

GCN to help publish USGA research findings

I'm pleased to announce that *Golf Course News* and the United States Golf Association Green Section will work together in the coming months to disseminate the findings of USGA-financed research.

The USGA spends nearly \$2 million per year on turf-related research. It allocated a full \$3 million to fund one comprehensive study of golf course maintenance practices and their effects on the environment.

The fruits of all this research are rolling in to Golf House — the USGA headquarters in Far Hills, N.J. — by the truckload, according to Jim Snow, national director of the USGA Green Section.

To help circulate the findings of these studies, *Golf Course News*

will publish a USGA-research-oriented column each month in the Maintenance section, starting with our January 1993 edition. Sometimes it will be a first-person commentary from a particular researcher. Other times it will be a story about a researcher whose particular turf-related experimentation should be of interest to superintendents.

Now, you can't thoroughly encapsulate most scholarly research efforts in a news story. So, if readers are interested in obtaining the full report, *Golf Course News* will always provide the necessary information.

The USGA will, of course, continue to publish its research findings wherever it pleases:



Hal Phillips, editor

The USGA *Record*, *Golf Course Management* and others. There is, however, a glut of information coming down the research pipeline, and *Golf Course News* is happy to assist in its publication.

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Just as *Golf Course News* went to press this month, Environmental Protection Agency director Carol Browner unveiled her plans for pesticide reduction. Browner indicated the EPA goal for nationwide reduction of pesticide use is 75 percent by the year 2000. Wow!

While the report cannot be seen as good news, there are some important things to remember:

First, sources inside the agency have told me that EPA's assault on the pesticide industry will hit hardest in the agricultural arena. Of course, the turf world will also feel its repercussions, but not as severely.

Second, the EPA has an important public relations role in the new administration. Unlike its Bush Administration incarnation, which was more damage control, the EPA under Browner is looking to make points with the public — for her boss, Bill Clinton.

According to Steve Johnson, the EPA director of field operations who spoke at the RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) Annual Meeting last month, the EPA recognizes the reduction of

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Veep Gore destroys designer golf green... The nerve!

Hey, whatever happened to values in this country? Where's our sense of history, of rightness, of appropriate behavior?

I understand why our kids can't read. Phonetics was taken out of the classroom.

I understand why there's so much trash on television. Heck, 51% of television executives feel adultery is just fine.

I understand how vanilla ice cream can still be the number-one seller. Ice cream eaters have perhaps lost their sense of adventure.

But the new vice president, Al Gore, tearing up a putting green in his new backyard? There can

be no reasonable explanation.

Hey, Al, didn't you check out that putting surface before you went ahead and defaced that green space? Didn't you call in the whole checklist of archaeologists, historians, ecologists, wetlands specialists, et cetera, before you changed the face of the landscape? (Since Mr. and Mrs. VP's staff doesn't return phone calls, we don't know the answer to this.)

The historian would have discovered that it wasn't just any green. It was a "designer-label" green. The fingerprint of



Mark Leslie, managing editor

Tom Fazio was upon it. Friends of then-Vice President Dan Quayle paid to have that green built to U.S. Golf Association specifications — at a cost of around \$18,000.

Mr. Fazio volunteered his services for the good of mankind, Mr. Quayle, his family and guests, and for the good of the putting game of each and every one of them.

Our new veep comes in and what does he do? He has the green torn up and a volleyball court built in its place.

Whatsamatteryou, eh?

Gee whiz. If you moved into a house with a Picasso original hanging in the living room, would you take a knife to it? If Tipper walked into her new closet and spotted an original Bill Blass-designed dress, would she take scissors to it?

What has happened to this country, anyhow?

For his part, Tom Fazio thought it not a crime.

He took the news of the destruction in stride.

It's not a thorn in his side. As it might be yours or mine.

"If he's [Gore] not a golfer, he would look at the green and say, 'WASTED SPACE!' And if you have kids and groups of people who participate in weekend activities, volleyball's a neat deal," Fazio said.

He even added: "Golf is a nonentity for a lot of people. And if you don't like golf, you may be embarrassed. He may invite dignitaries there who are golfers and would want to go out and putt, and want him to putt. He can't putt, so he's going to be embarrassed. So why should he have it? If I were him and not a golfer, I'd get rid of it, too."

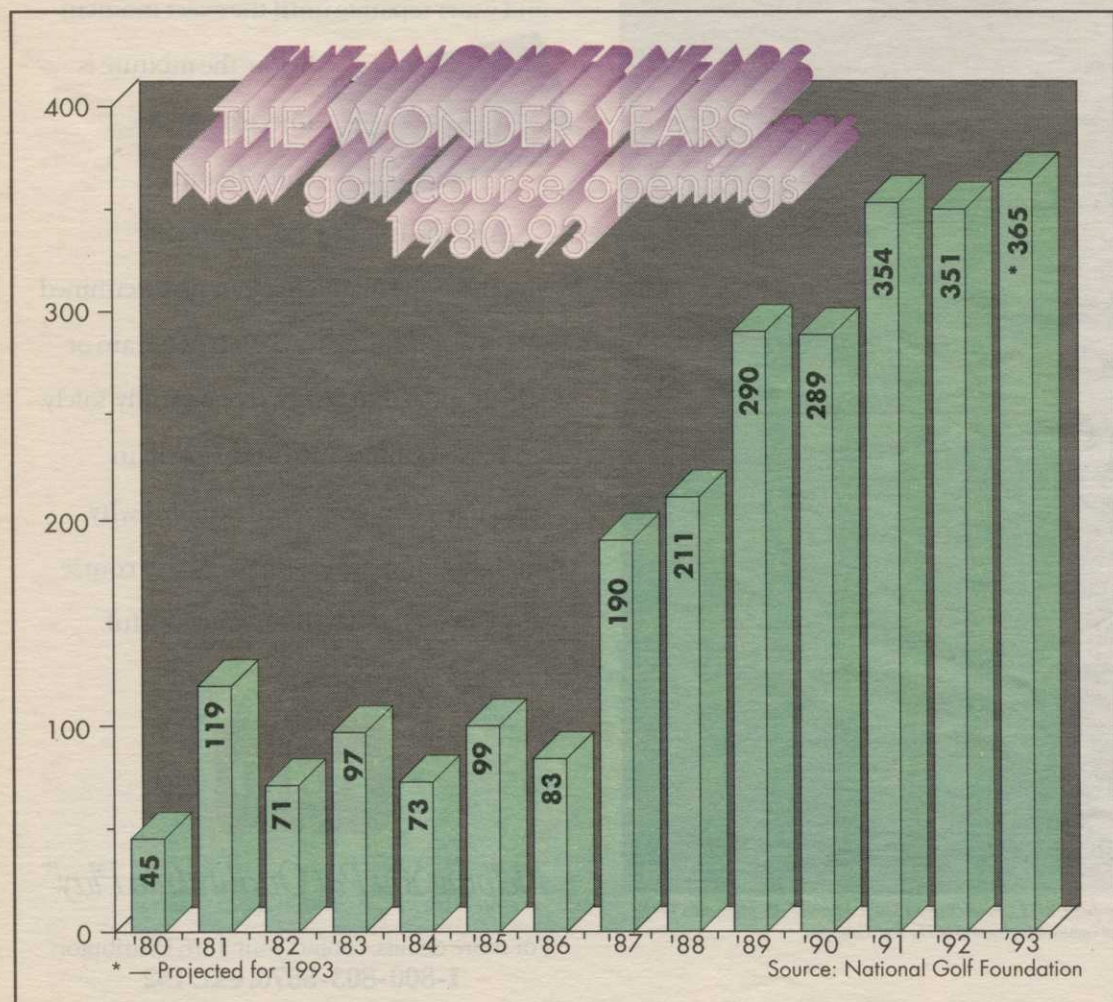
"We, as serious golfers, take it so seriously. But here's the person in the second-highest office in our country, and it shows you how serious he thinks it is. Obviously, his opinion counts because he's the second in command. If he doesn't think it's so serious, why should we?"

Fazio pointed out that the guts of the green are still there.

"What makes it a quality green surface is the drainage structure underneath, the soil mix and the bentgrass. I doubt they dug up the subsurface."

The 3,500- to 4,000-square-

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Phillips comment

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pesticide use as an "apple pie & motherhood" issue — meaning it's easy to get behind.

In other words, simply endorsing the 75 percent reduction in pesticide use may achieve the desired results. Enforcement is a sticky business that too often goes unrecognized in the polls.

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The editorial staff here at

Golf Course News bids a belated but heartfelt farewell to Simone Marsteller, who handled the Marketplace section and kept our publisher in line since the newspaper launched nearly five years ago.

Simone has already enrolled at Stetson Law School in St. Petersburg, where she's begun the business of torts and *prima facie*.

We've no doubt she will take the law world by storm, but we wish her the best of luck just the same.

Subsurface drip irrigation: A peek at the future?

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designs incorporate vacuum relief-valves that break the vacuum and keep water and inorganic particles from moving back into the emitter.

FERTILIZATION THROUGH DRIP IRRIGATION

Subsurface drip irrigation has the ability to apply precise amounts of irrigation water directly to the plant roots. When fertilizers are injected into the water supply they too are

delivered directly to the plant roots. In this manner, subsurface drip irrigation has the potential to deliver low fertilizer rates over extended time periods, with increased nutrient efficiency.

When chemicals are added to the water supply there is a potential for undesirable chemical reactions, particularly with phosphorus and some micronutrients. It is always recommended that an adequate water analysis be done before injecting any chemicals contain-

ing phosphorus. The introduction of these fertilizers into the irrigation water can lead to the precipitation of phosphates, particularly when high levels of calcium or magnesium are present. This precipitation will instantly clog emitter pathways and will cause a premature death to the subsurface irrigation system and of course, lead to the collapse of the turf.

CONCLUSION

With all the environment and economic pressures facing urban water users, subsurface irrigation holds the promise for answering many of these concerns. High water use efficiency of subsurface drip irrigation systems leave water available for allocation to other uses, such as enhancing environmental goals. It also reduces the deep percolation and associated ground water contamination and drainage problems.

In the urban environment, the reduction in risk of injury due to wet sidewalks or tripping on sprinkler heads may be enough to warrant its adoption. Maintenance expenses due to vandalism or breakage from heavy equipment can also be significantly reduced.

Finally, for urban applications, the ability to use effluent water without contact to the surface environment promises to be both an effective way to dispose of this water and provide water for turf and lush landscape. California is currently adopting legislature which will permit the use of graywater from urban dwellings to be used in subsurface drip irrigation systems. It seems clear that the adoption of subsurface technology should be cautiously, but enthusiastically, pursued as an appropriate technology to deal with increasing water, environmental, and economic concerns.

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Leslie comment

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foot green fit into the existing grades of the lawn. Next to it was a depression for a bunker. But flat is "in" with the new administration. If it doesn't watch out it will be a "flat-liner" itself in three years — especially if it continues to treat golf so shabbily and loses the golfing vote.

Its statisticians ought to compare numbers — golfers to volleyballers. Who represents the most votes?

Mr. Gore, my advice is, go ahead and tinker with the economy, mess with the environmental regulations, fiddle with your "rebuilt" government, but please keep your hands off the real national treasures.

Come-on, get serious...

GOLF COURSE NEWS