

And while I'm on the subject...

Of course, we're biased. But it's hard to imagine the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America choosing two more deserving recipients than Tim Hiers and Dr. Michael Hurdzan for its President's and Distinguished Service awards, respectively.

Both gentlemen serve on the *Golf Course News* Editorial Advisory Board, and they serve it extremely well. When it comes to reporting on issues that affect superintendents, the staff here simply could not do without their knowledge, enthusiasm and perspective. Please take time to read Mark Leslie's stories on Tim, the superintendent at Collier's Reserve in Naples, Fla. (page 28), and Dr. Mike, the Columbus, Ohio-based superintendent-turned-architect whose star is definitely on the rise (page 30).

And while I'm on the subject, this month's Q&A features Hurdzan's mentor, Jack Kidwell, who has done just about everything there is to do in the golf business. In addition to designing, maintaining and managing courses in his native Ohio, Kidwell played a fair game of golf in his day. In fact, during his high school years, he competed on more than one occasion against a fellow future architect from Urbana. Some guy named Dye...

And while I'm on the subject, the Kidwell Q&A was conducted by the newest member of our editorial staff, Editorial Assistant J. Barry Mothes, who comes to *GCN* after a tenure at the Portland (Maine) *Press-Herald*. Barry further qualified himself for the job by working this summer on the maintenance crew at Portland Country Club under Superintendent Pat Lewis. In between cup replacements and *GCN* assignments, Barry continues to work on an authorized history of Portland CC, a venerable Donald Ross design at the head of Casco Bay.

And while I'm on the subject (geez, this column is all over the board!), congratulations to Jim Hodge, who succeeds Lewis as president of the Maine Golf Course Superintendents Association. Pat has served the association well and I'm sure Mr. Hodge — who toils at Valhalla Golf Course in Cumberland — will follow suit.

...

A little birdie has informed me (as one informed him) that National Audubon Society President Peter Berle will step down early this year. Wouldn't it be great if the ubiquitous Ron Dodson, president of N.Y. Audubon and golf course bird sanctuary promoter, were considered for the nation's top aviary post?

"No chance in the world," laughed Dodson. "My job is national enough. If it were any *more* national, my wife would toss me out."

Indeed, I was amazed to actually catch the globetrotting

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Hal Phillips,
editor

Expo illustrates the need to exchange information

Sharing information. That is one basic, bottom, operative line for the golf industry in the 1990s.

As epitomized at Golf Course Expo in Orlando, sharing information is lifeblood to the body of the golf course superintendents' profession as well as managers and developers — a major change from decades ago when useful, helpful, innovative methods were held close to the vest and kept as secrets to take to the grave.

"What I have seen is, the superintendents' associations have moved from being social organizations to truly one of the most professional anywhere....," said former superintendent Mike Hurdzan, now a golf course architect. "Look at the breadth of services the GCSAA [Golf Course Superintendents Association of America] offers its members, and the professional development it offers, and the support it has. No longer are they trying to hide ideas. They try to share them. In the '50s guys wouldn't tell one another how they did something. Now they share equipment and manpower, if necessary, to help someone out."

And so it was a pleasure for *Golf Course News* to introduce Golf Course Expo, the first conference and trade show to share information specifically geared to public-access facilities. Maintenance, Development, and Management and Marketing educational tracks ruled the days, following keynote addresses

from Arnold Palmer and Robert Trent Jones II.

Here are a few samplers to whet your appetite — and remind you to mark your calendar — for this year's show, Nov. 9-10 in Orlando:

- From U.S. Golf Association (USGA) Green Section Southeast Region Director Pat O'Brien: Contour mow fairways; reduce mowing acreage such as around tees, out-of-play areas and pond banks; and equip

maintenance staff with two-way radios.

- Doral Golf Resort Director of Golf Course Maintenance and Grounds Patrick McHugh shared the 10 Commandments of Successful Human Relations: re-acquire the arts of kindness

and persuasion; put consideration of human dignity higher than pay, promotion, or working conditions; keep circulating to be seen as well as heard from; get rid of double standards of behavior; preface a request to subordinates with "please"; don't take yourself too seriously; praise fearlessly, giving credit where it is due; don't be afraid to make changes; in handling grievances, let the employee tell his full story without interruption, remembering a kind word will help; and learn to listen.

- From superintendent Don Tolson of Fox Hollow at Lakewood in Lakewood, Colo.: Encourage wearing of soft spikes, and test irrigation water to determine if it could be harmful.

- Joel Jackson, editor of

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Mark Leslie,
managing editor

Letters

ROOT ZONE ADDENDUM: COST AND 'PERFECTION'

To the editor:

Thanks for the opportunity to express some of my thoughts. In your November issue, regarding the industry's problems concerning root-zone mixes [see related letter on opposite page]:

Because of the important issue of cost, I would like to clarify our company's quality control testing fees. The blending companies I work with charge for the mechanical portion of the work. Our company supervises the production of the mix and assumes the liability of producing mixes as designed. *Together*, our pricing is competitive with others in the blending business.

It should be pointed out that all mixes are *perfect* until they are confirmed as meeting the original design specifications by a competent soil laboratory. If a mix is not checked by someone who knows what they're doing, it's a *perfect* mix.

Only after it's checked will you know whether the mix is subpar.

Glen Watkins

Root Zone Mix

Mule Shoe, Texas

PLAYER CLARIFIES DESIGN

To the editor:

I read the November issue of *Golf Course News* today. In this issue, *GCN* has an article concerning the acquisition of Cutter Sound Golf & Yacht Club in Martin County, Fla. ("Golf Communities adds Fla. track," page 43).

The article incorrectly states that this is a "Gary Player-designed championship course."

We terminated our agreement with the developer of this course approximately 50 percent through the construction phase. Our settlement with the developer expressly prohibits the use of Gary Player's name in conjunction with this golf course. The course was not substantially built to the plans and specifications, and we therefore withdrew.

We would appreciate an appropriate retraction at your earliest convenience. We also realize that this is not particularly the fault of *Golf Course News* and are not criticizing your efforts, only trying to set the record straight.

Thanks for producing such a fine industry trade journal.

Jim Applegate, president

Gary Player Design Co.
Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

GIVING CREDIT WHERE DUE

To the editor:

I would like to clarify several inaccuracies in your October 1994 article relative to the Atlantic Country Club opening in Plymouth, Mass. ("Massachusetts course opens first nine," page 4).

The present owners purchased at auction a nearly complete golf course designed by Richard and Associates that was named Head of the Bay Country Club. Construction of the golf course began in May of 1991.

I find it preposterous that full

design credit is being assigned to Mark Mungeam [of Uxbridge, Mass.-based Cornish and Silva, Inc.] after some minor tee and green enhancements to this golf course. Richards and Associates spent two years laying out and supervising construction on this exciting golf course during some difficult times.

To deny us credit where due is inaccurate reporting.

Ray Richard

Richard and Associates
Sagamore Beach, Mass.

Ed. While it was never our intention to "deny" Mr. Richard credit, Golf Course News apologizes for the error. A great deal of the design and construction work was performed by Richard and Associates before sale of the course. Mr. Mungeam indicated his firm considers Atlantic (the former Head of the Bay) "a remodel," not a Cornish and Silva design. However, according to Mr. Mungeam, "We did do a major amount of work out there. All the tees, six of 18 greens and significant grading."

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For turf's sake, don't take peat for granted

By TOM LEVAR

The constructed soil in sports turf root zones is the foundation of your golf course.

It is easily and often taken for granted once it is placed and covered with turf. Yet your continued success is largely linked to root-zone management, including construction. When root-zone conditions are optimized and sustained, you are also able to establish and sustain healthy, playable turf. This goal is best achieved through the proper use of peat in the root zone; and the bonus is water and nutrient conservation.

No other organic material is as effective as peat in constructed soils for maintaining healthy turf. Our organic options are ever increasing, but peat is the proven standard in the horticultural industries and for very good reasons. Healthy turf relies on a balanced diet of water, air and nutrients. A properly constructed root zone using peat will provide this balance and give a hedge against natural excesses and stresses.

The root zone must breathe and be permissive to gases and water, and at the same time function as a reservoir of available moisture. Peat provides both pore space for pathways and cellular fibers for sorption sites. The water held by peat is readily available to the roots of the turf. No other organic can provide both storage



Tom Levar

and availability so well. The fibrous nature and structure of peat enables the controlled metering of water and gases in the constructed root zone.

The greatest bonus of sphagnum moss peat in sports turf management is water conservation. The water in the root zone is the "chicken soup" to the turf — a broth carrying nutrients, gases and other natural substances to and from the turf roots. If stagnant, this water can suffocate the roots and give rise to diseases and turf failure. The proper use of peat will improve your efficient water use through storage, with optimum gas exchange which promotes an aerobic environment. This means moisture storage without stagnant, anoxic conditions. The balance of water movement and storage is very critical, since all root-zone functions are related to these processes.

Not only is total water use made more efficient with peat, but water quality is also improved. Peat performs as a physical filter to root-zone water which may be laden with nutrients and agrichemicals. Micro-organisms reside in the organic and biologically degrade agrichemical residues, enabling their contact and bioconversion by microorganisms. By using peat, the water percolating through the root zones of your facility is physically and biologically treated.

An additional conservation bonus of peat is related to the inherent presence of peat humic substances. Organic acids stimulate microbial activity and promote more efficient nutrient conversion and uptake by the plants. This effect on the beneficial micro-organisms gives them a competitive advantage over pathogens in the

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Letters

DETAILING A RECIPE FOR ROOT ZONES

To the editor:

I admire Mark Leslie's editorial in the November issue, "We mustn't forget: Greens, root zone are living organisms."

The "recipe" you describe is widely accepted, specified and used by the Deans of American Golf Construction. You identify several of these Deans in your editorial and the accompanying article ("Experts decry inconsistent root-zone mixes"), none of whom address your question: "Does anyone know what this recipe evolves into?"

The solution to your "recipe" is not found in the school of agronomy but is discovered in the school of medicine; pre-med to be exact, in the microbiology section.

See "Facts on File, Biology," edited by Elizabeth Tootill; Library of Congress catalog #88-045476; published in New York-Oxford-Sydney. This particular volume describes Part A of your "recipe" for peat. What follows is a partial description of "peat" from the above text:

1. Partially decomposed plant material that accumulates in water-logged anaerobic conditions; varies from light spongy material to a dense, brown, humidified material in the lower layers.

A. If mineral salts are present, neutral or alkaline peat (fen peat) is formed.

B. If there are no mineral salts present, acid peat (or bog peat) is formed.

What follows next is a description of the spongy and humidified material:

1. Mull: humus from deciduous and hardwood forests, grasslands, warm humid climates; neutral; alkaline; supports bacteria, worms, larger insects are abundant; decay is rapid.

2. Mor: humus; usually acidic characteristic of coniferous forests; few micro-organisms exist; anthropods and fungus being the most common organisms; decay is very slow.

The textbook description of your recipe would now read:

acid peat = peat (bog) = raw humus (mor)...

GOLF COURSE NEWS

supporting anthropods and fungus.

The next step in your "recipe" is the sand. A silica is superior to any calcarious sand. But it can be equally dangerous if not graded correctly. "Correctly" means no fines below the #100 screen and enough pore space to allow oxygen and water movement (The new United States Golf Association specification has difficulty meeting these basics).

Basically, the fertilizer and water cannot move or function if they are isolated or locked in an extremely fine mix. The fungus present in the acid peat then expands, leaving the golf course owner and maintenance staff with no other choice than litigation because, at this stage of the game, the green has failed.

So the recipe evolves into an impossible project for the superintendent, who will then hire an agronomist, who will recommend various fungicides that might or might not work.

The success/failure ratio in Colorado projects between the late 1970s and today also identify your "recipe" and the recipe's results:

1. Late 1970's to Early '80s: All organic material used was a native peat, an extremely heavy black soil. Successful, if handled cautiously.

2. Early to mid-'80s: Your "recipe" was used, sometimes with moderate success but always with problems. Some severe failures — namely, Breckenridge and Castle Pines — occurred.

3. Mid-'80s to today: Change to neutral organic on 95 percent of Colorado projects with 100 percent success to date. The five percent using an acid (not neutral) peat suffer similar fungus problems as those seen in the early '80s.

If the Deans of American Golf were to follow the example of the Canadian and American effects during the mid-1960s to stop the deadly contamination in the Great Lakes, perhaps golf greens would turn green.

Tom Briddle

Tectonic

Longmont, Colo.

OBITUARIES

Frank Duane, 73

Francis J. (Frank) Duane, a golf course architect who overcame paralysis, died Nov. 16, 1994. He was 73.

Duane, who was confined to a wheelchair after suffering from a rare paralysis in 1965 and a stroke in 1972, designed more than 60 golf courses as an associate of Robert Trent Jones and Arnold Palmer, and in his own practice. Duane also remodeled or expanded more than 45 facilities. His projects are found throughout the U.S., Canada, South America, Puerto Rico and Jamaica. Some of his courses include Bel-Ierive CC in Creve Couer, Mo., Big Sky GC in Big Sky, Mont., Half Moon Bay (Calif.) CC, Howell Park GC in Farmingdale, N.J. and Tamarest CC in Alpine, N.J. Duane served

as president of the ASGCA in 1972 and was a fellow.

A graduate of the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University with a degree in landscape architecture and recreational management, Duane believed golf course architecture should be a fair challenge to not only the professional, but the average player too. "Golf course design must not forget that 95 percent of golfers who pay the bills," he once wrote.

A native of Queens, Duane lived in Port Washington, Long Island, since 1957. He is survived by his wife of 39 years, Mary; sons Andrew and Joseph; daughters Mary, Patricia and Olivia; brothers James, Thomas and Robert; sisters Grace and Alice; and one grand-daughter.



Milton Coggins, 92

Milton D. Coggins Sr., an active golf course architect in the Southwest for 25 years and a fellow of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, died on Nov. 4, 1994. He was 92.

Mr. Coggins was one of the greatest figures in the history of Arizona athletics. In 1922, while attending Phoenix Union High School, he and his teammates won the state basketball title. He later started for the baseball team University of the Redlands, where he graduated with a degree in economics. He won five Arizona state tennis titles during the 1920s, was an avid hunter and fisherman. One of Mr. Coggins' friends was Clark Gable, who once said: "Coggins goes with the Arizona outdoors like its sun-

shine and pine trees."

As his life progressed, however, golf became Mr. Coggins' true love. Taking up the game in 1928 at the age of 26, he won the state amateur in 1931 & 1933. In 1940, he became PGA professional at Encanto Muni in Phoenix, a position he held for 25 years. After leaving Encanto, Coggins took up architecture full time. In total, he laid out 29 courses, including those carrying the Sun City name in Arizona (North, South and West), California, Texas and Florida. He was inducted into the ASGCA in 1970 and elected fellow in 1973.

Mr. Coggins is survived by his wife, Tate D.; sons Milt Jr. and Lewis; three grandchildren; and one great grandchild.

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