

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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FOCUSED ON EXCELLENCE

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Poa triv problems widespread & serious

By MARK LESLIE

Poa trivialis infestations of "epidemic proportions" are being reported in bentgrasses and some Kentucky bluegrasses, affecting golf courses across a broad portion of the United States. The question is, has it always been present?

A rough bluegrass, *poa trivialis* is "very aggressive," said Terry Buchen, The Legends Group director of agronomy. "It will take over bentgrass. Even when the seed is blue tag-certified, it's getting

through [inspections]."

"If you talk to the seed companies, the problem doesn't exist. But if you see new golf courses out in the field, it's absolutely a shame how much *poa trivialis* is there," said Stan Zontek, director of the U.S. Golf Association Green Section's Mid-Atlantic Region. "It's a huge problem. There are some supers who are fit to be tied."

"I totally disagree with Stan and his statement on [new golf courses]," said Dr. Rich Hurley, director of re-

search at Lofts Seed and perhaps the nation's foremost expert on *poa trivialis*. "You take me to 120 old courses and I'll find *poa triv* in fairways, greens and tees. I'm not saying it can't come in the seed, but it's all over. Take me anyplace from Georgia north, coast to coast, blindfolded and I'll find it and I'll find it quick."

"It's a hysteria pointed at the seed companies when, if there is a hysteria, it should be: 'This stuff is everywhere.'"

According to Zontek, the situation

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OB Sports: Turnkey managers

By PETER BLAIS

PORTLAND, Ore. — Bringing resort golf to urban areas is the goal of O.B. Sports, an Oregon-based, full-service management firm that recently began construction of a new golf project on the western outskirts of this city.

"We're focusing on high-end, public golf," said company President Orrin Vincent. "Country clubs and municipal courses have traditionally been the only choices in Western [U.S.] cities. We want to bring that resort golf experience to the city."

The 36-hole Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club, the fifth facility in the O.B. portfolio, is a good example. The Reserve will operate under an unusual format. Alternating each day, one 18-hole course will be dedicated to public/resort play with the other course reserved for private members and their guests.

The courses, which should open in August

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The 7th green at Rush Creek Golf Club, a John Fought design located in Maple Grove, Minn. Fought's design firm is now a division of Aurora, Ore.-based OB Sports.



PUBLIC GOLF FORUM

A NATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE AND EXPO FOR SUPERINTENDENTS, OWNERS, MANAGERS, AND DEVELOPERS OF PUBLIC-ACCESS GOLF FACILITIES

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Forum focus: Customer service

By HAL PHILLIPS

CHICAGO — The golfers couldn't be happier. With more than 400 new courses opening their doors each year, there's an increasing variety of playing options. It's another story for the golf course management team, however, as record development numbers mean more competition in an already tight marketplace.

Sophisticated operations that emphasize customer service, manage efficiently, market aggressively and maintain for quality will thrive in this atmosphere, while those content with the *status quo* will fall by the wayside. The application of these sound business principles to public-access course operations will dominate the four-track education conference at The Public Golf Forum, a two-day seminar and trade show sponsored by

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Participation, rounds back up, says NGF

By HAL PHILLIPS

JUPITER, Fla. — That giant sucking sound you hear is actually a collective sigh of relief. According to the National Golf Foundation's (NGF) annual report on golf participation, rounds played increased 5.5 percent during 1995, pushing the total to 490 million. The report also shows the total number of golfers grew by 3 percent, pegging the current playing population at 25 million.

Following on the heels of last years study which indicated troubling decreases in both rounds and players, the 1996 report comes as welcome news to a golf industry building courses at a record pace. Four hundred and sixty-eight courses, an all-time high, opened for play dur-

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