

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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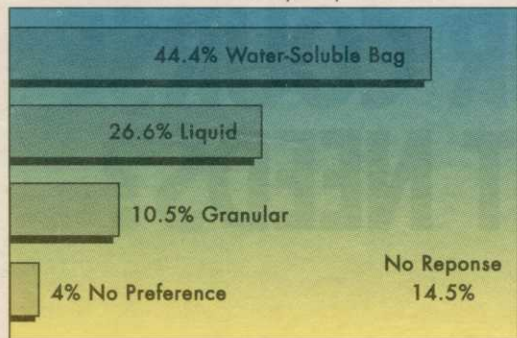
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SUPERINTENDENTS RESPOND

The American Cyanamid Co. recently polled 125 superintendents on consumer preferences, EPA regulation, environmental activism and other maintenance issues. Their answers appear on page 31.

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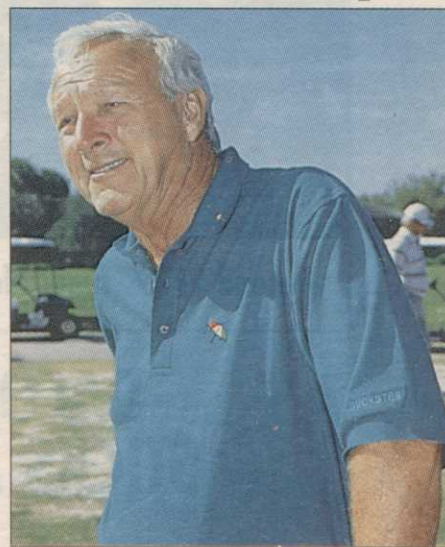
By HAL PHILLIPS

ORLANDO — Arnold Palmer, golfing legend and principal of Palmer Course Design, heads an array of influential speakers scheduled to impart their knowledge at Golf Course Expo, Nov. 11-12, here at the Orange County Convention Center.

Sponsored by *Golf Course News*, Golf Course Expo is a trade show and education conference designed specifically for superintendents, owners, managers and developers of public-access golf facilities: daily-fee, municipal, semi-private and resort.

Golf Course Expo will feature more than 150 companies, highlighting displays and demonstrations spanning 66,000 square feet of exhibit space. Also taking place on the show floor will be Shop Talks, vendor-sponsored technical and demonstration sessions right on the floor. The Palmer keynote, the trade show and Shop Talks are free to all Expo attendees.

"We are delighted, of course, that Mr. Palmer has chosen to speak at Golf Course



Arnold Palmer

Expo," said Charles von Brecht, publisher of *Golf Course News*. "He and the people at Palmer Course Design understand, as we do, that public-access golf is where the action is, so to speak. Over the last five years, 80 percent of the record course openings have been municipal, daily-fee or re-

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GOLF COURSE



EXPO

ORANGE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER
ORLANDO, FLORIDA
NOVEMBER 11-12, 1994

A NATIONAL EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE FOR OWNERS, SUPERINTENDENTS, MANAGERS, AND DEVELOPERS OF PUBLIC-ACCESS GOLF FACILITIES

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Brauer's Minn. project awaits court resolution

By HAL PHILLIPS

BIWABIK, Minn. — Neighboring Michigan may have its Homestead project, stalled and wrapped tightly in bureaucratic red tape. But Minnesota has a bogged-down, high-profile golf course development of its own, right here, and architect Jeffrey Brauer is caught in the flypaper.

"I might be overstating it to say it's like the Homestead," said Brauer, president of Dallas-based Golfscapes, Inc. "But this golf course has taken a tortured path toward approval... The worst of it is, no one is trying to sneak anything by

Continued on page 26



After the dormant bermudagrass is scalped at LaQuinta (Calif.) Country Club, maintenance crews vacuum the debris in preparation for overseeding.

Seed companies re-think the rye market

By MARK LESLIE

The term "high-volume, low-profit" might fit no other product better than perennial ryegrass—the choice of many for overseeding.

"People lust after this business for the volume. But it's very low-profit," said Steve Tubbs, vice president of Turf Merchants of Tangent, Ore.

"It's important to the industry in the fact there is a lot of seed used," said Tom Stanley, marketing manager at Turf Seed in Hubbard, Ore. "However, when you look at the dollars involved, it's not very important.

Then why get involved?

"That's a good question," Stanley said, "and I think it's a question a lot of Oregon seed companies are asking themselves. This year the trend continues from the last several years. We've seen declining prices and increased production.

"Everybody wants a piece of the overseeding market. It's big. A lot of distributors think it's glamorous. And it's a way to dump overproduction into a market that's not going to hurt them in other regions of the country."

Fifty million to 60 million pounds, or

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Roll With It!
The greens roller makes a comeback, page 20

Focus on Overseeding Page 11

Nobody's ever happy during overseeding time — 'even your dog'

By MARK LESLIE

When a superintendent over-seeds, "your wife's unhappy, your dog's unhappy, your crew's unhappy, the members are unhappy — everybody's unhappy," says Tim Hiers.

"If I can tell you one thing, it's this: There are few people who look forward to overseeding," said the golf course manager at Collier's Reserve in Naples, Fla.

"It's probably the most stressful thing a superintendent has to

do," said Steve Tubbs who, as vice president of Turf Merchants in Tangent, Ore., hears from — and commiserates with — many greenkeepers around the country.

Speaking of Northern superintendents, Stubbs said: "He has to time it so he hits the overseeding just when the Bermudagrass is about to go off-color.

"If he's too early, the [overseeded] grass might come up and fight the Bermuda. Or if the heat comes back, the Ber-

muda stays active. If it cools too quick, they're in trouble. Every green needs soil temps to germinate.

"Superintendents have to do it under playing conditions. They have to blow it on. And members want it up immediately."

Overseeding in the South, said Turf Seed Marketing Manager Tom Stanley, is "critical to superintendents. Most of their play takes place in the wintertime and they need to have those courses looking crisp and green

to attract golfers. A lot of that play in Arizona and Southern California is very expensive, and if they don't overseed they're shot out of the water because nobody wants to golf on brown fairways — especially if they're playing for big bucks."



Tom Stanley

'A lot of ... play in Arizona and Southern California is very expensive, and if they don't overseed they're shot out of the water because nobody wants to golf on brown fairways.'

— Tom Stanley
Turf Seed

Overseeding business: High-volume but low-margin

Continued from page 1

half of perennial ryegrass, is used for overseeding, according to Tubbs, who estimated annual use at 15 million pounds in California's Palm Springs area, 15 million in Florida, 10 million in Arizona, and 4 million to 5 million in Texas.

But, he added: "You're talking high-volume, low-dollar, very low-profit, very low-margin. This year we'll be lucky to make 10 percent on the perennial ryegrass overseeding business..."

"You sell rye for 60 to 70 cents a pound. We pay farmers 42 cents per pound. Add royalties and freight, and there's not much profit there."

Despite the low profits, most seed companies have varieties in the marketplace. About three dozen firms entered 123 varieties in the latest National Turfgrass Evaluation Program tests (See chart, page 16). Most of those varieties are available from dealers.

"When color and texture are achieved in any number of varieties, you're down to selling service, or quality, or personalities," Tubbs said. "We try to come up with different things like the best creeping bentgrass for over-seeding, the best poa trivialis [rough bluegrass]..."

"It's come to the point that your ability to get new business is predicated on your ability to produce poa trivialis."

More attention has been paid in the last five to seven years to developing poa trivialis than at any other time, Tubbs said.

Oregon State University reports more than 3,000 acres of poa trivialis in production in Oregon this year. "That's probably triple the numbers of five to seven years ago," Tubbs said.

Poa trivialis sells for a more substantial (than ryegrass) \$2.25 to \$2.50 per pound but less than its partner in a popular overseeding mix, bentgrass. Bentgrass sells for around \$7.50 a pound, and coated bent (which doubles the volume) for about \$3.50 a pound.

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