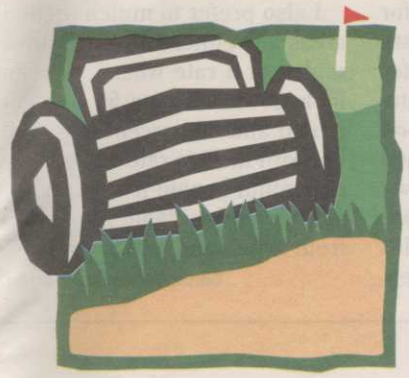
BRIEFS



AREA'S COURSES AGREE: NO SPIKES

OCEAN CITY, Md. — In "a unified effort to provide superior playing conditions for resort golfers," the golf courses of Ocean City Golf Getaway have agreed to prohibit the wearing of metal spikes in 1998. The Bay Club's East and West Courses, The Beach Club's InnerLinks and OuterLinks, Eagle's Landing Ocean City Golf and Yacht's Seaside and Newport Bay, Nutter's Crossing, River Run and Rum Pointe Seaside Golf Links announced the commitment through their marketing company, Ocean City Golf Getaway, Inc.

RUTGERS HONORING STUDENTS

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. — The 8th Annual Turfgrass Awards Banquet will be held here Saturday, Nov. 1. The Cook College Office of Continuing Professional Education, Rutgers Turfgrass Alumni Association, New Jersey Turfgrass Association, and Center for Turfgrass Science at Cook College will honor the 1997 graduates of the Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management School, Advanced Golf Turf Symposium attendees, Cook College undergraduate and graduate student scholarship recipients, and honorees from the turfgrass industry. For more information contact Linda McAteer at the Cook College Office of Continuing Professional Education, 732-932-9271, ext. 626.

WELLS A CERTIFIED AGRONOMIST

LAKELAND, Fla. — Jim Wells, regional manager for International Golf Management here, has been named a certified professional agronomist by ARCPACS, a federation of certifying boards in agriculture, biology, earth and environmental sciences. Wells is also a certified golf course superintendent and holds a degree in turfgrass management from Mississippi State University.

PENN STATE ACCEPTING 1998 APPS

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Applications are being accepted for Penn State's two-year Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program for the class beginning in September 1998. There is an application fee of $35 and the deadline for applications is Dec. 31. Applications can be obtained by calling 814-863-0129, or by writing to: Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program, The Pennsylvania State University, 221 Ag. Sciences and Industries Building, University Park, Pa. 16802-3504.

Baltimore CC's roofed rinse station raises bar

By MARK LESLIE

TIMONIUM, Md. — It's the perfect — well, nearly perfect — equipment wash station. And its co-creator, superintendent Doug Petersan, is about to make it completely perfect.

"I probably will install some kind of elevated retractable hose, so when the guys are done washing the equipment, the hose will wind up above so it doesn't lie on the ground," said Petersan from his office at Baltimore Country Club here.

When the club built two new maintenance structures and refurbished an old barn and existing maintenance facility, the wash station was a key element of the plan.

"We looked at other maintenance facilities, chose things we liked and didn't like and developed this wash area," said Petersan, who worked with architect Jack Reinhardt of Charlottesvile, Va. "We wanted it covered so we could work in it in less than ideal weather conditions. It's lighted, too, and has a couple of hoses and a high-pressure power washer. So, when people finish working, they have a good place to clean their equipment.

The wash area is adjacent to Baltimore CC's cold equipment storage facility in its office and shop area.

Other important aspects of the station are its dollards at each entrance ("which should be standard procedure," Petersan said) and a special drainage system for the rinsate.

Rinse water, Petersan said, goes through an oil grit separator which retains any sediment, oil or fuel. The then-clear water flows to a second, swirl-and-baffle chamber, then to a water-quality lagoon adjacent to the separator.

Photo by Terry Buchen

Washing equipment has never been made easier and more efficient than at Baltimore Country Club.

"In that lagoon we have wetland plants," Petersan said. "At the base of that, which is completely lined, we have a 12-inch filter bed of organic matter and sand which the water percolates through. At the bottom of the filter bed is a tile which directs the water into a second lagoon. From there it goes into the irrigation lake and back onto the golf course."

The steel-pipe dollards, he said, are filled and cemented in place with concrete.

Petersan, who has been head superintendent at Baltimore CC for six years, was superintendent for 12 years at Prairie Dunes in Hutchinson, Kansas, before that.

Course design and maintenance a crucial marriage

LAST OF 2 PARTS

By DR. MICHAEL HURDZAN

Last month I focused on the physical factors of design, and their relationship to maintenance as well as the professional relationship between designer and superintendent. Now I will address the single most important specification related to maintenance: the turfgrasses to be used. No other specification under the control of the golf course architect will dictate the overall maintenance practices, or playing conditions more than the selection of turfgrasses; and the choices are many.

A few years ago this was not the case and routine and standard specifications were acceptable. But in view of the enormous advances in turfgrass breeding and selection over the past few years, this is not the best practice. In fact, I believe that each individual golf course site should be studied for its inherent climatic and edaphic qualities, along with local environmental restrictions and attitudes, before turgrasses are selected and specified.

Ideally, a probable maintenance regime should also be defined, with any budgetary limitations, before turgrasses are selected. Then knowing specific site factors (drainage, soil fertility and texture, quantity and quality of irrigation water, proposed pesticide schedules, mowing equipment and height, etc.), climatic factors (wind, normal rainfall patterns, air drainage, and length of playing season), along with edaphic factors (soil chemistry, soil biology, and physical limitations), social factors, (EPA or conservation restriction, probable total play, country club or public golf course, existing competition, etc.), and budget factors, only then should turfgrasses be selected.

Let me give you some considerations in making this selection. Few golfers would deny that the finest playing surface in northern latitudes is bentgrass and there are many to choose from. It gives you the best tee, fairway and putting surface, but in the transition and Southern areas it is less practical because of summer heat stress.

Many new bentgrasses show good potential, but they are still susceptible to many insect and disease problems, require similar fertility, water management, cultural practices, and for a much longer and intense period.

Improved bluegrasses, on the other hand,

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The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System has enrolled the Country Club of the Poconos in Marshalls Creek, Pa., in its program. The Tom Fazio-designed course is operated by Resorts USA.

CC of Poconos, 'a living thing,' joins Audubon program

MARSHALLS CREEK, Pa. — Country Club of the Poconos, which encompasses 150 acres of wetlands, forest, rock walls and mountain streams, has joined the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System.

Operating on the notion that a golf course is "a living thing that is always evolving," superintendent Bob Meaney oversees maintenance of the property and its wide-ranging habitat.

"Our course design accommodates the natural contours of the land and preserves the wildlife habitats," Meaney said. "But it also plays like a dream. The holes challenge golfers of every skill level, play for reasonable par, provide scenic views, and

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Design/maintenance marriage

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may not provide the beautiful color contrast or playing conditions on tees and fairways compared to bent, but they have better heat tolerance and often require less pesticides, fertility and water, and present fewer cultural problems.

The difference in maintenance budgets between bent and blue is difficult to estimate, but I believe it to be in the $80,000 range year on a good site. Naturally, the source of irrigation water — its quality and quantity — can be a major factor in this decision.

Similar improvements are being made to warm-season grasses, particularly in putting green turfs, with improved winter hardiness. So the distinction of where to use warm- and cool-season grasses has become blurred, which makes careful decision-making critical. Both the designer and superintendent should do exhaustive research before selecting not only the turf type, but also the cultivar. Many are interested in non-traditional golf course grasses like buffalo, balia and paspalum species, but none compare in playing quality to finer-blade turf types.

The third alternative would be a fine fescue mix which can provide acceptable playing qualities compared to bent or blue, but require even less water, minimal fertilization, infrequent mowing, and almost no pesticides. This family of grasses (chewings, creeping red, slender creeping red, sheep and hard) has been extensively improved over the past few years and with proper selection can fit most climates and uses.

One might consider the fine fescues blended with bentgrass or bluegrass to provide the desirable playing conditions for a particular area or site.

I am not a big fan of turf-type perennial ryegrass, mainly because of its playing qualities and patchiness. Although I have played some wonderful ryegrass fairways, I feel the ball settles too deeply into the turf, it doesn't heal quickly during stress periods, and extremes in temperatures can cause major turf loss. This is my personal bias, and I certainly would be willing to compromise that view to a superintendent who felt strongly about ryegrass on a particular site.

The point is that several choices and combinations of choices could be made concerning turfgrasses, all of which will directly impact maintenance.

The maintenance budget may range from perhaps a low of $250,000 to an excess of $1 million, depending on which turfgrass blend is selected for a particular site.

Once the turf variety or varieties is chosen, next comes the planting method. Some turfgrasses such as zoysia, I believe, should only be sodded and approximately budgeted for, while other grasses like the Bermudas can establish quickly from sprigs. Sprigging rates can be as low as 350 bushels per acre to as high as 1,200 bushels per acre, depending upon planting time, climatic conditions and cultivar.

Sodding Bermuda is not unheard of, especially if the course will be planted at the end of the most favorable growing season. In fact, in Palm Desert it is not uncommon to establish the winter overseeding in Bermuda before it is wet and moved as dormant sod. Cost is a big factor in determining what method of planting warm-season grasses will be used.

Seeding of cool-season grasses also should be done to hit the most favorable time for establishment, typically late summer to early fall. I prefer using a drop seeder with compacting capability to assure good seed/soil contact, with the seed applied inone-half rates in two directions. Blending seed before planting works fine even with such diverse seed size as a creeping bentgrass mixed with a fescue, with no observable aggregation in the planted areas.

I also prefer to mulch seeded areas with either a fiber or a straw mulch at a rate where you can look down and see 50 percent mulch and 50 percent bare soil beneath it. This rate will ensure maximum benefit from sunlight and air and suitable protection from wind and water erosion.

Continued on next page

Mongoven takes over Everglades GCSA presidency

BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. — Mike Mongoven, assistant director of golf for the city of Fort Myers, has been elected president of the Everglades Golf Course Superintendents Association (EGCSA).

He heads a slate of officers that includes Vice President Tad Altman of Naples' Stonebridge Country Club, Treasurer Steve Durand of Quail Creek Country Club in Naples and Secretary Rick Tatum of The Forest Country Club in Fort Myers.

Gary Grigg of Royal Poinciana Golf Club in Naples was elected external vice president; and Dale Walters of Naples' Royal Palm Country Club was elected EGCSA's delegate to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

Elected to the board of directors and as committee chairmen were Walter Owisany of Audubon Country Club in Naples, membership; Jerry Belyea of Cape Coral's Royal Tee Country Club, education/programs; Terry Wood of Naples' Royal Wood Golf & Country Club, past president/bylaws; Brad Walters, sales manager of Golf Ventures, Inc., of Fort Myers, social and special events; and Tim Denton, sales representative of Boynton Pump & Irrigation Supply in Naples, golf.

Design/maintenance

Continued from previous page

Again, the designer and superintendent should talk about every detail of the planting specification.

Even grow-in procedures should be mutually agreed upon. If the contractor is responsible for more than planting the turf, a detailed maintenance specification would be appropriate. Usually the superintendent prefers to assume this responsibility rather than worry about if the contractor is following procedures to get the quickest maturation.

Sodding the entire course, or at least sodding all bluegrass (or ryegrass or fescue) areas, is becoming more common. The reason is that sodding answers many environmental concerns, reduces the grow-in period from months to weeks, produces a better finished product, and often makes the best economic sense to the owners. Large-scale sodding of fast-germinating varieties like bentgrass, is much harder to justify because of cost, but sodding tee or green surfaces can be reasonably affordable, especially late in the planting season.

The above process takes time, study and understanding if properly done. However, a wrong choice can be very costly and a right choice can make a golf course spectacular. Therefore, the designer should be very deliberate and methodical in choosing turfgrass seed blends, consulting with superintendents, breeders, researchers, suppliers and users.

My point is that there is a strong relationship between design and maintenance with many influencing factors. It makes the proper choices easier when one remembers that maintenance is more important than design.

I don't believe there will ever be a supergrass that works on every site, that provides awesome playing conditions with a minimum amount of maintenance. We are certainly closer than 20 or 30 years ago, but such a breakthrough is still a long way off. So the alternative is the old-fashion way of designer and superintendent working together to develop specifications and design concepts that support the maintenance objective of each particular site. If the owner is reluctant to hire a superintendent early in the development process, he should retain the services of an agronomic consultant to assist the designer.

Legend has it that when Moses brought down the Ten Commandments, there were actually 11. The last one was lost and never made it into the Bible, but designers and superintendents concerned about maintenance should know it well. It reads: "As ye sow, so shall ye mow," which means that what you plant will determine how you must care for it. Choose wisely.