

USGA seeking green research

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developed for these purposes. For example, a wide array of organic and inorganic soil amendments has been introduced; new construction methods have been proposed; more golf courses use recycled or alternative water sources for irrigation; and construction costs have risen dramatically, threatening to limit the growth of the game.

The Turfgrass Research Committee has identified the goal of this new research effort: Identify the best combinations of construction, grow-in procedures, and post-construction maintenance practices that prevent long-term problems, reduce environmental impacts, and produce high-quality playing surfaces.

Preference will be given to research studies addressing issues related to hydrology and microbiology of greens built to USGA recommendations and to alternative methods. Projects incorporating disciplines such as soil physics, soil chemistry, soil microbiology, turfgrass physiology, and turfgrass pathology will be necessary to achieve the research goals.

These research studies will also give due consideration to environmental issues, and to the use of alternative water sources for golf course irrigation. Organic and inorganic soil amendments also need evaluation to determine, on the basis of sound scientific information, how they fit into construction methods.

Providing a quality putting surface is both an art and a science. A critical period in the life of a new putting green is from the time of seeding and springing to opening day. As the saying goes, time is money and, unfortunately, this time frame is often shortened and the turf growth accelerated to meet the deadline of opening day. This research will help define grow-in guidelines such as evaluating the impact of accelerated grow-in and possibly develop criteria for determining when a green is ready for play.

Proper care after the green is opened for play helps provide a quality putting surface. Potential research will investigate the effects of construction and cultural practices on the long-term performance of the green and the changes in the rootzone properties of a green over time.

All inquiries and questions about these research pre-proposals should be addressed to Dr. Michael P. Kenna, Director of USGA Green Section Research. Dr. Kenna may be contacted at P.O. Box 2227, Stillwater, OK 74076; or by telephone at 405-743-3900 or facsimile 405-743-3920.

Kimberly Erusha, PhD., is director of education and manager of technical communications at the United States Golf Association Green Section in Far Hills, N.J.

Luikens leaves Woodlands, forms comprehensive golf service

HOUSTON — Richard Luikens, former director of golf course maintenance for The Woodlands Resort and Country Club here, has formed Richard Luikens Golf Services (RLGS).

RLGS was formed to provide sound, simple agronomic advice for successful and affordable golf course maintenance; to coordinate golf course construction and renovation projects; and to assist golf product manufacturers in introducing new products into the golf course industry, accord-

ing to Luikens.

During his 20 years in golf, Luikens has been involved with both privately and corporately owned facilities, maintaining and building courses for country club members, resort guests, daily-fee players, and the most demanding golfers of all — PGA Tour players.

While employed at The Woodlands, 54 holes of golf were built, including the TPC at The Woodlands (site of the Shell Houston Open for the past 11 years) and

the Palmer and North courses.

All three have been ranked in the state's top 50.

Previously, Luikens coordinated construction of Lochinvar Golf Club, a Jack Nicklaus-designed course here.

He has also been involved in developing several golf course products.

Chipco 26019, a turfgrass fungicide manufactured by Rhone-Poulenc Ag Co., and Barricade, a turfgrass pre-

emergent herbicide produced by Sandoz Agro. Inc., were tested before their release extensively on golf turf areas under Luikens' supervision.

Prototype work on one of the initial lightweight fairway mowing tractors, the Jacobsen LF-100, also took place on turfgrass facilities under his direction.

Luikens also assisted developers of the Dura-Rake and the U.S. Golf Hole Target.

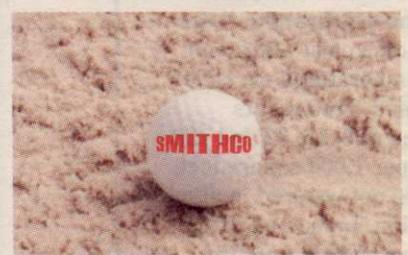
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