

BRIEFS



CRENSHAW TO GET OLD TOM AWARD

PGA Tour great Ben Crenshaw will receive the 1997 Old Tom Morris Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. The presentation will take place Feb. 11 in



Ben Crenshaw

Las Vegas at a banquet during the association's 68th International Golf Course Conference and Show. GCSAA President Bruce R. Williams said Crenshaw's actions over the years "exemplify what is best about the game. From his activities as a collector to his passion for the integrity of the game, Ben's obvious love of golf is an inspiration."

SOUTHWEST SHOW SCHEDULED

PHOENIX, Ariz. — The 19th annual Southwest Horticultural Trade Show will be held here Sept. 5-6, featuring a full-day seminar on reclaimed irrigation water and several educational sessions. Sponsored by the Arizona Nursery Association, the event will display products specifically designed for the desert areas of Arizona, New Mexico, California and west Texas. The annual Xeriscape Conference, continuing education units, marketing panel and grower short course are part of the event.

FOUTY OVERSEES EXPANSION

NORTHVILLE, Mich. — Expansion is underway here at Downing Farms Golf Course and Michigan State graduate Mike Fouty has assumed the position of superintendent. Work on an additional nine holes began in January along with improvements on the original course. The 3,120-yard Harry Bowers design will incorporate wetlands and hardwoods. A 3,000-square-foot clubhouse is scheduled to open in July.

GCSAA OPENS WEB SITE

A new World Wide Web site makes information available to the general public about course management. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America site address is <http://www.gcsaa.org/gcsaa>. The initial phase will focus on the environment. Starting July 1, GCSAA members will have a private Member Services area they can log into at their convenience. GCSAA has also added a new e-mail box — infobox@gcsaa.org — to gather feedback and answer questions.

Budget-cut threat to NTEP awaits Congress

By MARK LESLIE

BELTSVILLE, Md. — The air of neutrality and objectivity surrounding the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program would be in jeopardy if the U.S. Department of Agriculture redirects its support to other areas of its Agricultural Research Service (ARS), according to NTEP National Director Kevin Morris.

The reason, Morris said, is that NTEP would have to move to new quarters outside USDA's research station here, where it uses office, laboratory and greenhouse space and feed and equipment storage areas.

NTEP first observed the threat of lost funding when President Clinton submitted his 1997 budget to Congress in April. While it gave the USDA a small increase, it cut NTEP support.

The USDA gives no actual funds to NTEP, which in effect is a subcontractor whose employees are paid entirely through fees to its users. Rather, USDA's support is indirect, in that \$55,900 is set aside on paper to pay rent and indirect costs at the facilities here.

More important than the finances, Morris said, is "this partnership

between us and the USDA. The USDA puts out a small bit of support and they get a lot of benefit from it, being able to say how much they've done for research. What NTEP gets is the credibility of running a national program associated with an unbiased, neutral organization — not for industry. It's a danger that people perceive us to [work for industry]."

"There is a whole air of neutrality that is hard to put a value on and could be threatened by moving from here."

With many domestic and foreign visitors coming to the facility, NTEP

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Old vs. new ryes like night and day

By MARK LESLIE

BELTSVILLE, Md. — Rest on your laurels in the ryegrass breeding industry and you'll get run over. That's the message from the latest National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) trial results which show the top ryegrass cultivar in the previous test is ranked 23rd in 1996.

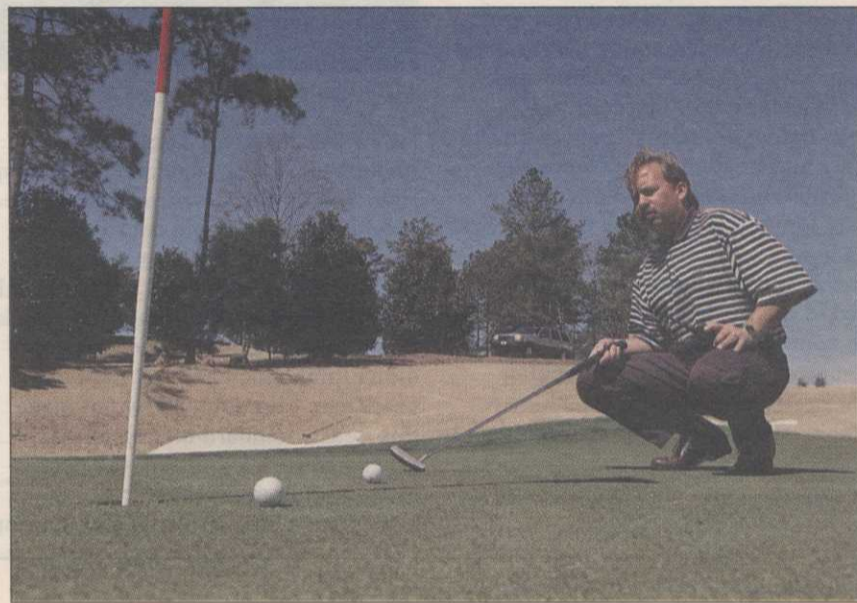
"The difference between those [new and old tests] is like night and day," said NTEP National Director Kevin Morris. "They're improved aesthetically (dark green and dense) and some have better persistence" — that is, in relation to disease resistance.

"Mow ryegrasses at one-half inch, using no fungicides in Maryland and you will kill a lot of them," he said. "But ours persisted quite well through last summer. We do irrigate them... But just looking at them this spring, most people are surprised at the differences — even besides color and density. It's easy to see."

The No. 1 ryegrass in the previous trials — Prizm — ranks 23rd this year, and the previous 4th-ranked cultivar — Brightstar — is 37th this time around. None of the other leaders are even in sight except the previous 7th-ranked Cutter, now 42nd.

Asked if the higher ratings in this latest test are due to more use of endophyte in the ryegrass cultivars, Morris said: "Endophyte relates to insect resistance, and surviving under adverse environmental conditions like low water use. My guess is, it's more that they are generally improved for disease resistance and persis

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Randy Waldron makes it a daily chore to check the consistency of the roll in his greens.

Waldron's aim: Picture-perfect

By TODD L. SENTELL

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Eighteen holes in the morning, another in the afternoon, perhaps a third 18 on the way home, dinner, then a Little League game. It's all in a day's work for Randy Waldron, director of golf courses and landscaping at The Golf Club of Georgia.

His walkie-talkie surgically attached and his sharp eyes are constantly on the peel, Waldron oversees the club's

Todd L. Sentell is a golf writer and the Golf Club of Georgia's director of sales and marketing.



54 holes of golf, managing all this incredible nature and for making sure it's all perfect. Very, very perfect.

There are Creekside, Lakeside and — up the road where he lives overlooking the 18th fairway, White Columns Golf Club.

"I hate it when he [Waldron] plays golf," says golf courses superintendent Tim Reinagel, shaking his head. You'd think Reinagel and his lieutenants would love it when the boss is out of the office for a few hours. But that's not the way it works around here. If

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Georgia's Carrow the Doctor of Stress for turf

Dr. Robert Carrow is a professor of turfgrass science in the Crop and Soil Science Department at the Griffin Station of the University of Georgia and is an integral part of the university's nine-member turf research team. He received a Ph.D. in Soil Science from Michigan State University in 1972 and has done research at the University of Massachusetts and Kansas State University. His areas of research emphasis are turfgrass drought resistance mechanisms and water conservation, plant nutrition/soil fertility and turfgrass wear/soil compaction stresses. He has written more than 200 articles and is co-editor of two turfgrass science books.



Dr. Robert Carrow University of Georgia



Golf Course News: What has your work shown in terms of such environmental stresses as drought and salinity? Traffic stress? Water conservation strate-

gies? Why are these issues important?

Robert Carrow: Whether a turfgrass persists in the field depends on its tolerance to the stresses imposed on it. Environmental stresses include high/low temperature, excess/lack of water and low light intensity. Pest stresses include diseases, insects/nematodes and weeds. Use stresses include close mowing, soil compaction from traffic and wear from traffic.

I have concentrated on two primary areas and within each tried to develop several strategies to cope with the stress.

Drought resistance/low water use is the first. We've identified which turfgrass spe

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Q&A: Bob Carrow

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cies and cultivars within a species have the best overall drought resistance. This included determining which grasses can develop a good root system and maintain it under our severe soil stresses of high soil strength, acid soil complex, high temperatures and low water content [i.e. drought]. We've identified which grasses have inherently low water-use rates thereby low irrigation requirements. We've developed irrigation scheduling procedures based on the use of turf canopy temperatures, and turfgrass cultivation programs to improve deep root growth.

Traffic stress is the second area of emphasis. We've determined soil compaction tolerances of grasses for recreational sites, developed cultivation programs to alleviate soil compaction and determined the influence of golf cart tire design on turfgrass wear.

GCN: Do you have any preliminary results from your USGA-funded research on developing general practices to deal with the decline of bentgrass in hot, humid climates like the U.S. Southeast?

RC: Preliminary results from a project funded by The Toro Co. the past two years strongly suggested that summer bentgrass decline (SBD) was not due to a pathogen but high temperatures leading to root deterioration, especially in the surface zones, leading to soil oxygen stress. From the results, the USGA is now funding a more detailed study on the causes and corrective practices of summer bentgrass decline.

GCN: The USGA is also funding University of Georgia research projects on the development of better models to track the movement of pesticides in turf-containing soils; Dr. Glenn Burton's work on TW-72 putting green Bermudagrass; and breeding efforts on seashore paspalums. Can you provide brief updates on those projects?

RC: Dr. Al Smith's research on pesticide fate in turfgrass systems demonstrated that very few pesticides leached through high-sand golf greens due to the high organic matter content in the surface zone that absorbs and degrades pesticides. In the second phase, he demonstrated that pesticide runoff from turf surfaces was potentially a greater problem. He is developing means to reduce runoff potential.

Drs. Burton and Wayne Hanna are increasing two improved vegetative Bermudagrasses: TW-72 (greens) and Tift 94 (fairway with good cold tolerance). These are excellent grasses.

Dr. Ron Duncan has a very extensive program on breeding/genetics of seashore paspalum (*Paspalum vaginitum*). This turfgrass has great potential for use in the same areas that Bermudagrass does. However, it has certain advantages — very

high salinity tolerance making it well suited to poor water-quality conditions; substantially lower nutrient requirements; greater resistance to soil stresses that limit rooting; moderate shade tolerance, especially important in climates with prolonged cloudy periods, such as monsoon seasons. Dr. Duncan is increasing ecotypes for evaluation across the Southern United States and selected overseas sites. This is a very stress-hardy grass.

GCN: The current round of USGA funding ends in January 1998, according to Dr. Mike Kenna. What is the most important area for future funding in

your locale? Nationally?

RC: The current overall funding areas of the USGA — water conservation, alternative pest management, pesticide/nutrient fate — are all high priority and will continue to be important. I would like to see the USGA devote somewhat greater resources to basic research on environmental, traffic and soil stresses. They are doing this for pest stress through the alternative pest management program. It is the basic research that allows a science to truly evolve over both the long and short term. Basic research almost always has immediate practical implications.

GCN: Has the USGA done well allocating research money?

RC: Yes, especially considering the diversity of problem areas they are involved in.

GCN: Does the University of Georgia work closely with the Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association and other state and regional turfgrass groups?

RC: Yes, but not necessarily as a whole group or team. Turfgrass researchers/teachers/extension specialists have one or two areas where they concentrate their attention. With this approach, we can be more involved than if the whole team tried to be involved in each of the interfaces.

GCN: Is there any additional pressure working at the University of Georgia considering the institution's accomplishments?

RC: Probably the No. 1 pressure for a research scientist is obtaining sufficient funds to maintain a productive program. Turf research is costly, requiring turf maintenance equipment, irrigation facilities and operating expenses similar to a golf course, but on a smaller scale. These needs must be met before moneys can be devoted to actual research. This requires much time for writing and submitting projects, meetings, writing reports, developing contacts, etc.



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