

SEPTEMBER

Dry weather plagues East Coast

By PETER BLAIS

During his travels throughout his five-state area — Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia and West Virginia—United States Golf Association Green Section's Mid-Atlantic agronomist Stan Zontek has witnessed the effects of what some are calling the worst drought in the past 100 years.

"It's a notch above awful," Zontek said. "Today [Aug. 5], the state of Maryland imposed mandatory water restrictions. Watering of fairways is only allowed with syringe irrigation with an 80-percent reduction in water usage required. Greens and tees are limited to the minimum necessary.

"Delaware is on voluntary restrictions and will probably go into mandatory water restrictions by noon on Friday [Aug. 6] north of Wilmington.

"Pennsylvania went to mandatory water restrictions last week. They allow watering of tees and greens only and syringing to a maximum of 15 minutes a day to heat-sensitive grasses, which are defined as bentgrass and poa annua fairways. Any irrigation of sodded or seeded areas can only occur from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., which isn't going to help for sodding or seeding.

"In Maryland, they don't even allow that. No agricultural irrigation is allowed at all.

"West Virginia was just designated a drought emergency by the President. Virginia has voluntary restrictions, although in the far western corner of the state it's wet, like an oasis. The

courses around Bristol are the first green courses I've seen in two months."

Most watering restrictions apply to courses whether they are on municipal water or have their own wells.

"The superintendents are

irate," Zontek said. "You can have an impounded pond that doesn't rely on city water, streams or wells, and it doesn't matter. You're still under the same restrictions."

In addition to brown grass, the drought has led most courses to restrict golf carts to cart paths and/or roughs.

According to Zontek, it's too early to tell what long-term problems could arise from the pro-

longed dry spell.

"Cool-season grasses have a very efficient dormancy cycle under drought stress," he said. "The grass may look white, but if you get rainfall for recovery, it will pop back just fine. High-traffic areas are the problem.

"The second major effect will be on trees. The ground is powder dry four feet down, and most tree roots are in the top three

feet. They are losing leaves now. I'm seeing trees literally wilting. That's sayonara. Arborists say it takes up to five years to see the effects of a drought on trees. So that's where the greatest long-term effect is likely to be.

"The bent and poa annua greens are taking it on the chin. Anthracnose is out there... There definitely will be some reseed-ing this fall."



allowed with syringe irrigation with an 80-percent reduction in water usage required.

Greens and tees are limited to the minimum necessary.

Delaware is on voluntary restrictions and will probably go into mandatory water restrictions by noon on Friday [Aug. 6] north of Wilmington.

Pennsylvania went to mandatory water restrictions last week. They allow watering of tees and greens only and syringing to a maximum of 15 minutes a day to heat-sensitive grasses, which are defined as bentgrass and poa annua fairways. Any irrigation of sodded or seeded areas can only occur from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., which isn't going to help for sodding or seeding.

In Maryland, they don't even allow that. No agricultural irrigation is allowed at all.

West Virginia was just designated a drought emergency by the President. Virginia has voluntary restrictions, although in the far western corner of the state it's wet, like an oasis. The

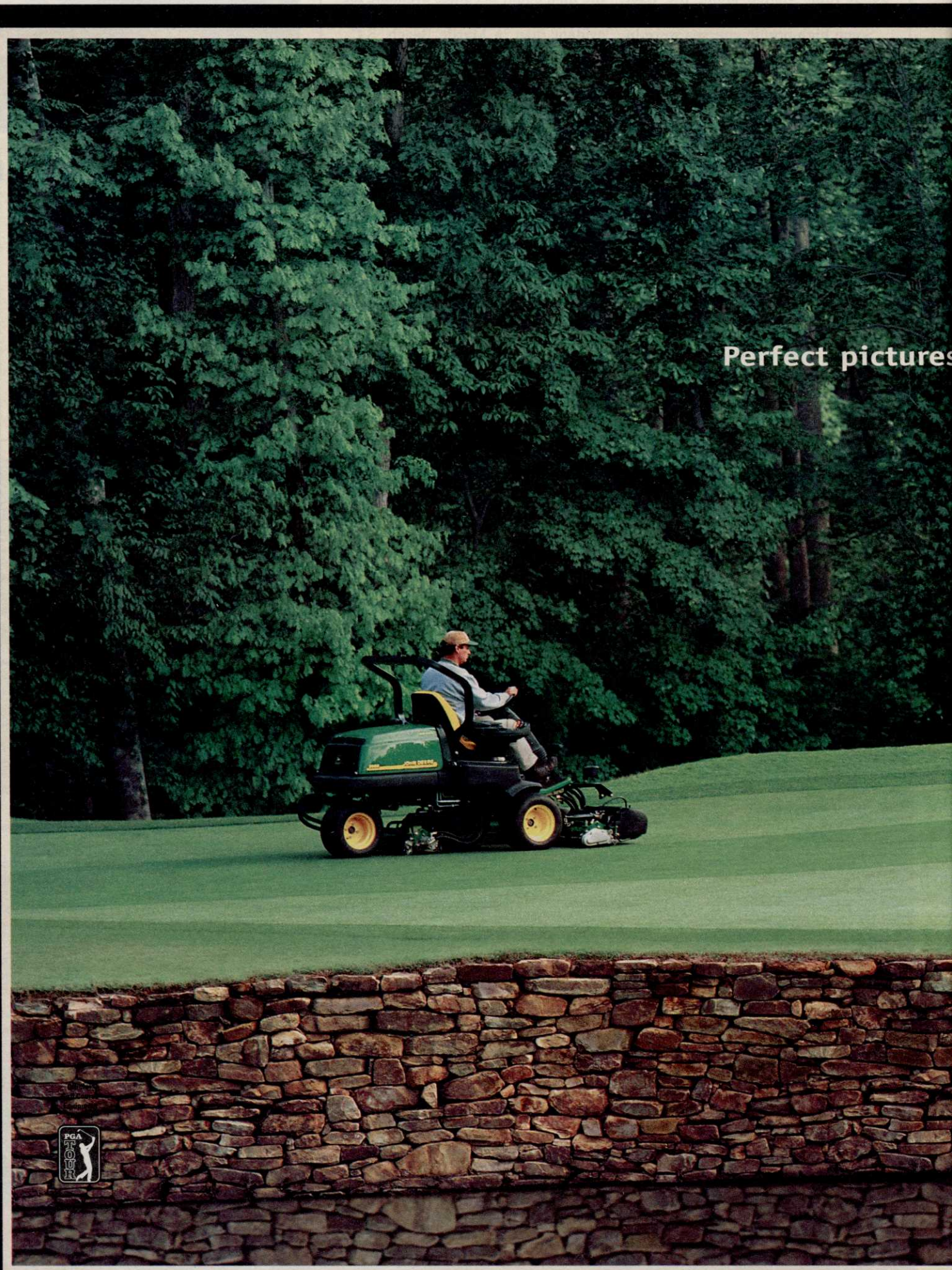
APRIL

ClubLink, RCGA strike course deal

KING CITY, Ontario—ClubLink Corporation has completed its \$40 million (Cdn) purchase of Glen Abbey Golf Club, the top-ranked public course in Canada and site of the 1999 Bell Canadian Open.

ClubLink will continue to operate the Jack Nicklaus-designed, 18-hole course as a daily-fee facility.

ClubLink will host the Bell Canadian Open at Glen Abbey a minimum of four times through 2009. The Open will be held a minimum of one time between 2010 and 2014, and a minimum of one time between 2015 and 2019. ClubLink will lease Glen Abbey to the Royal Canadian Golf Association (RCGA), at market rates, for the Open.



Perfect pictures

