

BRIEFS



DON SWEDA DIES AT 48

COLUMBIASTATION, Ohio — Don B. Sweda, a certified golf course superintendent at Columbia Hills Country Club here, has died at the age of 48.



Don B. Sweda

Elected president of the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation (OTF) in December 1993, Mr. Sweda had served six years on the OTF board and was also a past president of the Northern Ohio Golf Course Superintendents Association. He had previously worked at Beechmont Country Club in Cleveland.

WHITE JOINS RUTGERS

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. — Dr. Jim White, a world authority on endophytes in turfgrass, has left Auburn University in Alabama to join the staff at Rutgers University. White, who began his duties in September, has eight years experience in turf mycology.

POSTER HIGHLIGHTS BENEFITS

A new color poster that highlights the environmental benefits of golf courses is appearing at golf facilities across the country, thanks to a cooperative effort by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the United States Golf Association (USGA). The poster lists some of the key ecological and social benefits provided by the more than 15,000 golf courses in the United States, including protecting wildlife habitat and improving air quality.

BENTGRASS RESEARCH GREEN ENLARGED

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. — The Golf Course Superintendents Association of New Jersey and Rutgers University's Center for Turfgrass Research are collaborating to double the bentgrass area for bentgrass research here. The enlargement will allow researchers to evaluate the changes in construction recommendations for U.S. Golf Association-specification putting surfaces. More information is available from Drs. Bruce Clarke and Jim Murphy.



PENN STATE CONCLAVE SET

The Penn State Golf Turf Conference will be held at Nittany Lion Inn here, Nov. 7-9. More information is available from Dr. Peter Landschoot of the Department of Agronomy at 814-863-1017.

GCSAA, chapters float dual membership requirement

By PETER BLAIS

LAWRENCE, Kansas — A proposal that would have required anyone belonging to a local superintendents' association to also join the national organization by the year 2010 was hotly debated during September's Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America chapter relations meeting here.

What eventually emerged from the two-day conclave was a compromise measure mandating dual membership for new members beginning July 1, 1997. Anyone joining a local chapter after that date would also have to join the GCSAA. Likewise, anyone joining GCSAA would also have to join a local chapter. Existing members would not be required to join both organizations.

The proposal could be enacted on the national and local levels over the next few months.

Most of the 95 chapter representatives who met here to discuss the proposed chapter affiliation agreement agreed dual membership would increase the professional image of all superintendents.

But many disagreed with the requirement proposed by the GCSAA Chapter Relations Committee that all superintendents and assistant superintendents join both organizations. The proposal would have required that 51 percent of a local chapter's Class A, B and C members hold joint membership by the year 2000, 75 percent by 2005 and 100 percent by 2010.

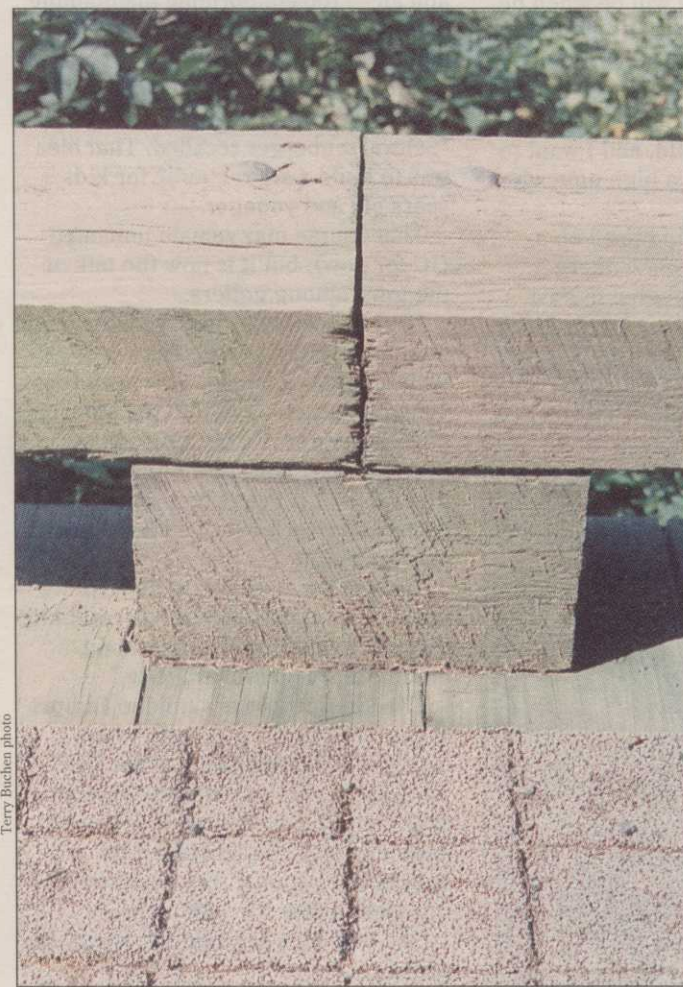
"There are some existing members

who just don't want to join the national association," said Jim Hodge, president of the Maine Golf Course Superintendents Association (GCSA) and head superintendent at Val Halla Golf Club in Cumberland. "Most of us want to see 100-percent participation in both organizations. But there are other avenues to get there rather than simply requiring everyone to join by the year 2010."

A recommendation from the floor that the proposed chapter affiliation agreement be amended so that only new members be required to join both organizations gained the support of better than two-thirds of the chapter representatives, Hodge said.

"Requiring just new members to join

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Flexigran and Play Bound make wooden walkways safe and aesthetic.

New products for wood ensure soft-spike safety

By TERRY BUCHEN

We are fortunate to have new technology available in the form of spikeless golf spikes. These spikeless alternatives have made our jobs easier in providing better playing conditions, and it will be interesting to see if they will survive the test of time. Many golf courses have banned metal golf spikes, favoring the "greens-friendly" spikeless varieties.

The only disadvantages: They sometimes will come loose and can become lost when used on an older set of golf shoes; and they are slippery on wooden bridge surfaces (especially if they have an incline) from the elements

of heavy dews, irrigation, rainfall and sometimes even fog.

To help eliminate golfers from potentially "falling to



their knees," a couple of products can be applied to any wooden bridge surface with excellent results. Flexigran and Play Bound are two types of rubberized or urethane surfaces that are "poured-in-place" just like convert.

On wooden bridge applications, one-half or five-eighths of an inch top-grade waterproofed plywood is nailed to the bridge surface in any widths or configurations the superintendent desires. The rubberized or urethane prod-

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Low pH can destroy pump stations as well as turf

By TOM LUBIN

Normally the most acidic rain and the most acidic lakes are found in the North-eastern United States and Southeastern Canada. In many cases the low pH has been traced to industrial air and water pollution in both countries. When the pH of lakes falls below 6.0, some species of fish and other organisms are affected adversely. Depending on the plant material pH values, lower than 6.0 may affect the plant metabolism adversely.

Acidic irrigation water available for use on golf courses and other irrigated facilities may cause problems not only for the plant material. It can literally dissolve the pump station. A case in point is at Banyan Tree Country Club in Phuket, Thailand.

Tom Lubin is a professor of chemistry at Cypress College in Cypress, Calif.

SECOND OF TWO PARTS

This golf resort was built on a site near an old abandoned tin mine. A combination of the very acidic irrigation water with a pH of 2.7 with an appreciable tin ion concentration literally dissolved the pump station over three months. A number of attempts to solve the problem failed, and for a period of time a welder was on call to repair leaks as they occurred.

The water at a pH of 2.7 essentially contained none of the buffering provided by the bicarbonate ion normally found on less acidic water. The only way to provide a long-term answer to these problems would be to re-establish the bicarbonate buffer. This was accomplished using dolomite (calcium and magnesium carbonate), the best quality powdered carbon-

ate containing material available locally. If a reliable source of calcium carbonate were available, it could have been used instead of the dolomite. This is the safest and most efficient method of both raising the pH of the water and creating a buffer to further pH change both in the water and ultimately in the soil.

At the Banyan Tree Country Club site, acidic deposits had built up over the many years of operation. Runoff from the old tin mine had acidified the ground water in the area and effectively destroyed the buffering capability of the irrigation water and the soil.

When the pH of any water or soil is lower than 6.0, the bicarbonate ion buffer is converted to carbonic acid. The carbonic acid can decompose and the buffer may be lost as carbon diox-

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GCSAA hopes to work membership deal with local chapters

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both groups was more palatable to just about everyone," said Mark Ruff, president of the Intermountain GCSA and head superintendent at Mountain Dell Golf Course in Salt Lake City.

"Guys coming out of school today all know about the benefits of GCSAA and are more likely to join anyway," added Hodge. "We'll eventually get to the 100-percent level this way. It may take a little longer. But there are no deadlines and no existing members will be forced to leave their local organization because they don't want to join the national."

GCSAA Vice President Bruce Williams, who chairs the chapter relations committee, said he was pleased with the compromise.

"The consensus was that we go with a two-way [dual] membership," he said. "Whether we phased it in over 15 years or just required it of new members didn't make a great deal of difference."

GCSAA and chapter representatives conceded the \$210 annual GCSAA dues may present a hardship for some superintendents, especially those at smaller or remote clubs where employers are less likely to pay for a superintendent's GCSAA dues.

"We [GCSAA] deal with membership prices all the time," said Williams, who noted dues have remained the same the past six years. "And we sympathize with those situations. But we have to look at the good of the profession as a whole. If a club won't pay for its superintendent's dues, then the individual must decide whether the services GCSAA provides are important enough for the superintendent to contribute to the profession himself."

The new agreement could lead several smaller superintendent chapters and/or turfgrass associations with a mix of superintendent, landscape architects, sod producers, etc. to drop their affiliation with GCSAA, Williams said.

"We [GCSAA] are poised to give those groups any assistance we can," Williams said. "We could lose a couple. Or they might reorganize and come back in another form. It's not our intent to lose chapters. But as we attempt to strengthen the profession, some individuals and groups may have to jump through a few more hoops."

The Chapter Relations Committee, Williams said, has been reviewing the dual membership question as part of its ongoing effort to improve cooperation between the

national and its affiliated associations. Little has been done to enforce the existing affiliation agreement for the past dozen years, Williams noted.

"We need to strengthen a relationship that had started to fall apart," said Williams, who will assume the GCSAA presidency in February. "The affiliation agreement is a big part of that. To enforce the old agreement without input



'It's not our intent to lose chapters. But as we attempt to strengthen the profession, some individuals and groups may have to jump through a few more hoops.'

— Bruce Williams
GCSAA vice president

from the chapters would not have been fair."

Chapter representatives were impressed with GCSAA

officials desire for their input and willingness to listen to their ideas during the meeting. "Four years ago when we

were considering some new bylaw amendments, there was no trust between the members and board of directors," said Bob Maibusch, a past president of the Chicagoland GCSA and board member of the Midwest GCSA. "There seemed to be a lot of hidden agendas.

"No one accused this board of that. Everything was above board and we had a very open dialogue. Now we can move forward as an association."

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