

BRIEFS



**KNOTTS EARNS CERTIFICATION**

NAPLES, Fla. — Prentis C. Knotts of Eagle Creek Country Club here has been designated a certified golf course superintendent (CGCS) by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Superintendent at Eagle Creek since 1991, Knotts passed a rigorous examination and his course was inspected by two CGCSs.

**ISS INKS PENNBROOKE PACT**

LEESBURG, Fla. — ISS Golf Services of Tampa has reached an agreement with Florida Leisure Communities for maintenance of the nine-hole Pennbrooke Fairways golf course here. Florida Leisure has added three Gordon Lewis-designed holes at Pennbrooke Fairways and plans to expand to 18 holes in 1996.

**LARGE-ROLL SOD HARVESTING A HIT**

OMAHA — Large-roll sod harvesting and delivery systems captured the imagination of the 850 registrants at the Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) Summer Convention and Field Days held July 26-28 at Todd Valley Farms 35 miles west of Omaha. TPI officials said highly automated, one-person roll sod harvesting machines also drew interest, as did improvements in forklifts, large mowers and irrigation systems. The event was attended by 60 representatives from 14 countries.

**FIDDLER'S ELBOW QUALIFIES**

FAR HILLS, N.J. — Fiddler's Elbow Country Club has earned full certification in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP). Specific projects undertaken at Fiddler's Elbow include the release of two rehabilitated American Kestrels on the property; the use of bluebird nest boxes as 150-yard markers; a club-wide recycling effort; the continued use of a comprehensive, "natural-organic" integrated pest management program; and the creation of sediment-traps and buffer zones around many on-course waterways. In addition, Fiddler's has set a total of 107 acres of property aside as "no-mow" areas.

**GEORGIA GIVES STEWARDS \$3,000**

EATONTON, Ga. — The Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association has donated \$3,000 toward creation of a new exhibit at Rock Eagle Natural History Museum here. The Stewards of the Land exhibit will introduce visitors to the world of urban agriculture, including turf and landscape.



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# Zebra mussel menace threatens South

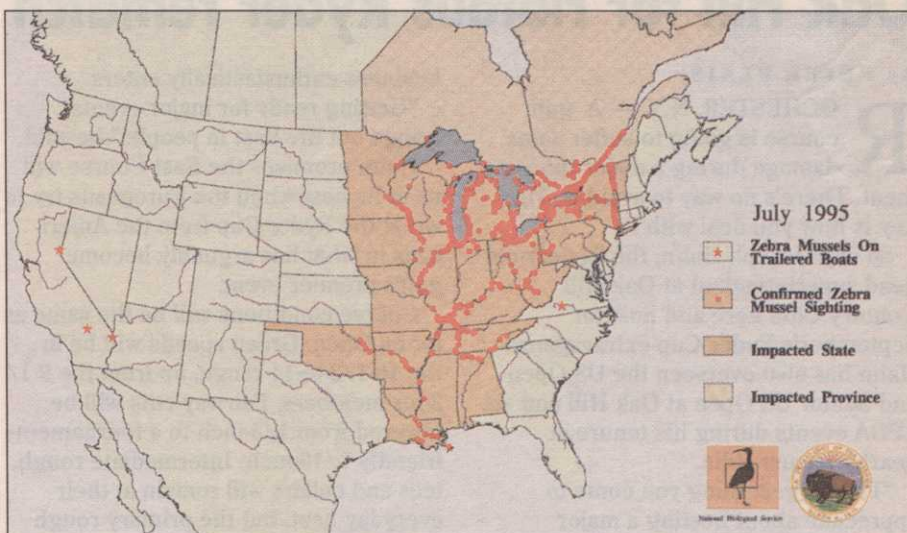
By MARK LESLIE

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — The Southeast is bracing for what scientists feel is the imminent invasion of the zebra mussel — a menace that has plagued the Great Lakes area since arriving in the ballast of a ship from Europe nine years ago.

Already, the clamlike shellfish have invaded golf courses in Illinois, Minnesota and New York, and shut down water-management and power companies. So minute in their veliger, (the larval form, which is 70 microns or larger), zebra mussels swim right through conventional water filters. They have been found up to two feet thick on the intake of a water system.

"All of us from North Carolina on down the coast are trying to set up preventive programs," said Marion Clarke of the Sea Grant Extension Program at the University of Florida in Gainesville. "Northern Florida will be the first vulnerable area because our waters are cooler longer. They [zebra mussels] are becoming more tolerant of warm water and are developing immunities to salinity."

Golf course superintendents should



The National Biological Service's Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Data Base at the Southeastern Biological Science Center in Gainesville, Fla., keeps track of zebra mussel distribution in North America. This map depicts the zebra invasion as of July.

be most concerned if they draw from open water, Clarke said, adding: "Zebras get into the irrigation system and clog up their sprinkler heads and pipes. You can be [closed] down weeks doing chlorination treatments and scraping and blowing out pipes. "It is very labor-intensive. You

intensively chlorinate the pipes, let it sit and then pressure-blowout the pipes; then keep chlorine in there to kill whatever larvae survives."

The Great Lakes area has spent millions of dollars combating zebras. Indeed, if not money then at least fear

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The dead-air green at Atlanta Athletic Club is divided into 5-by-10-foot plots for 28 cultivars and five blends of turfgrass.

## Dead-air green's gift: Life to the industry's turfgrasses of the future

By MARK LESLIE

DULUTH, Ga. — Dead air oftentimes means dead grass. But Georgia superintendents and researchers hope the "dead-air green" they built at Atlanta Athletic Club (AAC) here will help produce turfgrasses that survive regardless of air movement.

"I think we'll wind up with better year-round conditions on the putting greens," said AAC Director of Golf Courses and Grounds Ken Mangum. "The more information we have, the better decisions we can make."

The Georgians built almost a worst-case scenario when they constructed this 9,000-square-foot green. Trees edge two sides of the putting surface and eight-to-nine-foot-high mounds enclose it on all sides. Cut to a height of 9/64 inch, it is being maintained like the other greens on the golf course — even to the extent of

double-mowing and rolling during the state amateur tournament in July, Mangum said.

"It was done mainly to research performance to find the best cultivars for those conditions," said Dr. Gil Landry of the University of Georgia. "That's the number-one question for all golf course superintendents. The feeling is, if we can get a grass that will survive that stress it will survive other locations on a golf course."

The green was built to U.S. Golf Association specifications by area shaper Mitch Bourgeois, and AAC crews seeded four replications of cultivars instead of the three common to national trials.

The plots are 5 by 10 feet, which is twice the size of normal test plots. Twenty-eight cultivars and five blends grace the green.

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## Mechanics tune up 1st nat'l conclave

By MARK LESLIE

COBBLESKILL, N.Y. — The fledgling Golf Course Mechanics Association (GCMA) is gaining momentum in numbers and now plans its first Mechanics School, a five-day program hosted here by State University of New York at Cobleskill, Jan. 8-12.

"Hopefully, it will be yearly," said GCMA Vice President Brian Alford of Dedham (Mass.) Country and Polo Club. "It will stay on a regional level for the time being. If [GCMA] really gets rolling, perhaps 10 years from now, we might have a one-week national conference."

The \$685 course, consisting of eight half-day sessions, will instruct members on the ins and outs of products made by Jacobsen, Toro, Cushman, Ryan, Ransomes, John Deere, Troy-Built, Melroe-Bobcat, Kawasaki, Honda, Briggs & Stratton, Tecumseh/Peerless, Rainbird, Buckner, Neary, Foley and many others, according to organizers.

Open to GCMA members only, the sessions are structures such that the SUNY-Cobleskill instructors determine at what experience level classes will begin and cover. Instructors may also look to students' experience to help the class.

Sessions will include repair welding, diesel engine fundamentals, electrical systems diagnosis, hydraulic system diagnosis, carburetion and gas engines, grinding reel mowers, irrigation system repair and sprayer calibration maintenance.

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# Dead-air green to reveal secrets of air movement, turfgrass growth

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Seeded Nov. 22, 1993, the turf didn't accomplish good coverage until late spring of 1994. This year's data will be the first, and Landry and the others intend to widely disseminate the findings.

The main problem for superintendents growing bentgrass in the Southeast is summer stress and limited air movement. The Georgia Turfgrass Foundation (GTF) decided to fund construction of the dead-air green when Atlanta Athletic

Club was considering building a nursery green at the same time the GTF wanted to improve cultivar evaluations.

The project actually correlates to a program superintendent David Stone started at The Honors Course in Ooltewah, Tenn., where he didn't have much air movement, Landry said.

Yet, findings from this research will be pertinent across the country, Landry added.

"Our data will help give most



*"The feeling is, if we can get a grass that will survive that stress it will survive other locations on a golf course."*

— Dr. Gil Landry, UGeorgia

people insight into cultivar performance under similar types of environmental conditions," Landry said. "And we compare our data with David Stone's data as well other data across

the South.

"Dr. Keith Kornack is trying to determine whether there is a cultivar relationship between localized dry spots. That will be applicable to anywhere in

the world. Next summer a pathologist will inoculate the plots with dollar spot, brown patch and maybe pythium, and try to get ratings based on disease tolerance. We're trying to make it as all-encompassing as possible."

This spring researchers began to investigate green speed to determine cultivars' relative performance on ball roll.

"I think we will see you definitely get a difference based on the innate characteristics of each cultivar," he said.

Next summer, a traffic simulator will be used to determine wear tolerance.

Meantime, the GTF has purchased a weather station and installed it about 50 yards from the dead-air green.

In addition to being part of an 18-station environmental and climatological monitoring program in Georgia, it will measure environmental conditions in the area of the dead-air green and help researchers correlate better environmental conditions and cultivar performance.

"This will help enormously," Mangum said. "What you may find using the weather data is that one cultivar may do better in hot and dry weather and another better in wet conditions — that sort of information."

"For putting green performance, no one has done this extensive a test plot," Landry said.

The dead-air green is already paying dividends.

"This gave us an opportunity to look at all the new bentgrasses in the Atlanta area," Mangum said. "There are many golf courses here, a lot of new construction and reconstruction. It gives people the opportunity to bring their committee members, architects, developers and others out to take a look first-hand. A week hardly goes by when we don't have a visitor."

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An added plus is that 10 different warm-season grasses, from buffalograsses to zoysias and Bermudas, were grown around the green "so that people can get an idea of what they look like," Mangum said.

"We also have four 20- by 20-foot bunkers with sands that are readily available in the area," he added. It's educating people. They can look at this sand versus that sand, or this zoysia versus that zoysia."

A lot of information superintendents are waiting for expectantly won't be available for perhaps five years, Mangum said. He specifically pointed to certain blends of bentgrass seed, such as Southshore-Crenshaw-SR1020, Penncross-Crenshaw and Crenshaw-Providence. "And a lot of people are interested in these," he added.

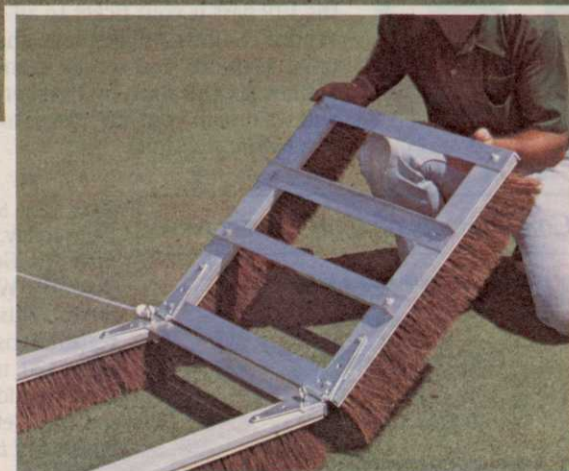


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