

BRIEFS



MINDS MEET ON IPM

MARLBOROUGH, Mass. — "A Meeting of the Minds" is the title of an urban/suburban integrated pest management conference Oct. 13 at Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel. Focus is to highlight what has been developed and working in integrated pest management systems in the turf, landscape and ornamentals and structural pest control industries. It will provide a forum for industry leaders as well as educational, environmental and governmental agency personnel to discuss matters of mutual concern surrounding the practice of pest control and integrated pest management.

DEROCCO ENTERS MAINE HALL OF FAME

SOUTH PORTLAND, Maine — Tony DeRocco, a native of Rocco Morice, Italy, who found happiness in Maine via an illustrious golf career capped by almost 30 years as a course superintendent, has been inducted into the Maine Golf Hall of Fame. DeRocco, 87, immigrated from Italy to Hastings, N.Y., in 1921. He caddied at Ardsley-On-The-Hudson, shagged for pro Tommy Harmon at Hudson River CC, and moved into the pro shop as club cleaner. Maine has claimed him the past 65 years. He became shop aide at Summit Spring CC in 1929, pro at Wilson Lake CC in 1934, and at Oakdale CC in 1953, returned to Summit as pro in 1963, then launched a successful stay as superintendent at Poland Spring CC in 1965. He retired as cart maintenance chief in 1993.



Tony DeRocco

METRO TURF FIELD DAY SET

The Westchester Country Club will host the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Associations annual



Professional Turfgrass Field Day on Oct. 18. A seminar co-sponsored with The Metropolitan Golf Association will coincide with the field day. The seminar will host Dave Oatis, director of the Northeast Region of the United States Golf Association, Green Section along with Dr. Noel Jackson, professor at the University of Rhode Island

W.VA. SUPERS RAISE \$14,000

The West Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association raised more than \$14,000 for the Scholarship and Research Fund at its annual turfgrass scholarship and fundraiser golf tournament at Wheeling Country Club. The record \$14,000 was raised to support the WVGCSA William C. Campbell Scholarship and Research Fund.

# 'Iron' men unite to broaden education, training

By HAL PHILLIPS

WESTON, Mass. — Golf course mechanics associations are materializing across the nation, as technicians organize themselves to meet the ever-increasing challenge of innovation. As equipment continues to change and improve, mechanics need to keep up. Organizations now exist in New Jersey, Chicago, the Carolinas, the Mid-Atlantic region and New England, with two in Florida. The benefits are wide ranging. The New Jersey Golf Course Mechanics

Association, for example, has compiled an equipment users list which details, by make and model, the equipment used at each member course. Should a mechanic run into a problem with repair, he or she can quickly locate someone with the same machine who may provide the insight needed to minimize down-time. "It's sophisticated. The average auto mechanic can't work on this stuff," said Stephen Lucas, the mechanic at Weston Golf Club here and president of the Golf Course Mechanics Association, which is centered in New England states but holds national aspirations.

"Considering the heights of cut we're working with, it's very precise work. You're doing irrigation, sign-making, repair, setting up job assignments. The mechanic is a unique individual. "I would like to get together with as many [regional mechanic] associations as I can, so we can talk about eventually taking this thing nationwide. That's my dream." Any hopes that the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) would adopt a "big-tent" attitude towards course mechanics died

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MAKING INROADS WITH AUDUBON

## Hiers exports pro-golf message to the masses

By MARK LESLIE

NAPLES, Fla. — Collier's Reserve Country Club superintendent Tim Hiers, who has delivered the message that golf courses are ecology-friendly to those inside and outside the golf industry, has been presented the first John James Audubon Steward Award.

"Tim is the perfect example of one of those people who was already moving in the right direction" when his club joined the New York Audubon Society's Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, said John Santacrose, NYAS executive director. "And he's running with the new information we've given him. Hopefully, that will happen with more people."

Presenting the award, NYAS President Ron Dodson said Hiers led the Collier's Reserve course through the rigorous Signature Program process and the facility has become the international model for others to follow. The award, established earlier this year, represents "the highest recognition of leadership in the field of environmental responsibility."

Santacrose said Hiers' involvement in the Signature Program was "like a springboard for him."

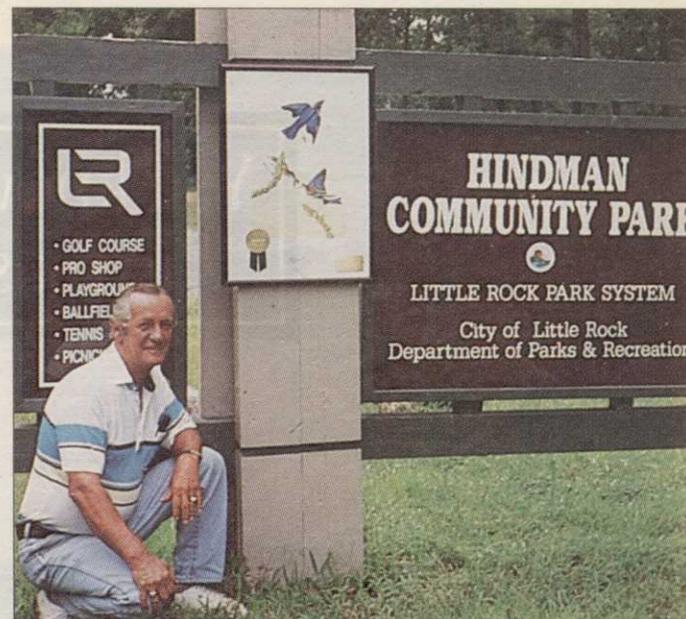
Among his new procedures were hiring an Integrated Pest Management specialist, and involving the general public, to the extent that a number of people have helped revegetation projects at neighboring golf courses.

"Tim got a lot of people in Naples, Colliers County and all of Florida involved in the program, has done programs for school-children and things like that," Santacrose said.

Dodson also cited the family-owned Collier Enterprises, the developer of Collier's Reserve, for its "commitment to environmental excellence."

Surprised by the award because he knows "a lot of others who are just as deserving," Hiers said: "I'm glad they have awards like this because superintendents don't get recognized for what they do. It's amazing. You have people in other organizations that don't do nearly as much and, yet, get huge recognition. Meanwhile,

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John Miller with his bluebird print that the New York Audubon Society presented him for completing certification in the Cooperative Sanctuary Program at Hindman Golf Course. The print will hang in the pro shop.

## Devotion to wildlife, golf moves Miller's muni to the forefront

By MARK LESLIE

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Here is a man who loves wildlife and golf courses. Most of all, he loves wildlife on golf courses. Hence, John Miller, the city's golf course superintendent, has earned recognition as one of the first Environmental Steward Award winners by gaining full certification for one of his three municipal golf courses in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (ACSP).

"I don't think there's anything more beautiful than a golf course early in the morning when the sun's first coming up," Miller said. "The only thing more beautiful is if there's a bunch

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New York State Turfgrass Association President John Liburdi Jr. speaks at dedication ceremonies.

## Delhi dedicates new education center

DELHI, N.Y. — More than 100 representatives of the turf industry joined faculty and staff from the State University College of Technology at Delhi, Aug. 16, to dedicate the college's new Turf Education Center here.

The building, which opened to students Aug. 29, is an example of the industry investing in its future, according to Mary Ellen Duncan, Delhi College president. More than \$85,000 toward the \$320,000 educational center was provided through donations from the industry.

Lead gifts included \$33,000 from the New York State Turfgrass Association and \$25,000 from Ransomes America Corp. Also contributing were the Central New York, Finger Lake, Hudson Valley, Long Island, Metropolitan and

Northeastern golf course superintendents associations.

The remaining construction costs were paid by the College Association at Delhi Inc., the not-for-profit auxiliary services corporation that owns and operates the Delhi College Golf Course.

The building illustrates how the college can be entrepreneurial in developing needed academic facilities, Duncan said. "State funds were not available for this project so we turned to other sources and they responded enthusiastically," she said. "We also believe that the strong industry support this project generated is indicative of the high regard Delhi College has earned throughout the turf profession."

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## Mechanics groups hard to organize

WEST CALDWELL, N.J. — Golf course mechanics associations are not easy to organize; nor are they easy to maintain. Just ask Bob Lay.

Lay, the mechanic at Mountain Ridge Country Club here, incorporated the New Jersey Golf Course Mechanics Association (NJGCMA) in March 1991. The organization boasts 45 to 50 members, most of them in northern New Jersey.

"I feel it's been very helpful, but at times it's been discouraging, too," Lay explained. "Maybe it's because we're mechanics, but it's difficult to find guys who want to get involved. We get guys to join, but you need more than just members."

"The superintendents that don't pay these guys well are afraid they'll meet some of their peers and discover how poorly they're being paid. When it comes to attracting new members, my feeling is that's 90 percent of our problem."

"Some superintendents just don't want us organizing. Back when we started, they were afraid we were trying to form a union. What we're actually trying to do is get some education. I've been a mechanic for 20 years, but the day you say, I can't learn any more, you're kidding yourself."

"That's what we're trying to do, and if the superintendents realized it, they'd be more receptive."

## Mechanics unite

Continued from page 13

in January, when members voted not to create specific membership classifications for these technicians.

Indeed, the 1994 vote in Dallas mirrored another overwhelming electoral defeat at the 1993 GCSAA Show in Anaheim. Golf course mechanics can attain associate member status in GCSAA, but that is all.

Lucas, for one, saw writing on the wall back in 1990 when he started organizing his fellow mechanics in Massachusetts.

"The first time I came across the idea, I had gone out to a Jacobsen learning center," he explained. "A bunch of us were from New England. We talked between classes and learned so much from each other, I thought to myself, Why can't we do this all the time?"

"Little by little, I started to organize people. Every time I went to a dealership, I asked around and left my card. Then I started holding seminars, asking Jake and Cushman/Ransomes to put them on at my club. Kohler made a special arrangement to do a complete engine tear-down for us."

Lucas said he gathered invaluable information from a Chicagoland golf course mechanics organization. He also owes a debt of gratitude to Dr. Joseph Troll and his wife Lonnie, who run the Massachusetts Turf and Lawngrass Association and Show in Springfield. Early on, Lonnie agreed to put a sign in the window of the Springfield Civic Center advertising the new association.

The response was good and the organization has grown to 151 members in all six New England states. Dues are \$25 per year, and each seminar costs \$25 per members. Non-members are welcome, but admission is \$35. Students at turf-related university programs are admitted free with valid IDs.

"The meetings started out as just getting together for coffee," Lucas said. "But they would last until lunch, then 4 p.m. We could've talked with each other until 9 o'clock at night. It's starting to really pay off. We're exchanging parts more frequently and not competing with each other. We're working together to make our jobs easier."

Lucas said his national dreams are serious. If others share the same vision, Lucas would like to talk. He can be reached at 508-663-3299.

## Dealers offer technician certification

AUSTIN, Texas — Saying the need to upgrade maintenance technicians expertise in the golf course industry is urgent, The Service Dealers Association (TSDA) is sponsoring OPE Technicians Certification Testing. The many recent technical changes in equipment will accelerate as government mandated changes take effect.

Since the first test was administered Oct. 31, 1992, more than 2,000 technicians have been tested on two- and four-stroke engines. A compact diesel engine test is available starting with the fall test period October through Dec. 15.

The electrical test is scheduled to be completed by early 1995. Drive train and generator should be ready by fall 1995. Those who pass the test receive an arm patch and certificate.

TSDA recommends two study resource textbooks as well as the individual study guides — *Small Engine Technology* by Bill Schuster covering two- and four-stroke engines, and *Automotive Diesels* by Edward Rabovsky. Both publications as well as the study guides are available from TSDA.

For information contact Virgil Russell, director of certification at 512-443-7999.

## Illustrated Turf Irrigation Manual updated

DALLAS — Weather-matic has announced availability of the 5th edition of its *Turf Irrigation Manual*.

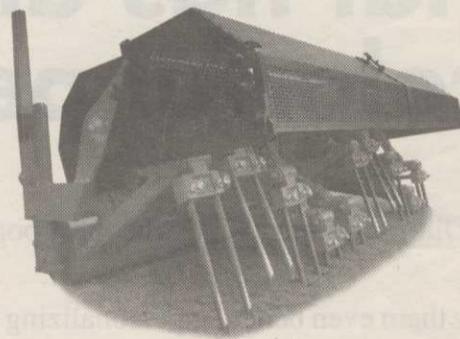
The author of the 5th edition is Richard B. Choate, director of training for Weather-matic's College of Irrigation Knowledge.

According to Choate: "The 5th edition takes a practical and useful approach to the myriad technological environmental changes which have occurred during the past 20 years. Each of these changes has dramatically affected the way we water landscape now and in the future."

The Turf Manual covers all aspects of design for all types of turf and landscape properties, including golf courses, residential and commercial.

The new book includes more than 400 pages and 300 illustrations plus 42 reference tables.

The book is available from irrigation distributors; university, college and technical bookstores; and major industry associations such as the Irrigation Association, the American Society of Landscape Architects and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.



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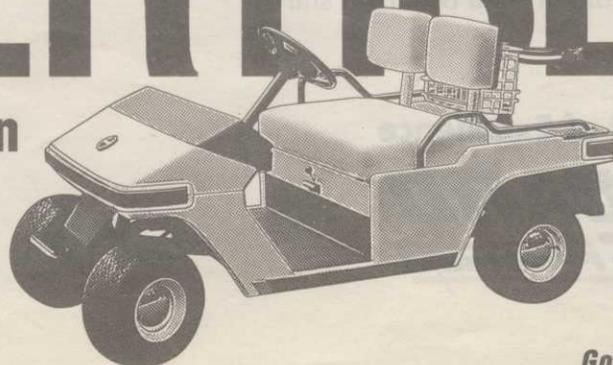
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