

BRIEFS



**N.C. TURF SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED**

Seven North Carolina turf students have been awarded scholarships from the Turfgrass Council of North Carolina for the 1996-97 school year. Re-



ceiving scholarships totaling \$2,500 were North Carolina State University students Christopher

Connors and David Bradley. Peter Joe and Thomas Allen Riggan Jr. were chosen from Brunswick Community College. Henry Wayne Caddell, William Daniels III and Thomas David Minowicz were chosen from Catawba Valley Community College. They are all in the final year of their education.

**UMASS SCHOOL TARGETS IPM**

MARLBORO, Mass. — The University of Massachusetts Extension Service will conduct its Green School in January and February, providing training in horticulture fundamentals and their relationship to environmental quality. Integrated Pest Management will be the curriculum foundation. Classes will be conducted on various Tuesdays and Fridays at Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center. Students must apply by Dec. 1. Call Kathleen Carroll at 413-545-0895.

**MID-AM 'ADVANCEMENT' SEMINAR**

CHICAGO — The Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show will present a management seminar, "Habits for Enhancing Personal and Professional Effectiveness," Jan. 17, here at the Navy Pier. The seminar is aimed at executives, top- and middle-level management personnel, and key employees who may be moving toward positions of greater responsibility. The seminar registration fee is \$20. For more information, call 847-526-2010.

**SUMMER JOBS TO BE LISTED**

CARLISLE, Pa. — Ferrell's Jobs In Horticulture (FJIH), a twice-monthly newspaper, has announced a new service for employers



Jack Ferrell

who seek summer workers and job seekers looking for summer positions. Publisher Jack Ferrell said an insert will be included in the 2nd issue each month

from December until April. It will list employers offering summer employment. For information, write Summer Employment Insert, 8 Terri Dr., Carlisle, Pa. 17013-9295; or call 1-800-428-2474.

**MECHANICS' CORNER**

Inform uninformed of winter chores

By GLENN PETERS

In the years that I have worked as a golf course equipment technician, people always ask me: "What do you do all winter?" This is the question I am asked most frequently, both by people who play the game and those who seem to think that there couldn't be very much to do once the temperature drops and the snow flies.

What follows is a brief synopsis of what happens at the Sunset Ridge Country Club maintenance facility during the winter months.

First and foremost, I prioritize what equipment will be worked on and in what order. Once this is done, the work begins with a visual inspection of each machine for obvious problems and, then, a thorough pressure washing is done. Hoods, fenders and body panels are removed to clear any accumulation of grass and dirt.

The most important aspect of our maintenance program, which affects

**NEW COLUMN**

This is the first of a new column, Mechanics' Corner, dealing with innovations in golf course equipment mechanical work. The following article appeared in the Sunset Ridge Country Club (Northbrook, Ill.) newsletter to inform members that the well-conditioned course they enjoyed during the summer was due, in large part, to the work done during the winter, according to Equipment Manager Glenn Peters.

both course playability and condition, is the sharpening of the cutting units.

All cutting units, from greens to rough, are sharpened during winter maintenance. Oil changes, lubrication, tune-ups and overhauls are performed at this time as well. As the maintenance on each piece of equipment is completed, it is inspected again and then waxed. Waxing of turf equip-

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Some of the damage caused by vandals at Bretwood Golf Course in Keene, N.H.

Courses battle plague of vandals

By MARCIA PASSOS DUFFY

KEENE, N.H. — Early one morning this September at Bretwood Golf Course here, Thomas Barrett saw something that would cause any superintendent's heart to sink: scarred greens.

Joy riders had stolen golf cars during the night and had spun "doughnuts" on the 9th and 10th greens at Bretwood's 36-hole public golf course. One golf car was in the Ashuelot River; another had a broken axle.

"It was frustrating... We work so hard all year long to keep the greens looking good," said Barrett, who is part of the 30-year-old family-run business.

Two mornings later, the vandals were caught — red-handed — doing more damage. Keene police arrested five people, including two juvenile girls, on the golf course. But the damage they left behind totaled about \$1,800 to the golf cars and about \$7,000 to the greens.

Barrett's story is not unusual. Many golf club owners and superintendents have their courses vandalized at least once a season.

"Vandalism to golf courses has been around as long as golf courses have been around," said Bruce Williams, president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and superintendent at Bob O'Link Golf Club, an 18-hole private club in Highland Park, Ill.

Like other superintendents, Williams, who has worked at Bob O'Link for 20 years, has his own horror stories to tell. "People have poured gasoline on greens and tried to light it on fire... They've driven cars on the course and knocked over trees. People steal flags and signs. Our halfway house was burned to the ground. Once our

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**SUPER — BY DESIGN**

BRAINERD, Minn. — The Classic, an 18-hole championship golf course created at Madden's on Gull Lake in Brainerd, Minn., was designed by Madden's long-time superintendent Scott Hoffmann. See story, page 28.

Q & A Engelke: Continuing Texas A&M's pioneering character

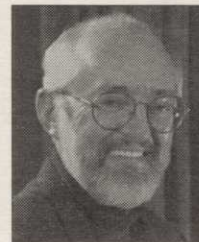
**Golf Course News:** Could you review your recent work with new strains of creeping bentgrass, both those that have been released and those we can expect to see in the future?

**Milt Engelke:** The Texas A&M bentgrass breeding program was initiated in 1985 with support from the United States Golf Association and Bentgrass Research, Inc. (Fort Worth), with the primary emphasis of targeting physiological mechanisms of heat tolerance and superior disease resistance within creeping bentgrasses.

Management practices center on the lack of heat tolerance, which is partly due to the lack of root persistence during stress periods. The root is obviously im-

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Dr. Milt Engelke is project manager of the Turfgrass Breeding, Genetics and Management Program at Texas A&M University, where his major emphasis is developing turfgrass for the arid and semi-arid regions of the South and Southwest. He released Prairie buffalograss in 1989 (the first turf-type buffalograss), three strains of creeping bentgrass (Cato, Crenshaw and Mariner) and four strains of zoysiagrass (Palisades, Crowne, Cavalier and Diamond). Engelke earned his PhD in plant breeding from the University of Wisconsin/Madison in 1974 and received the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Distinguished Service Award in 1994.



Dr. Milt Engelke

# Vandals are controllable

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front sign was missing and we found it in a ravine four miles away."

The vandalism is not always done by wayward youths with nothing better to do. "Sometimes it's kids," Williams said. "But sometimes it's over-exuberant golfers who've had too many

cocktails. It could also be disgruntled patrons or employees."

Regardless of who is doing the damage, golf courses need security from vandals. Although many clubs and courses have some form of security in place — such as an alarm system in the clubhouse and where the cars are stored — most problems happen because

courses are so easy to get onto, even with fencing.

And short of hiring an army of security guards, it is difficult — if not impossible — to patrol 130 acres or more.

"It is a difficult security problem," said Michael Hughes, executive director of the National Golf Course Owners Association in Charleston, S.C.

Of all the advice on how to deter vandalism (see sidebar),

the one golf course owners and superintendents deem most effective is to toughen up security at the access points with a good "community watch" program.

"Your best defense is to have good relations with your neighbors," Hughes said.

Hughes got agreement from course architect Michael Hurdzan of Columbus, Ohio, whose Widow's Walk course in Scituate, Mass., was recently hit by vandals

while it was still under construction. "If the community is involved (with the golf course), there is little to no vandalism," he said. "To solve vandalism, you have to go into the psychology of why people do it. I think it's a machismo thing — something to brag about. The answer is to have people take pride in the golf course and take away the motivation to destroy it."

And if a community is proud of its golf course, chances are people will report vandalism if they see it happening. That is what happened in Scituate where two teenagers were caught because of a community watch program there. Someone spotted the youths riding dirt bikes across the greens and fairways that had been shaped and were ready to be seeded, and reported it to the police. The teenagers did about \$2,600 worth of damage to the course.

Scituate's town superintendent, Richard Agnew, said that along with community watch, he used the "shame on you" approach. "We called the newspapers immediately to embarrass them and their parents," Agnew said. This may not work if vandals are underage and their names cannot be publicly revealed.

Although community watch programs may be a good strategy for public courses, what about exclusive country clubs?

The private Oak Park Country Club in River Grove, Ill., straddles the boundaries of two working-class neighborhoods. Superintendent Alan T. Fierst said that regardless of their differences, the golf club has fostered a good relationship with its neighbors.

"The homes bordering our property act as watchdogs for the people who may pass through their yards," Fierst said. In return, the club does some tree and hedge trimming for the community. "It's a good PR program," he said.

Fierst said vandalism still happens — but damage to the greens such as scratching out names or slogans — happens only one or two times a season.

Even the best community watch program is not flawless. Chances are, vandalism will happen to a golf course sooner or later. But when it does, course owners and superintendents should check their insurance coverage.

"I think a lot of golf courses don't realize this is something that is covered," said Richard Gross, vice president of marketing at CNA Insurance Cos. in Chicago. Most policies cover vandalism to the greens, he said.

Although most vandalism is more a nuisance than a financial burden, the biggest concern, Gross said, is if many greens are ruined and the course is temporarily out of business until repairs are made. If that happens, many insurance companies now offer business interruption insurance.

Again, check the policy, Gross said. And if it's not, get it. "Even if it's just for peace of mind."

# The Results Are In.

Seed Research of Oregon set out to find the Best 18 Bentgrass Greens in North America, planted exclusively to our own varieties of creeping bentgrasses—Providence (SR 1019), SR 1020, or the Dominant Blend. A winner was selected from each of the five regions and out of those five our judges chose...

## ...THE "BEST 18 GREENS IN NORTH AMERICA"



Providence

**EAST**  
Kevin Pryseski  
Cattail Creek Country Club  
Glenwood, MD

**SOUTHEAST**  
Mike Brisbois  
The Legends at Chateau Elan  
Braselton, GA



Dominant



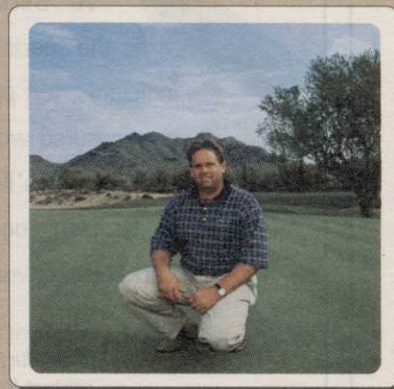
Dominant

**MIDWEST**  
Don Tolson  
Fox Hollow at Lakewood  
Lakewood, CO



Providence

**SOUTHWEST**  
Paul Ellwood  
Club Terravita  
Scottsdale, AZ



SR 1020

**Grand Prize Winner!**

Because of their proven, exceptional performance—Providence, SR 1020, and Dominant Blend creeping bentgrasses are used extensively, throughout the world. On golf course greens and fairways the SRO Bents consistently produce beautiful dark green, upright growing, fine-textured turf with reduced maintenance, less thatch, and excellent wear tolerance.

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