

BRIEFS



NORTH CENTRAL EXPO READIED

ST. CHARLES, Ill.— The Illinois Turfgrass Foundation (ITF) will host the North Central Turfgrass Exposition, Dec. 3-5, at Pheasant Run Resort here. Pre-conference seminars will be offered Dec. 2 at the same location. ITF will hold an awards luncheon, Wednesday, Dec. 4 at which the 1996 ITF Distinguished Service Award will be presented, along with scholarships for undergraduate study. For information contact the ITF headquarters at 11 S. LaSalle St., Suite 1400, Chicago, Ill. 60603; phone 312-201-0101.

IGM HONORS ROWE

MELBOURNE, Fla. — Michael Rowe, superintendent at the Aquarina Country Club here, has earned a Total Quality Management (TQM) award from International Golf Management (IGM) for the overall quality of the course. "The overall quality, conditions, appearance and customer satisfaction at Aquarina is second to none," said Scott Zakany, vice president and general manager. Rowe joined IGM as the superintendent assigned to Aquarina Country Club in August 1995 when the club was in the grow-in stage.



COOK PREPARES AWARDS BANQUET

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. — The Seventh Annual Turfgrass Awards Banquet will be held this year at 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 9, at Cook Campus Center here. It will honor the 1996 graduates of the Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management School, Advanced Golf Turf Symposium attendees, Cook College undergraduate and graduate scholarship recipients, and honorees in the turfgrass industry. For more information, or to register, write the Cook College Office of Continuing Professional Education, P.O. Box 231, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903; 908-932-9271.

IRRIGATION SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

The American Society of Irrigation Consultants (ASIC) has selected three students to receive 1996 scholarships. They are Tim Grey, who is in the landscape architecture program at the University of Florida; Jerry Donaldson, who is majoring in landscape design and minoring in construction management at Colorado State University; and Katy W. Harrell, who is studying landscape architecture at the University of Georgia.

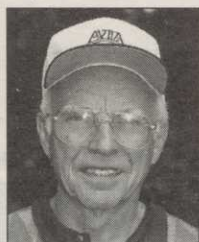
FIRST OF TWO PARTS

Managing personnel a challenge often unmet

By ROBERT D. CHABOURNE

What's the difference between a good golf course superintendent and a great superintendent? "I have no statistics, but when a superintendent fails to move up, or loses the position he has, I feel I'm safe in saying he was probably deficient in some area of managing people," concludes Dr. Donald R. Marion, retired professor of resource economics at the University of Massachusetts (UMass), who teaches personnel management at the annual UMass Winter Turf School.

Marion's message to superintendents honing their skills, and assistant superintendents grooming their resumes, has changed over the years.



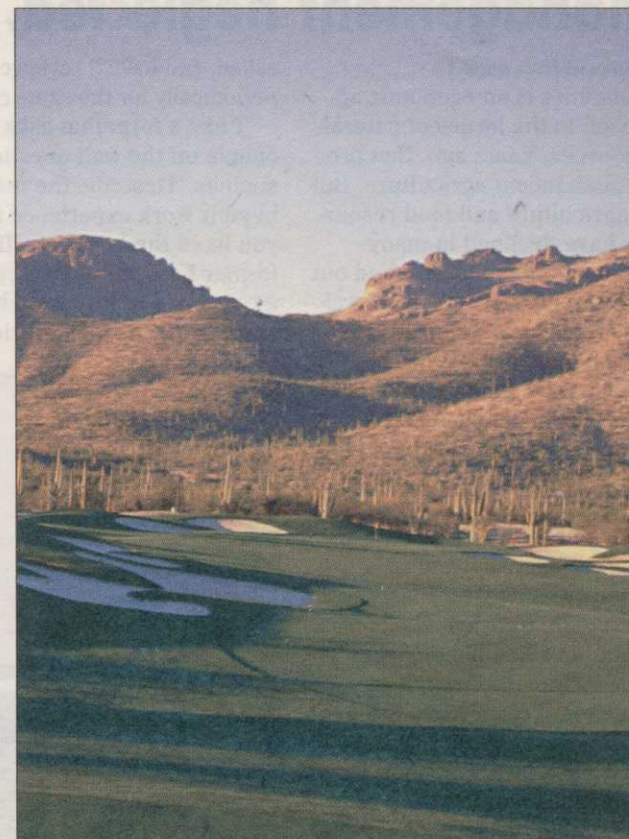
Dr. Donald Marion

"Back in the '70s we used to stress the routing, automating, and mechanizing of tasks as the complete answer to a smooth golf course operation," said Marion. "What's different today is the expanded role of the employee in the workplace." When asked to arrange lists of job considerations such as pay, promotion, benefits, responsibility, job involvement, job security, appreciation, tact in applying discipline, and assistance in dealing with personal problems, workers tend to rate appreciation and the degree to which management involves them in the overall process higher in importance than pay and benefits.

"The teaching point to superintendents is not how their employees arrange their lists," Marion said, "but how they are arranged in comparison to the superintendents' list. Ideally, results that are about the same would predict a smoothly running operation."

Marion, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees in agronomy from Cornell University and a PhD from UMass, has seen his own field change with the times. Resource

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MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

The Raven Golf Club at Sabino Springs in Tucson, Ariz., integrates wildlife conservation with urban development. The community features nine natural springs, each creating a riparian habitat within the fragile ecological area of the Sonoran Desert. Designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr., the project focused on protecting these areas to ensure they would continue to support a broad spectrum of wildlife and plant species. Desert wildlife species were relocated to natural protected wilderness areas adjacent to the property, or placed with an adoption program. Harris Environmental Group Inc. of Tucson also performed many duties vital to maintaining the ecosystem, including mitigation of the sewer easement and work with the local water company on location of the booster station and reservoir.



Lake Nona Golf Club superintendent Brett Harris (front) chats with assistant Murray Russell, who is operating their street cleaner.

Brett Harris' war on thatch

By TERRY BUCHEN

ORLANDO, Fla. — A street sweeper on a golf course? Yes. Brett Harris, superintendent at Lake Nona Golf Club here, has perfected thatch removal on his 419 Bermudagrass tees and fairways with aggressive tricks of the trade that include using a street sweeper.

"I discovered the Lay-Mor [Street Sweeper] while sitting at a stop light when it was doing street sweeping," Harris said. "I looked at it up close, and what is so unique about it is that the brush is made of 50 percent steel wire bristles and 50 percent nylon brush material. The unit is self-propelled, turns in a short radius and a similar unit can be rented that will fit on the front of a golf course front-end loader tractor."

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Turfgrass, molecular genetics and the future

By MARK LESLIE

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Citing "several-fold results" from the first international Workshop on Biotechnology of Turfgrass, scientists are excited about the future of genetic engineering and biological controls.

"Look over your shoulder and see where we were 10 years ago with bentgrasses, and that [progress] was just with conventional plant breeding," said Dr. Michael Kenna of the U.S. Golf Association Green Section, which co-sponsored the workshop along with host Michigan State University (MSU). "I think we will see some turfgrass varieties in which molecular genetics made a significant contribution."

"We can expect breakthrough after breakthrough very quickly," said Dr. Miriam Sticklen, an MSU biotechnologist who helped coordinate the three-day event. "In a decade there will be a big revolution in turfgrass maintenance, saving time and money and improving the environment."

Already, according to MSU Professor Jan Zeebaart, who spoke at the workshop, there is work on genes that can make grass shorter and thicker. And scientists are researching other genes with herbicide and pathogen resistance.

"We have several other useful genes, but because we are talking about patents, I can't discuss them now," Sticklen said.

Kenna tempered his assessment of the future. Acknowledging that Rutgers and Michigan State have bentgrasses that are resistant to the chemicals Finale or Roundup, he said: "The problem is, the companies that own the patents



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New Albany's walls make space-savers

By TERRY BUCHEN

NEW ALBANY, Ohio — Using storage space properly and efficiently has always been a priority for superintendents in their maintenance buildings. New Albany Country Club superintendent Tony Mancuso has accomplished a fine example of using wall space for storing backpack blowers and string-line trimmers.

The backpack blowers are hung on a partition wall, using a bicycle-type hook that is covered with a red vinyl-type material screwed into a 1-by-6-inch board. "We installed particle peg boards on the inside of our partition wall and put wing walls on either end to protect the backpack blowers from being bumped accidentally," Mancuso said. "Below each backpack blower we have space for smaller items such as orange-colored parking lot cones and rolls of rope."

For string-line trimmers, Mancuso mounted 2- by 8-inch



Tony Mancuso's trimmer storage area.

boards vertically, then notched them out so the trimmers could be stored horizontally. The motor and string line, brush blade or recipricators end of the trimmer are then also protected from being bumped accidentally. The straps used by the crew while operating the trimmers are hung alongside the trimmers on the same wall used for storage for easy access.

Safety signs are also placed on the wall, reminding employees



SHOP TALK

that eye protection must be worn at all times when operating the string-line trimmers, brush blades and recipricators.

"We did all of the storage modifications to our turf-care facility in-house with our staff during the winter months and inclement weather," Mancuso said. "We have many of our own carpentry tools. There are always many small projects that justify having this type equipment instead of renting from the usual sources."

Harris Method of thatch control

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Thus, the genesis of The Harris Method.

"We are closed on Mondays," Harris said, "so we began our thatch-removal process by verticutting our tees in two directions with a Toro Reelmaster Model 4500 with hydraulically driven verticut reels set at 1/2-inch bedknife height. Then we blew the thatch into windrows and clean them up with a Toro Rake-O-Vac Sweeper/Vacuum.

"The following Monday we rented a Lay-Mor and went over every tee in one direction, angling the brush so we could windrow the thatch to the outside of both sides of the teeing ground."

Harris set the Lay-Mor as low as permissible, he said, adding: "That keeps the brush turning vigorously so you can see a little soil fly up, or, less aggressively, by raising up the brush.

"Ultimately, we end up with just grass plants and soil — nothing else," he said.

On the self-propelled model, a person can see right underneath. It usually takes about 10 hours to do all the tees at Lake Nona.

Harris recommends that the operator wear a respirator and safety goggles and maybe a spray suit since he will get quite dirty.

Lake Nona plans to rent two or three units to prepare the 419 fairways for overseeding in the middle of November and do the tees again soon.

They close the course for five days to overseed. "The Lay-Mor is too coarse a machine for greens and collars, so we are going to test a Jacobsen Turf Cat that has a rotary brush that is made for cart paths that should work really well," Harris said.

Once The Harris Method of dethatching tees is completed, a fairly heavy 3/8 to 1/2 inch of top dressing is applied and the tees are completely healed up in two weeks. The tees are pumped up with ammonium sulfate at about 1/2 pound actual nitrogen, about five days prior to verticutting and again about five days before brushing. Then Harris applies a 19-0-17 greens fertilizer a week after the brushing is completed.

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