

BRIEFS



CLEMSON REPORT DUE

The initial findings of Clemson University's ecosystem study of the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island are due out in January. First undertaken in 1990, the 3-year study is analyzing the relationship between golf course maintenance practices and the environment at the Pete Dye-designed layout, site of the 1992 Ryder Cup. Dr. Ron Kendall, director of Clemson's Institute of Wildlife and Environmental Toxicology, is overseeing the project.



CHEMICAL BOOKS RELEASED

Thomson Publications of Fresno, Calif. has published two new books of interest to turf managers: "The User's Reference Guide to Pesticides" and "The Spanish-English, English-Spanish Illustrated Agricultural Dictionary." "The User's Guide" lists by generic name all products registered in the United States, followed by the different formulations with their tank-mix, adjuvant and compatibility recommendations. It is priced at \$27.95. The paper-bound dictionary is designed to assist turf managers dealing with the influx of Hispanic crew members. It retails for \$27.95. For more information, call Thomson at 209-435-2163.

CLAYTON NAMED EDUCATION MANAGER

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Rebecca Powell Clayton has been promoted to education manager for conference and certification by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Clayton had been GCSAA's education coordinator for special projects since 1990. Prior to joining GCSAA, Clayton had held several positions at Hall-Kimbrell Environmental Services, Inc., in Lawrence. She holds a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from the University of Kansas, and serves on the Recycling and Resource Conservation Advisory Board for the city of Lawrence.



MINNESOTA WATER TALKS SLATED

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Legislative Water Commission, in cooperation with the Environmental Quality Board, are co-sponsoring meetings to discuss the state's ground-water protection efforts. They will be held Jan. 5 in Rochester in Riverland Technical College's Room C-105; Jan. 6 in Marshall in the Department of Transportation (DOT) building's Conference Room; Jan. 19 in Duluth in the DOT Conference Room; and Jan. 20 in Detroit Lakes at City Hall's City-County Chamber.

By MARK LESLIE

Politics. Age. Agronomic decisions made by committee. Lack of communication and management skills. These are all job-killers, especially for golf course superintendents — some of whom daily face the fear of being fired.

"I had no chance to defend myself. They had a secret meeting and voted to dump me," said Bruce Rickert, who was fired last fall after six years at a Philadelphia course, and several months of struggling to keep dying greens alive.

"When I got fired, at 51, at least five others in New Jersey were fired that spring, and for the same reasons: age and greens committee chairmen," said Jim Gilligan, now superintendent at Richmond County Country Club on Staten Island.

For Ted Horton, vice president of resource management for Pebble Beach



Tragedy or blessing, losing a job can have many causes, effects

Co., when he was fired as general manager of the prestigious Westchester Country Club in New York a couple of years ago, it was at a time when, politically, "change had to be done for the sake of change. It didn't matter who was there."

In most cases, however, problems reportedly are exacerbated by lack of communications between the superinten-

dent and his boss or club membership.

Superintendents live in perilous times, Horton said. "I think that's true with any profession. The technical aspects of our profession are generally pretty solid and it's the 'people' aspects that generally trap us... A superintendent has to remember that 90 percent of his job is communication — both upward and downward.

"Oftentimes, a superintendent is not equipped to handle that. He's attracted to be a superintendent to be out-of-doors. As a result, his interpersonal skills are not that well-honed and that's what gets him into trouble."

Then there is the case of the "Marlboro man mentality," as Gilligan called it.

"Superintendents are tough to deal with in a lot of cases. Salesmen can tell you stories about guys who are unapproachable. So, if they're unapproachable to ven-

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Shining the light on grow-in secrets

By TERRY BUCHEN

Many "secrets" for a successful grow-in, implementing newly planted turf, are just the opposite of routine maintenance where fertilization, pesticide usage, topdressing applications, and mowing heights are concerned. A few cases in point:

1. Use high rates of phosphorus for excellent root and top growth and keep the potassium levels also high for sustained disease prevention. Utilize a safe, homogeneous fertilizer granular product that you are personally familiar with.
2. Use "THE SANDWICH" method whereby the turf on putting greens is

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Prairie Isle Golf Club after fine shaping but before grow-in.

President Sweda promises OTF return to basic intent

By MARK LESLIE

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Saying that many members have lost sight of the purpose of the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation (OTF), new President Don Sweda intends to re-establish the organization's original purpose.

"All the members are involved with turf, whether it is lawn care, golf courses, cemeteries or sports fields," said Sweda, a certified golf course superintendent from Columbia Hills Country Club in Columbia

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Station. "OTF exists to join all the associations to help and support Ohio State, and we want to regain the university's support and understanding. We have many new, exciting projects."

A former president of the Northern Ohio Golf Course Superintendents Association who has served six years on the OTF board,

Sweda said that too often superintendents and lawn-care people don't attend OTF functions, thinking the foundation is not in their bailiwick. He hopes his administration can begin a drive that will bulge membership rolls from 1,300 to 2,000

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Don Sweda



AIRING IT OUT WITH SUPER FOCUS' AL BROMANN

Al Bromann is the owner, superintendent and pilot for Pinewood Country Club, where he tries to keep both feet on the ground agronomically while taking to the air for his customers. See how he keeps all his jobs in focus on page 34.

Glover retires at NMS

LAS CRUCES, N.M. — Charles Glover, agronomist with New Mexico State University's Cooperative Extension Service, has retired after 15 years of service.

Glover joined Extension in 1978 after working eight years as a plant breeder for Taylor-Evans Seed Co. in Tulia, Texas.

Since 1990, he has been administrative officer for the New Mexico Crop Improvement Association.

Glover's Extension educational program covered soil fertility, alfalfa, irrigated pastures, cotton and other crops important to New Mexico. He also helped solved problems channeled through county agents' offices.

He is now working full-time for the New Mexico Crop Improvement Association and the 1517 Cotton Association, primarily with seed certification and foundation seed programs. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from NMSU.



Watson: Green industry failures evoke need to change

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Dr. James Watson, president of the International Turfgrass Society and former vice president of The Toro Co., admonished colleagues in the green industry in his talk at the Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show for not informing the public about the benefits and shortcomings of turfgrass.

"Be assured, the green industry will be severely taxed and challenged the remainder of this century and beyond," Watson said. "Researchers, professionals,

practitioners, extension personnel, consultants and all others who purvey information will be challenged in the political, ethical, environmental, safety and standards arenas.

"Why? Because of something I think is wrong with our industry. Too often we fail in construction techniques. Too often we don't get the right kinds of seedbed materials.

"We use wrong grasses. Perhaps our management procedures and techniques are not always the best. But are these the areas that are

wrong, or is it simply the manner in which we use or are told to use various factors?

"I happen to think it may be our publicity campaigns are not the best."

He added: "Why, for example, are the experts in the green industry not recognized, not perceived as authorities and often overridden in decisions that can make of break turfgrass consulting?

"Why are the knowledgeable experts not called before problems arise on new or renovated sports

fields? Why, when the turfgrass industry has new and improved grasses, procedures for specifying soil texture and techniques in construction and establishment, are managers still blamed when grass is lost?"

With new maintenance equipment, supplies and materials, and more knowledge about cultural practices, grass should not die, Watson said.

"One major factor may be the economics — not the economics associated with turf management

but with facility management. Most managers and investors have to generate a return on their investment. But whether or not excuses are valid, "they adversely reflect on the green industry, often because the industry has not done a good job of explaining that there are limitations to turfgrass areas. We talk only to ourselves, not to the public," he said.

Changes by 2000

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Among Watson's predictions for the industry are:

- Increased use of native grasses like buffalograss.
- Superior salt grasses that will tolerate 7,000 to 8,000 parts per million of salt. "That will permit us to use brackish water supplies. These grasses have substantial promise, especially in the West and Southwest."
- A proliferation of organic-based fertilizers.
- New laws, "ostensibly to protect the environment. And you must be aware of them and take steps to make certain you are not prohibited from using water that might even be on your golf courses.

"Some of these regulations may be detrimental. Methyl bromide is being considered to be taken off the market. Yet 90 percent of methyl bromide that goes into the atmosphere comes from the ocean. Man's contribution is minute, like a grain of sand on the beach. Yet, they may take it away from those who need it."

Urging the industry to be active and outspoken, Watson said: "Green industry facilities are an integral part of our present and future lifestyle and needs. We must not let this future be decided by political entities, environmental extremists, or anyone not familiar with the green industry. They must not dictate our future."

Sweda takes office

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by the year 2000.

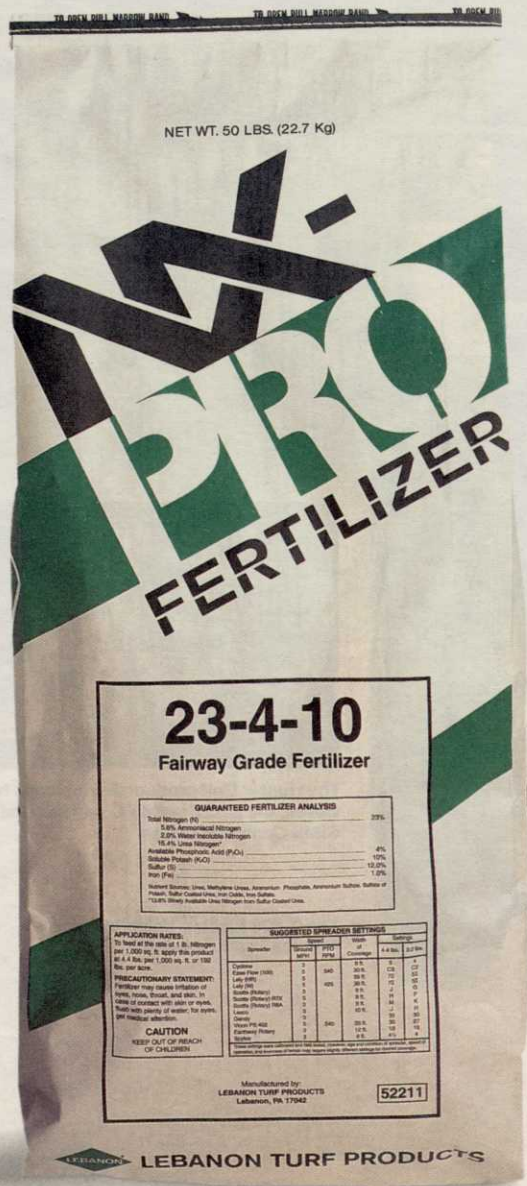
Citing the many professors retiring from other universities, he said, "Ohio State has a golden opportunity to become the leader in turfgrass research."

"Research is our key number-one priority," he said. "We're funding the new biotechnology center [at OSU]. They're going to genetically alter a plant and try to develop a drought-tolerant plant... Maybe in the near future we'll have our Buckeye grass.

Sweda, who left Beechmont Country Club in Cleveland to join Columbia Hills CC last spring, said he views his service as president as returning "what somebody gave me 26 years ago. Somebody gave me a wealth of knowledge and got me started. I want to give it back."

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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