

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 7, NUMBER 10
OCTOBER 1995 • \$4.50

INSIDE

Diplomatic Relations?

GCSAA and local chapter representatives appear to have agreed on a dual membership strategy 13

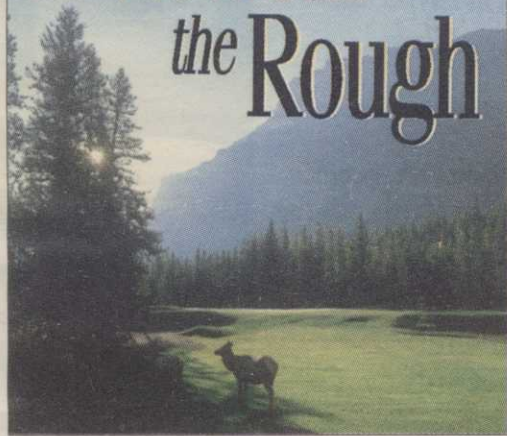
On the green

U.S. Golf Association research may give *poa annua* the staying power it sorely lacks 15

The Public Arena

The Golf Course Expo Development Program will focus on an evolving financial climate 46

A View from the Rough



KLEMME IN PRINT?

Well, sort of... Photographer Mike Klemme has published a book highlighting golf's natural benefits. See page 3.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

Reducing the chance of rubber-spike slippage 13
Savings, safety via custom soil storage 18
Measure your greens right, the Maples Way 19

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

P.B. Dye, master of the "visually disturbing" 27
All aboard! GCBAAs sports full membership 31

COURSE MANAGEMENT

EPA's UST ruling should ease credit crunch 35
Legal Corner: Women gain equal access 36

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

The growing specter of MCS 39
Biodegradable tee-maker tests the market 40



Perry Dye's Third Place CC near Nagoya, Japan

Design in Asia-Pacific
... see p. 31

Ken May/Rolling Greens Photography

Courses, supers withered by drought

By MARK LESLIE

There are 100-year floods and 100-year droughts. For some, this was a 100-year summer. It was drenching wet in Florida and Ohio. There was record-crunching heat and humidity in Pennsylvania. Dew points went through the roof in Minnesota. Everywhere from Delaware to the Midwest, golf courses got scorched.

"The only guys happy are west of the Rockies," said Golf Course Su-

perintendents Association of America President Gary Grigg after a meeting of chapter representatives in Lawrence, Kan. "It's been drought in the Northeast, heat in the Midwest, rain in the South. [Director] Paul McGinnis said Arizona had a stretch of 47 days when the temperature was over 110 degrees."

"This was the worst summer I've ever seen for growing grass," said Terry Buchen of Double Eagle Club in Galena, Ohio. "We had so much

rain, and the heat and humidity was the worst I've ever seen. The grass just cooked."

Cooked so badly that many golf courses closed down so crews could aerate and reseed. People were hitting balls off bare soil at some facilities.

"If you had new greens with sand-based construction, generally you were fine," said Stan Zontek, director of the U.S. Golf Association Green Section (USGA) Mid-Atlantic Region.

Continued on page 21

Alumni key university development strategy

By MARK LESLIE

COLUMBIA, S.C. — In the Southeastern Conference (SEC), 75,000 to 100,000 fans pack football stadiums every Saturday in the fall. Now a unique concept in golf development, The University Club, aims to pack them in at new golf courses located at those same SEC schools.

Indeed, The University Club at University of South Carolina (USC) boasted a whopping 12,000-plus members when it opened its first 18 holes here on Sept. 15. A second University Club — this one at Louisiana State University — could register similar numbers when it opens in a year or so.

Targeting universities with "a fervent athletic supporter base," this new company, called The University Club, decided to concentrate first on the Southeastern Conference which leads the nation in attendance at football

Continued on page 26



PUBLIC PLAY, OUTSIDE THE BELTWAY

Augustine Golf Club, the Washington, D.C. area's newest golf facility, is open for public play. This 18-hole Rick Jacobson design is the centerpiece of a residential community now under construction in Stafford, Va. For an update on this and other Jacobson projects, see page 30.

Audubon targets public-access at Golf Course Expo

By MARK LESLIE

ORLANDO, Fla. — Sensing that the vast number of public-access golf course officials are not joining the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System because they believe it is cost-prohibitive, the Audubon Society of New York (ASNY) will address them in a special session during Golf Course Expo here, Nov. 9-10.

"Our program is not geared towards finding interesting ways for golf courses to spend even more money from an already dwindling budget," said ASNY President Ron Dodson. "But we want superintendents to consider conservation as a mechanism to save money. Generally, our program should be thought of not only as environmental but as cost-efficient as well."

The ASNY is one of several major associations



Continued on page 46

Banc One goes sour on muni financing deals

By PETER BLAIS

Banc One Leasing Corp., a major lending institution that helped finance approximately a dozen municipal golf facilities using municipal lease arrangements, has taken over or is negotiating with municipalities on four of those projects, according to a bank attorney.

The courses are located in Minnesota, Colorado, Iowa and California, said Jeffrey Ayres, senior attorney for Banc One Corp., the holding company for Banc One Leasing.

Continued on page 37

The 100-year summer strikes

Continued from page 1

"If you had bentgrass greens, you were basically fine. But if you had *poa annua* greens, it's been a real problem. And, in certain places, you were in trouble with ryegrass on the fairways because of a disease called *Pyricularia grisea* (gray leaf spot) found normally in Bermudagrass and centipede. This year ryegrass got it from the Mid-Atlantic to Kentucky. I've seen this disease twice on ryegrass in 24 years.

"Put these ingredients all together and you have some hurting golf courses. All have suffered... There weren't many umbrellas over the golf courses."

Bob Brame of the USGA North-Central Region agreed. "It was so bad... Greens, green embankments, fairways — there are scars everywhere," he said. "A number of courses are doing major renovations — aggressive overseeding and some sodding — and using temporary putting surfaces while renovating their permanent greens."

Wet wilt, Brame said, has been a major problem because "there's no way to treat it. It happens when soil can't drain, and it kills the grass quicker than anything. Usually you see very little of it, never to the extent we've seen it this year."

"I've been here two years and we've had a 50-year ice storm and now a 50-year drought," lamented superintendent Dan Pierson of Wilmington (Del.) Country Club. "We're looking at more financial loss this year than the ice, and that cost \$75,000 for restoration. I have no viable roughs now. Our fairways are 30 to 40 percent dead."

At Chester Valley Golf Club in Malvern, Pa., superintendent Kirby Putt closed the course from Aug. 28 to Sept. 16 "to try to re-establish some of the greens where the *poa annua* was left."

At Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pa., superintendent Paul B. Latshaw took advantage of the disaster to do a project he had planned for later in the year. Looking at three or four *poa annua*-dominated greens that had lost 30 to 40 percent of their turf, he closed the course to install a new irrigation system.

"This made the most sense," Latshaw said. "If we were ever going to do the fumigation, the timing was perfect."

Putt and Latshaw blamed heat and humidity rather than the drought for the turf loss at their clubs. Putt added another culprit: an untimely drenching (3-1/2 inches of rain that flooded most of the course on July 21) and the fact he could not get the moisture out of his greens.

Latshaw added the fact that "we got hit with every disease *poa annua* can get — from anthracnose to summer patch, root Pythium, everything. We had soil temperatures at one point above 100 degrees. It was absolutely brutal."

Minnesota experienced the second-highest dew point numbers on record, said Patty Knaggs of Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska. "There were large amounts of lots of diseases, including pythium that never went away and take-all patch," she said. "And a lot of people reported breakthroughs with their chemical controls. The labeled rates didn't last as long as they should have because disease pressure was extraordinary."

With 30 inches and more of rain being dumped on South Florida courses in 30 days, many closed down, said Grigg, who kept nine holes open at the 36-hole Royal GOLF COURSE NEWS



Scenes like this were numerous across the country. Excessive heat and humidity, combined with drought, made it unusually difficult to grow in this new course.

Poinciana Golf Club in Naples.

"The mole crickets, sod web worms and other insects really relish the moisture — as do nutsedge and other weeds," he said. "And we can't get out to spray for them. It's like a sponge."

The fairways at Worthington Golf Country Club in Bonita Springs, Fla., were under water for more than three weeks in mid-September, said superintendent Kevin Selsor. "We're losing 2 inches a water a day, vertically, and we're looking at two to three weeks before all the water is drained off. That is, if we don't get another storm.

"We have a lot of major problems. We still have live roots and green leaf tissue. But with another two to three weeks to go, we just don't know what we'll be facing. Temperatures are in the 90s and the water is warm. That depletes the oxygen from water and suffocates the grass."

Putt said that although he was able to syringe the greens to cool them off during the day, since he couldn't relieve the moisture inside the greens, the stage was set for fungus. In his case it was basil stem root rot, an offshoot of anthracnose for which there is no good chemical control.

"You can stop it by using higher rates of Cleary 3336. But if you stay in high heat and humidity as long as we did, we found

that no chemical could help," he said.

In the case of gray leaf spot, Zontek said superintendents had a mere three-day window in which to apply Daconil. "If you did, you got good results. But if you didn't, it was pretty dramatic in how much you lost."

Exactly how are superintendents overcoming the problems?

Even Pierson's good intentions worked against him. Having begun a project to convert to bentgrass fairways, he had just aerified on July 28 and overseeded using some plant growth regulators. The drought — coupled with the fact Wilmington CC relies on runoff and a couple of small wells for water — meant terminal turf.

Putt double-verticut and aerified Chester Valley's greens and incorporated SR1020 and Penncross bentgrass.

"It's not a bentgrass conversion but a re-establishment," Putt said. "We wanted to take full advantage of when *poa* was at its weakest point."

Short of rebuilding, he plans to deep-drill to 10 inches and fill. "If we do that twice a year for two years it will help," he said.

Latshaw reseeded with a bentgrass blend of Providence, Crenshaw, L-93, Southshore and a little Pennlinks.

"It will be survival of the fittest," he said. "We have some greens shaded, some in full sun, some that don't drain well..."

Brutal conditions across the country

In many places across the country, the weather elements were savage. For instance, by mid-September:

- In Delaware, "water police" were checking neighborhoods ensuring that people held to water restrictions put in place beginning Sept. 13. "The state was very understanding and reasonable," said Dan Pierson of Wilmington (Del.) Country Club, who had feared the worst. "Courses are limited to watering between 5 and 8 a.m., greens and tees only. But we can use the automated irrigation systems for delivery."

- Delaware surpassed the 50-year drought stage and may soon reach a 100-year drought. "We were 7 inches above normal rainfall in mid-May," Pierson said, "and now we're 12-1/2 inches under."

- Philadelphia marked nearly 50 days exceeding 90 degrees, including a record 27 in a row. "We have broken every record in Philly," said Paul B. Latshaw of Merion Golf Club. "Of the last five years, four have been the hottest in the history of Philadelphia. This year was the hottest and the worst drought on the record books."

- August was the driest month on record in many parts of Pennsylvania.

- Data from 1985 to 1995 shows Minnesota had the hottest August in the last 10 years, the hottest July since 1989 and the hottest June since 1991.

- Just 7/10 of an inch of rain was measured from the first of June to mid-September at Waterville (Maine) Country Club. "Business is great. The golf course has had it," said superintendent Kyle Evans.

- "We had 15 consecutive days where we set record highs for heat and humidity," said Kirby Putt of Chester Valley Golf Club in Malvern, Pa. "It's the fourth-worst drought in 101 years."

- Columbus, Ohio, is 12 inches over normal in rainfall — normal being 36 inches.

Hot Spots?

Stop wasting labor handwatering! Wet Hot Spots FAST with the **WETTING FORK**™



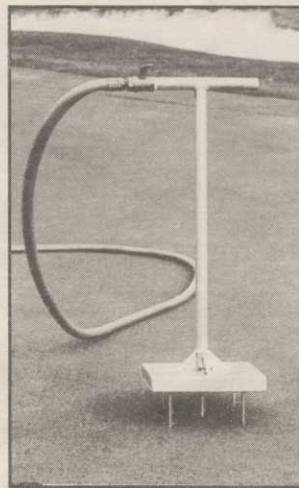
The Wetting Fork...

- Wets hydrophobic spots in 10 seconds or less
- Is made of lightweight but durable aluminum
- Has new improved stainless steel tines that can be used to inject fertilizers, fungicides and insecticides or wetting agents
- Helps control Fairy Ring
- Saves handwatering cost by wetting hydrophobic dry spots quickly and efficiently
- Reduces wetting agent use

Available Through Professional Turf Distributors

Ask for a free demonstration!

For your nearest Distributor, call: **PRECISION TOOL PRODUCTS CO. 1-800-253-2112** or fax 313-429-3985



TURF GRASS SOLUTIONS

PROBLEM:

You like to overseed with Annual, but need something darker & finer?

SOLUTION:

Developed especially for winter overseeding!



Frog Hair is a product of



33390 TANGENT LOOP
TANGENT, OREGON 97389
PHONE (503) 926-8649
FAX (503) 926-4436
OUTSIDE OREGON 800-421-1735