its support for another five years, according to Jim Snow, Green Section national director.

Some 40 research projects improved knowledge about water-use rates of various turfgrasses and how these grasses react to moisture stress; introduced new grasses that use less water and pesticides; and forwarded understanding of maintenance practices.

Snow said: "Through the efforts of the individual turfgrass scientists and their support staff, many significant

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Longer seasons mean agronomic problems in transition zone

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Association Green Section.

"Winter play does severe harm to the grass. You compact the soil and you have weeds and poor water infiltration. People wonder why and associate it with summer problems instead of being caused by playing months before, during the winter."

Since turfgrass is mostly dormant in the fall, winter and early spring, it is unable to recover from traffic, divots and ball marks during that time. So the turf thins out, leaving perfect conditions for infestation of poa annua and weeds like goosegrass and crabgrass, Snow said.

Neus said that while Hobbits Glen has always remained open year-round, the level of maintenance is noticeably different now.

"If the traps aren't frozen, they [members] expect them to be raked in January and February. They want the course as prepared as possible. We have a few winter greens that we mow and roll periodically," he said.

Added Bateman: "We're open 364 days a year. Even New Year's Day is big if it's decent weather... Our mission is to provide golf."

WINTER PLAY PROBLEMS

But providing golf has its drawbacks.

Divots, Neus said, are a massive nuisance.

"In a mild winter the landing areas get like land mines," he said. "Golfers need to take more care in the winter and they don't. Ball marks are also big problems. Along with divots in the fairways, they exacerbate the problem of poa annua when you have traffic. In a mild winter poa annua will continue to germinate and it grows into those areas..."

Since thinning and soil compaction leave a green open to poa annua encroachment, "this can be disaster if you're trying to grow bentgrass greens," said Snow. "If at all possible, try not to use the greens during the winter. Play on temporary greens."

Because more work is required to maintain courses in the winter, less time is available for normal wintertime work and a larger crew is necessary come spring, Neus said.

"Traditionally, wintertime has been our off-season when we've done tree and drainage work — non-maintenance things," he said. "Now you have to mesh it [non-maintenance work] in, whereas before you could almost go out with blinders on, not worry about the rest of the course and focus on projects."

More part-time help is also required. "Now I have a couple of part-timers right through the wintertime," Neus said. "It does make your full-time staff so much more critical. If you don't have an adequate staff, a lot of things won't get done."

"Then you run into snow. That

can screw things up, too."

BUTTING HEADS

While using temporary greens would solve many of the headaches, they are often politically incorrect in the clubhouse.

"Golfers just don't want that. When they come out in January they want to play the whole golf course. You're always butting heads," Neus said. "I don't like playing on a temporary green, either. So I understand. But it's a hard sell that winter golf is one of

the most detrimental things you can do. There's nothing good about it for the turf.

"Avid winter golfers will hang petitions in the locker room to keep the greens open. They rant and rave at green committee meetings. They don't want to hear that they are damaging the course. To them, it's a crock."

CHANGE IS PERMANENT

It does not appear this trend toward longer seasons will reverse. Terry Buchen, superintendent at Double Eagle in Galen,

Ohio, attributed it to several things that evolved in the 1970s. Golf club members never used to play other courses, he said. "Then, in the '70s, they started, and they compared. Secondly, seasons are longer. Even in true Northern climates like Chicago and upstate New York. People get cabin fever. When you get one week of fine weather in the spring, members say, 'Why can't we play?'"

"Members also want to get their money's worth. Another reason

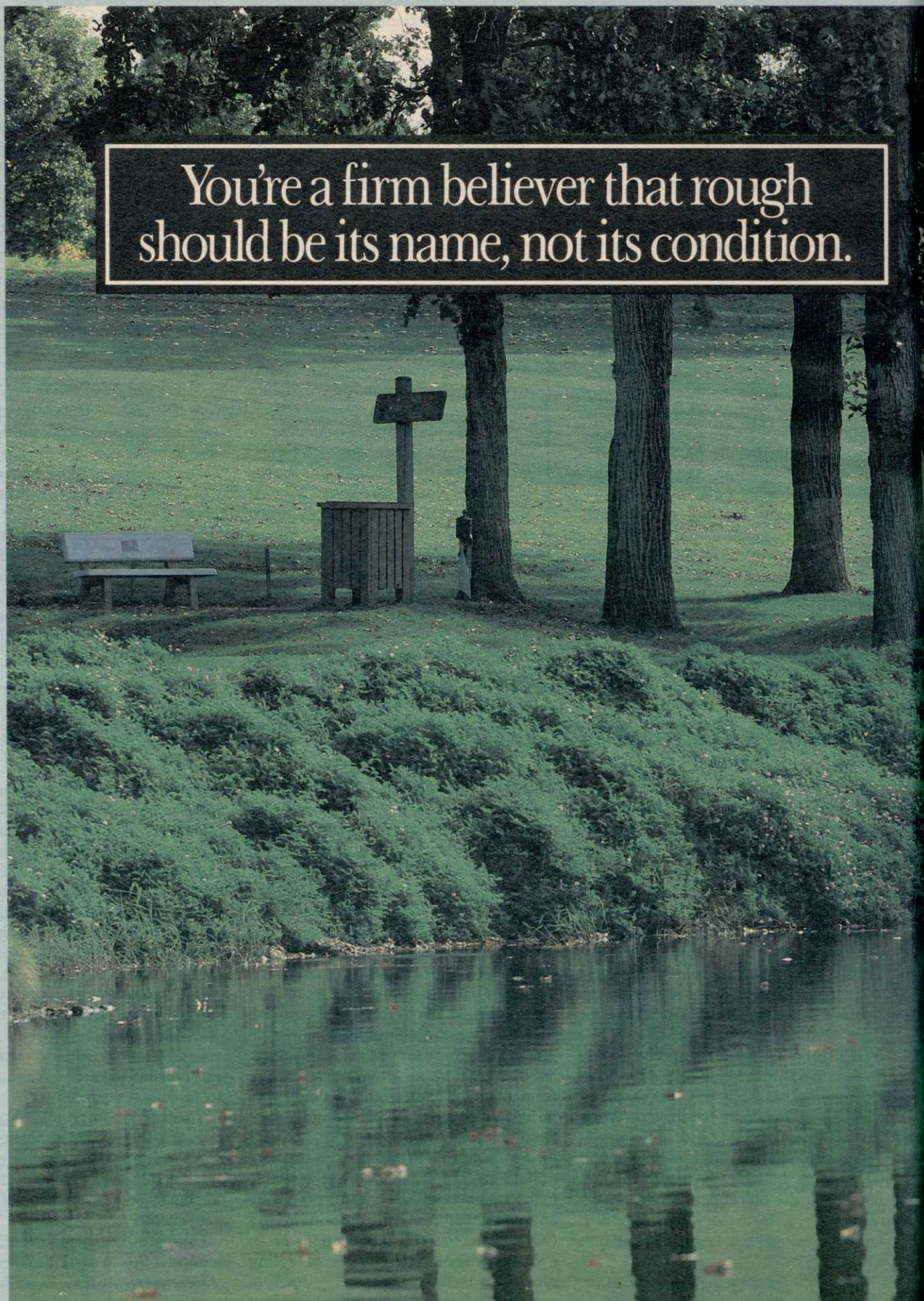
is that people sit in their living rooms in the second week of April and see the Masters on television, and want to



Bill Neus

Former Oregon Golf Course Superintendents Association

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You're a firm believer that rough should be its name, not its condition.

Super's construction responsibilities specific but varied

By TERRY BUCHEN

The responsibilities of a golf course superintendent during course construction are many and varied. Here are the most crucial:

1. Communications: Act as a liaison and owner's representative between the course architect, builder, sub-contractors and the owner/developer on the construction site.

2. Specifications: Work with the course architect in preparing construction specifications, with the owner's best interests,

objectives and budget constraints in mind.

3. Irrigation: Work with the irrigation system designer in developing the sprinkler system with the owner's and architect's best interests and budget in mind.

4. Budgets: Prepare the following budgets for the owner:

- a. Grow-in maintenance budget.
- b. Post grow-in maintenance budget.
- c. Capital golf course maintenance equipment budget.
- d. Capital golf course

maintenance building structure and contents budget.

e. Capital golf course accessories budget.

5. Design: Work with the owner's building architect to develop the floor plans and objectives for:

- a. The golf course maintenance building, soil storage and irrigation pumphouse.
- b. A rain shelter and rest rooms on course.
- c. A snack bar and halfway house on course.

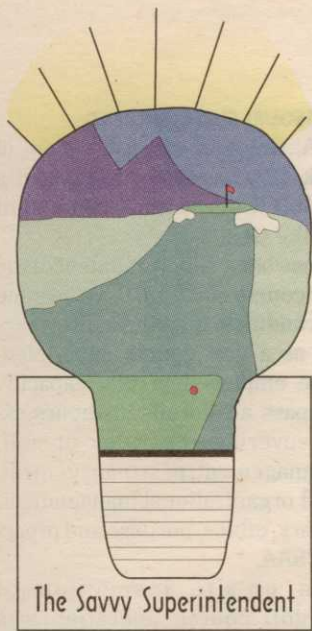
6. Photographs: Take photographs of all irrigation drainage work, and initial golf course construction as a permanent file for the owner.

7. As-builts: Help the golf course contractor and sub-contractors prepare permanent as-built blueprints of all construction activity, such as irrigation, drainage, underground utility lines, utility conduits, and anything else buried on site.

8. Environment: Coordinate environmental impact studies.

9. Helping hand: Assist the total effort by: locating local sod sources, building a permanent putting green for the marketing department, testing the sand-soil mix for the greens, obtaining bids by contractors, making final selection of a contractor, scheduling construction, installing electricity for the irrigation pumphouse as soon as possible, hiring a staff and growing in the course as soon as possible.

Be friendly and cooperative with the owner, architect and contractor.



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got the time. Toro's

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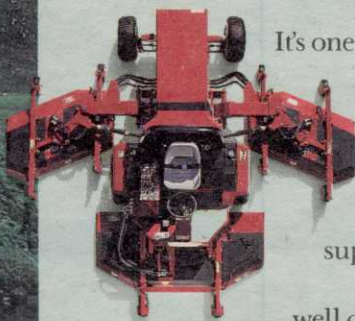
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Hagy joins Diamond Run

PITTSBURGH — Richard A. Hagy has been appointed superintendent at Diamond Run Golf Club.

Hagy began his career in golf course maintenance at the famed Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga., home of the Masters. Following his seven-year stint at Augusta, Hagy accepted the position of assistant golf course superintendent at Woodcrest Country Club in Cherry Hill, N.J. in 1988. He then accepted a similar position at The Club at Nevillewood, in suburban Pittsburgh, in 1991.

Longer seasons

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President Mark Snyder, of Salishan Lodge Golf Links in Glenden Beach, Ore., said: "It is safe to say, the Northwest reflects many other areas of the country in terms of increased play. Typically, it is very weather-related. If the weather's nice, the parking lot is full. If not, it's empty."

CONTRAST AND COMPARE

Yet, if superintendents want to debate closing their courses, they might present evidence from one New Jersey municipal facility.

Snow said this 36-hole facility had severe goosegrass problems in the summertime and decided to close one 18-hole course during the winters. "The difference between the greens was unbelievable," he said. "The goosegrass almost went away on the one course, while the other continued to have severe goosegrass problems. It dramatically illustrated the effects of thinning on the turf."