

## Self-sufficient TGIF doubles membership

By MARK LESLIE

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Turfgrass Information Foundation (TGIF) membership has doubled and participation has grown 30 percent since the mandate for its self-sufficiency was handed down last winter by the U.S. Golf Association Green Section.

"I'm very, very optimistic. These are the right kinds of numbers. That's the kind of response and interest we needed from the industry," said Peter Cookingham, director of the Turfgrass Informa-

tion Center, based here at Michigan State University. The USGA had underwritten the costs since the start-up of TGIF, the world's largest turfgrass-related library.

Now, Cookingham said, "It's a matter of sustaining that momentum, and of delivering on some things we've wanted to but haven't done yet."

First among the new services, he said, will be a printed index — by author and subject — of all the information in TGIF. Cookingham hopes to publish it every six

months, beginning at mid-year.

A major improvement was the addition in December of Internet, which Cookingham called "the mother of all computer networks."

An international network which grew from origins within the U.S. Defense Department, Internet now has life of its own in defense, research and development, universities, national research laboratories and foreign governments, he said.

"The benefit will show quickly for universities and overseas us-

ers [of TGIF] — the universities because most of them have access to Internet through their campus networks; the international users for whom telephones tend to be problematic sometimes because of good and bad connections," Cookingham said.

"For the average superintendent, Internet provides another way to get in [access TGIF]. Long-distance carriers provide access to Internet. Most public network systems, like Progeny and America On-line, have indicated they intend to provide a gateway to Internet for those services."

Students at TGIF-member uni-

versities now can access TGIF without paying for log-on time or telephone connections.

Danny Quast, superintendent at Medinah (Ill.) Country Club and chairman of TGIF's external advisory council, said: "We will serve a lot of purposes over the years, but the most important could be making it available to turfgrass students."

Quast sees "endless possibilities" to the uses for TGIF.

"The flexibility is there," he said. "MCI thinks it's worth billions for the 'superhighway' and Internet is it right now. I'd like to see it expand so manufacturers could contribute information on equipment but not advertising."

"It can also be personalized for organizations like RISE [Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment] and GCSAA [Golf Course Superintendents Association of America]."

In fact, a proposal on TGIF went before GCSAA board in Dallas.

"Things are falling into place very nicely. I'm enthused about it," Quast said.

"I think anybody in society should see how important communications is to any business. This is in place and represents big investment by the USGA, and it's there for everybody. That's why I've worked so hard on it. I think it will grow and grow and be a useful service. We just have to iron out the lumps."

## PGA plans 36-hole 'winter residence'

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. — The PGA of America reportedly plans to build a winter home for its 23,000 members here.

Tom Fazio of Jupiter will design two courses, a clubhouse with a PGA member area, research and development center, hotel and lodging facilities and 1,000 sites. An additional 18-hole course and a nine-hole par-3 layout are future aims.

The facility would be open to the public, but PGA members and residents of surrounding homes would have preferred tee times.

PGA National Golf Club or PGA of America headquarters in Palm Beach Gardens won't be affected.

## Matthews returns to North Country

FAIRBANKS, Alaska — Jerry Matthews, Michigan's most prolific course designer, has been engaged to improve the nine holes at Fort Wainwright Army base here. Matthews is no stranger to Alaska. He spent an Army hitch here in 1957-58.

He will add a new nine complete with grass greens in a climate where such carpets are rare. The new nine will be built on a wooded parcel. When it opens, the old course will be closed and renovated. Completion target is June or July, 1996.

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