

BRIEFS



MOSQUITO MARAUDER

LOS ANGELES—Got mosquito problems? Garlic Research Labs says it has a cure. The firm's Garlic Barrier, an all-garlic-and-water product, is sprayed on turfgrass and is said to last six to eight weeks, even if the turf is watered. "Once sprayed, the odor of garlic disappears in about two minutes," said Managing Partner William A. Anderson. "We call it 'odorless garlic.'" Garlic Barrier is EPA-registered. Garlic Research Labs is located at 3550 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 200, Los Angeles, Calif 90010; 213-386-5300.

ELECTRONIC PESTICIDE REFERENCE

NEW YORK CITY — Electronic Pesticide Reference, a computer program consolidating the 3rd Edition Turf & Ornamental Chemicals Reference and two books on crop protection chemicals, has been released by C&P Press, Inc. The program's key features are full-text labels for more than 800 products and more than 1,000 full-text MSDSs; interactive indexes and product summaries; hazardous chemical reporting information by product; and Department of Transportation shipping information by product. More information is available from C&P at 888 Seventh Ave., Suite 2800, N.Y., N.Y. 10106; telephone 800-544-7377.

MORE BANS ON LEAF BLOWERS

Connecticut and Illinois municipalities are leading the nation's movement toward banning leaf blowers. Passed as noise ordinances or to stop use of the gas-powered models, the laws sometimes restrict their use to certain hours of the day, sometimes to certain months of the year. Among the communities with bans are Greenwich, Conn., Highland Park and Wilmette, Ill., and Los Altos, Calif.

TURF 'N SURF

FT. LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The Florida Turfgrass Association's annual conference and show will be held Sept. 18-21 at Broward County Convention Center here. Golf and fishing will be sidelights to this four-day event featuring educational sessions, workshops, research technology and exhibits.

GREEN EXPO MANAGEMENT UNCHANGED

Despite months of searching for a new management firm, Green Industry Expo officials have retained the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) as show manager. The show combines the trade shows and conferences of the Professional Grounds Management Society, Associated Landscape Contractors of America and the PLCAA, which has managed it since 1990.

Kansas golf industry eyes golfers as donors

By MARK LESLIE

LAWRENCE, Kan. — The Kansas green industry has embarked on a novel endeavor with "enormous" potential, aiming to tap into the good will of golfers to raise support for turfgrass research.

Golfers using the GIN Handicap system are being asked in their billing document to donate \$2 above their \$9 payment to the Kansas Golf Association (KGA). In Kansas, 19,000 golfers use GIN, according to Dick Stuntz, superintendent at Alvamar Country Club in Lawrence, Kan., who has coordinated the effort through the Kansas Turfgrass Foundation (KTF) and KGA.

"We're small," Stuntz said. "But in states like Michigan, which has 80,000 GIN users, the potential is enormous."

Money raised in Kansas will fund research at Kansas State University. But research facilities around the country are starving for support, having been struck with major decreases in government aid in recent years. Success in Kansas could bode well for similar efforts elsewhere.

KTF members have privately discussed this project for four or five years, Stuntz said. He presented it to the KGA board last December.

Since handicapping services are competitive — and therefore price-conscious — the KGA hesitated to mandate the \$2 charge, Stuntz said. But it approved

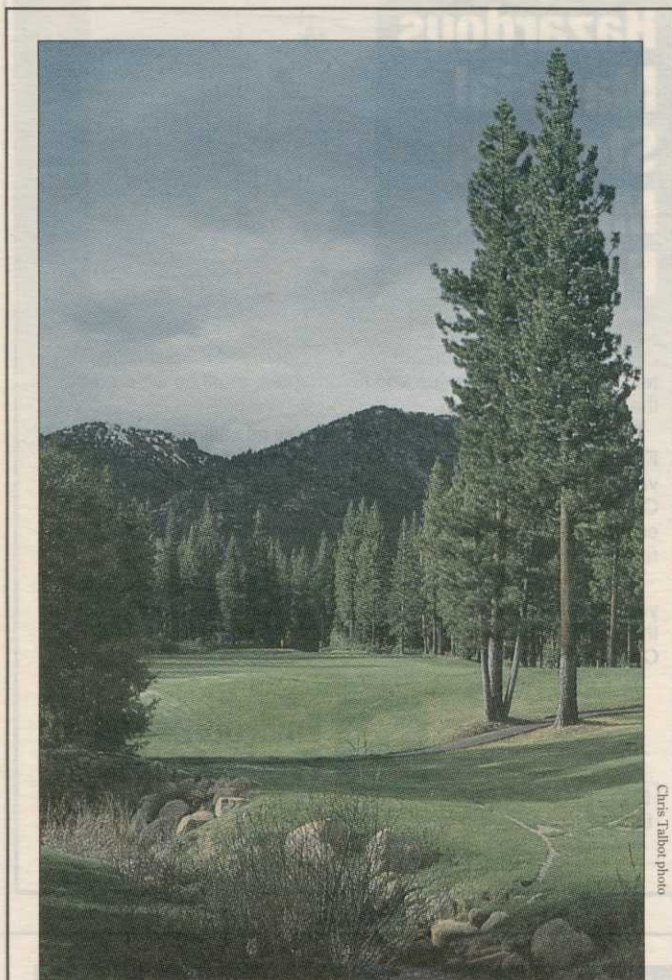


KTF instituting a method to solicit funds on a voluntary basis.

The KTF first sent letters to the 160 to 170 clubs themselves explaining the campaign. It followed up with a reminder in March and with a letter to course superintendents in early April. Superintendents were asked "to go to their clubs and sell the program," Stuntz said.

"They know the decision-makers at their club. We don't... What it will take is for each superintendent to lobby their club to add this amount on to the normal handicap charge. This system has the capability

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Chris Talbot photo

INCLINED TO CHANGE

Superintendent Gary Skolnik and Director of Golf Mike Hair have spearheaded renovations at nationally ranked Incline Village in Lake Tahoe. (See Super Focus feature, page 16.)

To heck with golfers, cut grass higher, Jackson urges supers

By MARK LESLIE

CUMBERLAND, Maine — Saying every cultural, biological and chemical practice possible should be used to manage turfgrass, yet stressing that fewer pesticides are available, Dr. Noel Jackson has urged golf course superintendents to heighten the cut of grass.

"Everyone," he said, "mow at 3/16 [inch] and no less and to heck with the golfer. Do this and you'll grow great grass."

"Think about 1/8 [inch]," Jackson told the Maine Golf Course Superintendents Association. "A grass plant manufactures [by photosynthesis] sugars and carbohydrates in its leaf tissues. How much tissue have you left on a bentgrass blade cut to 1/8 [inch]? Very little. So here it is, trying to photosynthesize to generate reserves so it can push up more leaf, and you come along and knock it down to 1/8 inch again — every day of the week and 20-some Sundays. And you tell me I'm an idiot for telling you not to mow it at 1/8 inch."

"I'm trying to impress on you: Never manage turf to the quality people expect nowadays, without pesticides."

Yet, he asked: "What's happening to the fungicides? Where has Dyrene gone? Where's Tersan 1991 gone? Where have the mercury fungicides gone? What are your alternatives?"

Against Takeall Patch, the immensely effective PMA [phenyl mercury acetate] contains mercury and is no longer on the market.

Against gray snow mold, mercury fungicides "work like a charm." But, again, no more will be for sale after June.

Against leaf spot, one of the best fungicides is Dyrene, but it will not be sold any more. It would cost \$5 million to re-register Dyrene, but only \$1 million worth of the product is sold a year.

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Soil labs far apart on pH in blind tests

By HAL PHILLIPS

FAR HILLS, N.J. — Soil-testing laboratories have, for the most part, fared well in a blind test procedure nearly completed by the United States Golf Association (USGA) Green Section.

"The majority [of the labs] were very close on all of the characteristics," said Green Section Director Jim Snow. "Certain labs are off on some characteristics. In some cases, they're making some simple mistakes because they're off on both samples."

"A lot of people were off on pH, and it's hard to imagine why they would get that wrong."

The USGA is funding and conducting this blind test of soil laboratories to determine which firms are abiding by USGA protocol, and which are not.

"These are the labs that have agreed to

abide by our protocols," noted Snow. "This is the first time we have tried to check and see what they're up to. We want to be sure they're following protocol. We'd also like to be sure they understand the protocol."

Some 13 labs were sent the same two soil samples, independently, from soil-mixing firms cooperating with the USGA. Laboratories were asked to evaluate the samples in terms of infiltration rates, porosity, moisture retention, pH and other factors.

Most of the returns are in, said Snow. Once both sets of samples have been processed and returned, the USGA will compile all the results and take the appropriate action.

"We're not going to kick labs off the list if their results don't add up," he said. "We want to work with them to make sure the

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Professors say mixing can broaden benefits

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Tank mixing fungicides is not a new concept for many turf managers, but they may not be aware of the variety of benefits that the right combination can provide, according to turf industry researchers. The researchers pointed out that mixing fungicides with different modes of action can achieve better control of a broader spectrum of major turf diseases, as well as additional turf management benefits.

According to Dr. Karl Danneberger, associate professor of turfgrass science at Ohio State University, tank mixing can solve a number of turf management problems. For example, Danneberger noted that a tank mix

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Super Focus

Duo puts new face on Incline Village course for 30th

By DOUG SAUNDERS

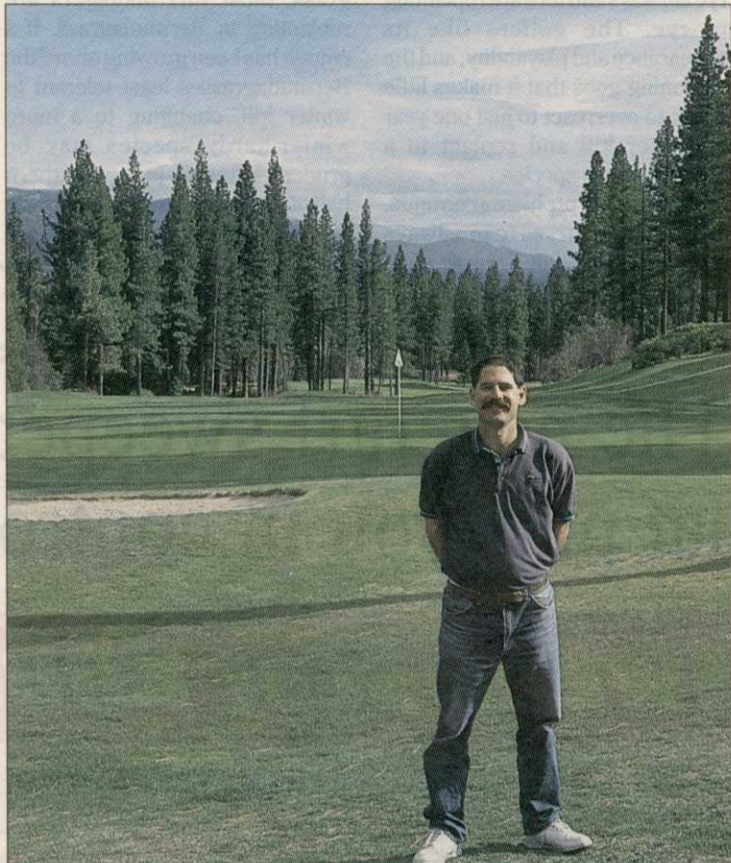
LAKE TAHOE — “Two heads are better than one” has become an idiom of success at Incline Village, where two men trained in turfgrass management are leading an extensive overhaul of its nationally ranked Championship Course.

Leading the restoration are two superintendents: director of golf Mike Hair, and head superintendent Gary Skolnik.

Located on the north shore of Lake Tahoe, Incline features a classic Robert Trent Jones Sr. design the architect once called the “ideal mountain golf course.” The 6,915-yard layout rolls through thickly wooded, hilly terrain that offers spectacular views of Tahoe and the surrounding peaks of the Sierras.

The golf course is celebrating its 30th anniversary this summer. It was built as the centerpiece of Incline Village, a real-estate project that has grown into a thriving town. The Incline Village General Improvement District, which owns and operates the course, has undertaken an extensive overhaul of the course and its operations to make a resort worthy of recognition for the next 30 years.

Hair came to Incline from Colorado, where he was head super and general manager at South Suburban Country Club near Denver. His selection as Incline’s director of golf in 1989 is testimony to the increasing number of superintendents moving into managerial positions.



Superintendent Gary Skolnik is proud of the improvements at Incline Village.

The course had been run by various outside agencies and numerous superintendents for two decades. It was up to Hair to map out a strategy to bring the course up to its true potential.

“I had to approach it from two fronts — capital improvements and operational improvements,” Hair explained. “To make things go, we needed to upgrade equipment and facilities first.”

For years, maintenance was run out of a small area under a deck behind the snack bar. An

8,000-square-foot maintenance building took its place, while new machinery, irrigation system and carts were procured.

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Three years ago, Hair hired Gary Skolnik from Bishop Country Club in eastern California. Skolnik was an avid golfer at a young age and also worked in landscaping through his teens. Blending these two loves led him to enroll in the turf management program at the College of the Desert in

“The Wigwam and my favorite course, Spyglass, are both Trent Jones Sr. designs. So when I heard about the opening at Incline, I jumped at the chance.”

— Gary Skolnik, superintendent

Palm Springs.

Skolnik’s two years at the college allowed him study under renowned turf specialist Melvin Robey, as well as do intern work at The Lakes and Mission Hills country clubs. He was the first graduate of the turf program to earn his Class A classification.

He took his knowledge and bilingual talents (Spanish) to secure work at Mission Hills, the Wigwam in Arizona, and Newport Beach Country Club. He took his first head superintendent’s job at Bishop in 1990, but the opening at Incline intrigued him.

“The Wigwam and my favorite course, Spyglass, are both Trent Jones Sr. designs,” Skolnik said. “So when I heard about the opening at Incline, I jumped at the chance. The fact that it was a beautiful place for my family also figured in my choice to come here.”

According to Hair: “Bringing Gary has been a major step for our operational improvement. His bilingual skills have helped develop a loyal staff of Latin workers. The basics of maintenance are easy, but it’s the implementation that demands talent.”

When Incline was built 30 years ago, construction crews had to deal with granite bedrock

that held little topsoil. With little percolation or filtration, the course suffered from puddling and inconsistent conditions. Some fairways were built up with large granite boulders and covered with fill after the land had been logged out.

Skolnik’s first priority was installation of a state-of-the-art irrigation system and new drainage lines. “We’ve put in over six miles of drainage in the last three years,” said Skolnik, whose tenure at Incline has been longer than any other superintendent at the Lake Tahoe resort.

Soil samples also showed a high acidic content. To rectify this, Skolnik “sweetened” the soil with 140 tons of sugar beet lime. Walk-behind greens mowers were secured to develop smooth, fast putting surfaces.

Drought has had a major effect on the surrounding pine and fir forest. To deal with the threat of beetle infestation and more tree loss, Skolnik has been working closely with the Nevada Department of Forestry to implement a forest management program to sustain the wooded areas that surround the course.

“The trees make this golf course,” said Skolnik. “It has to be a priority to save them.”

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Mixing can equal benefits

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application of Banner systemic fungicide and Daconil 2787 contact fungicide provides longer-term control of dollar spot and brown patch.

“Banner gives excellent control over dollar spot, while Daconil is strong against brown patch,” said Danneberger. “Together, they actually expand the spectrum of disease control. This is a big benefit for turf managers when conditions favor both diseases.

“The benefits don’t end with disease control,” he added. “Tank mixing is the best option in resistance management. By combining two different chemical modes of action, you greatly decrease the chance for development of insensitive strains.”

Dr. Paul Vincelli, assistant professor of plant pathology at the University of Kentucky, agreed tank mixing is a good way to avoid insensitivity problems. “I always recommend that turf managers avoid exclusive use of any one chemistry,” he said. “Tank mixing two chemicals with different modes of action is one way to accomplish this.” He said that during extreme disease pressure, tank mixing can be very effective. “There are times when conditions may be right for both dollar spot and brown patch. That’s when a tank mix may take care of both problems.”