

BRIEFS



LAKE CITY OFFERS IRRIGATION TECH

LAKE CITY, Fla. — Lake City Community College is offering a new one-year certification program in irrigation technology to train residential and commercial irrigation technicians for the golf, irrigation and landscape industries. Instructor Steven King has more than 15 years of irrigation experience. He has developed a state-of-the-art irrigation laboratory on campus. The extensive curriculum was developed with input from practicing irrigation professionals, the Florida Irrigation Society and the Irrigation Association. The first class began Aug. 23. Interested people should contact John Piersol, chairman of the Golf, Landscape and Forestry Division, at 904-752-1822, ext. 1225.

CYBULSKI EARNS CGCS

Scott Cybulski, head superintendent at Falmouth (Maine) Country Club, recently received his designation as a Certified Golf Course Superintendent, making him just the fourth active superintendent in the state to earn the distinction. Cybulski has been at Falmouth CC since 1992 and served as head superintendent since 1995.

MSU adds Spanish to turf curriculum

By MARK LESLIE

EAST LANSING, Mich. — In a testament to the prominence of Hispanics on golf course grounds crews, Michigan State University has made a class in the Spanish language mandatory for two-year turfgrass students.

The class, Spanish for Golf Course Management, has been taught in the turfgrass program for two years, but this will be the first time it is mandatory, said MSU Professor John "Trey" Rodgers. He added that it will be available, but not mandatory, for four-year students.

"It's interesting that when our four-year students come off internship, one of the first questions they ask is if the Spanish class is available," Rodgers said.

Around the country, he said, Hispanics often comprise a large portion of the golf course work force, and Spanish is their operative language. Without knowing Spanish, it is difficult to work with them, Rodgers added.

The 10-week, three-day-a-week, two-credit course has two focuses:

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Post-traumatic stress syndrome

Cleaning up after The Majors is like clearing a battle field after war

By MARK LESLIE and TREVOR LEDGER

PINEHURST, N.C. — It's five weeks after the U.S. Open and the roughs are lower, the fairways longer and the greens slower on Pinehurst No. 2 here. "You would hardly know right now that we had [an Open]," said Director of Golf Course Maintenance Brad Kocher, whose course is blessed with fast-growing, fast-healing Bermudagrass.

Augusta National Golf Club Senior Director of Golf Course Operations Marsh Benson and superintendent Brad Owen opened their course for play the day after the Masters Tournament concluded and, in this dry year, had the playing areas back in shape in two weeks.

Three weeks after Carnoustie Golf Links hosted the British Open, July 15-18, superintendent John Philp was removing all the periphery items which come first in the regeneration of the famous course after its first Major in 24 years.

But at Medinah (Ill.) Country Club, whose No. 3 hosted the PGA Championship on Aug. 13-15, superintendent Danny Quast was in more of a rush, waiting for the last of the corporate tents to be removed from the neighbor-



This gallery area between the 14th green and 15th tee is indicative of the damage superintendent Paul Jett and his crew faced following the U.S. Open. The inset shows how it appeared on June 23. Above is how it looked by July 6.

ing No. 2 course so that his crews could seed bentgrass and return it to normal playing conditions.

Quast, who hosted the Open in June in 1990, pointed to the importance of timing in recovering from his mid-August event.

"The main concern about how the course will look next spring is how fast they get the tents out of my way," he

said. "But some have an urgency to do so: They need to get out to Boston for the Ryder Cup.

"The main trick of success is how soon you can seed the course. The later you do it, the longer it takes to germinate. If I can get it to germinate in the first part of September, we will have very beautiful fairways next spring. If

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George Frye, H2O and The Ocean Course



Lack of quality water the bane of Kiawah super

By MARK LESLIE

KIAWAH ISLAND, S.C. — "Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." George Frye could pen his own refrain to this lament. The superintendent at Kiawah Island Resort's famed Ocean Course, which is running short on available effluent, is paying the high price of potable water and monitoring his three sister courses on the island, which are watering with deep-well, brackish and waste water.



George Frye

Frye may be best known for readying the Pete Dye-designed Ocean Course for the 1991 Ryder Cup even before the course was built, or for preparing Tom Fazio's Turtle Creek course here for the World Cup matches in 1997, or for his course being a test site for a major Clemson University toxicology study. But he points to water as his most consuming issue.

"Water. It's getting as expensive, if not more, than providing electricity. It's our biggest challenge of the future," said Frye, calling for extensive research into how to grow turfgrass with low-quality water.

The Kiawah Island courses "are considered — not to golfers or myself, but others — as sewage dispersal sites, a means of getting rid of excessive effluent," Frye said. "The problem right now is, we have too many courses for the effluent. We need more houses in order to provide effluent."

In the meantime, the Ocean Course is irrigating with aquifer water and a small amount of effluent, while the other courses get a combination of potable, effluent and deep-well water.

Dealing with less-than-perfect water has led to experimentation with methods to treat that water. For instance, the deep-well water contains "a lot of bad constituents, such as high bicarbonates, high carbonates, high sodium, high boron," Frye said.

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AUDUBON CERTIFIES OCEAN COURSE

KIAWAH ISLAND, S.C. — The Ocean Course has achieved designation as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System (ACSS). The Ocean Course is the fourth in South Carolina and 177th course in the world to receive the honor. The other three courses in South Carolina are The Club at Seabrook Island, Palmetto Hall Plantation, and Whispering Pines Golf Course.

Post-traumatic stress

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I've got to be seeding in late September because of any delays, the course won't look so nice in spring."

Kocher, Quast, Benson and Philp all agree: Though returning their tournament courses to "normal" playing conditions has its challenges, the toughest ob-

stacle is dealing with damage from the peripherals — traffic into and out of corporate tents, bleachers, clubhouses and television paraphernalia.

"We had 50 corporate tents," said Kocher. "They started putting them up in April, and it took them four weeks to get them out after the Open. They

were here a long time."

Thankfully, said Pinehurst No. 2 superintendent Paul Jett, most of the corporate village was on Course No. 4's 1st and 18th fairways, and No. 4 was already closed for reconstruction. Only one major tent was situated on No. 2, and that was in the woods between the 8th and 16th holes.

Quast said his biggest problem isn't the No. 3 tournament course, but rather No. 1, where

they dumped 1,300 tons of gravel on the 13th fairway, which had become home for the corporate village.

Several hundred trucks were expected to unload tent parts, air conditioners and various other equipment on the property, so Quast had the idea of laying down plywood, then covering it with gravel.

"I think it will clean up pretty well," he said, "but obviously the

grass will be dead under it."

On the adjoining Medinah No. 1, an area for decorators, sports bar-type and merchandise tents on the 11th fairway, the champions tent on 12th fairway, and small hospitality tents caused damage that needed repair after the Championship.

"Wherever they've dumped gravel into the roughs, we're going to dig it out 6 inches and sod it," Quast said. "Everything on the fairways we will burn off with Roundup and overseed in bentgrass."

As far as No. 2 course fairways' recovery from being a parking lot for a week, Quast said "a little aerification and fertilization at the right time of year and it will come back by itself."

But if the weather gets wet, some problems could persist for many months, Quast said.

"If it rains and gets muddy and they pack it down, there are some areas around the clubhouse that may take a couple of years to get back to what you'd like," he said. "If the ground is dry and with reasonable weather, between aerifying, overseeding and fertilizing next spring, it will look all right. The wetter it is, the more compaction."

The British Open, according to Philp, is the biggest event in golf and the one with the most infrastructure in place.

"You've got all these stands, all the tentage, all the hospitality units and the TV cabling. It all has to come away and they're still doing it now [early August]. The stands are mostly down around the course now. They're just dismantling the last ones on the 18th and behind the 16th green."

Philp is not overly concerned about the damage left behind on the course. "The damage is not too bad," he said, "but these forklift trucks that carry all the equipment have aggressive tires and they are four-wheel drive." Their operation, he said, is not biased towards turf care, either.

"The drivers are not greenkeepers. They are not going to be here once they've taken it all away, so they tend not to be as careful as we would be," Philp said. "We have taken on an extra three staff [for the cleanup and ensuing summer] and we have already aerated the main routes around the Links. We will require some overseeding or some odd bits of re-turfing 'round about some of the stands."

It is the damage to the Burn Links course [one of the other two courses at Carnoustie] which is the biggest headache for Philp.

"The worst area has been caused by the tented village which, in our case, ran up the 1st fairway of the Burns Links course," he said. "With all the pedestrian traf-

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CIRCLE #113

High-level volunteers get down and dirty for comrades

By MARK LESLIE

PINEHURST, N.C. — Instead of a high schooler or college student tending bunkers during the U.S. Open at Pinehurst No. 2, there stood Augusta National Senior Director of Golf Course Operations Marsh Benson and Pebble Beach Golf Links superintendent Mark Michaud with rakes in hand.

The brotherhood of keepers of the green reaches new heights during major events when one of their members needs help, say superintendents whose courses hosted the four Majors this year.

"We were blessed to have a lot of volunteers," said Pinehurst Resort Director of Golf Course Maintenance Brad Kocher. "We



A Pinehurst No. 2 grounds crew member prepares turf for restoration in a typical area that was beneath a grandstand during the 1999 U.S. Open.

had between 50 and 55 every day of the tournament. So we were able to do everything to the 'nth' degree."

Benson was "instrumental in showing us how he staffs for the Masters and we used a lot of his program as a template for what we did," Kocher said.

"I learned a lot, too," Benson said of his volunteer work at

Pinehurst No. 2.

And Benson said he also received major help for his Major. One hundred seven individuals worked on Augusta National during the Masters, including 62 volunteers who did a wide variety of jobs, he said.

Superintendent Danny Quast, whose Medinah (Ill.) No. 3 Course in Medinah, hosted the

PGA Championship in August, said he had 16 superintendent volunteers — a lot of them assistants, some from Florida.

He noted that August is "crunch time for all the superintendents in the area, so it's understandable if others don't volunteer." And he added: "There is not one [local] superintendent who wouldn't help, if asked."

But since Quast has crews for Medinah's three golf courses, "we're in pretty good shape," he said.

Meanwhile, at British Open host Carnoustie Golf Links, in addition to volunteering superintendents, John Philp had "180 local schoolchildren working in shifts through the tournament to collect litter. They have been down since."

Kocher summed up the feelings of all four for future hosts of Major tournaments. "Anything we have here we would be glad to share," he said. "It improves the learning curve of anyone who is going to host a tournament."

Post-traumatic stress syndrome at the Majors

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fic during the tournament and the subsequent vehicles to remove it, the fairway is pretty bereft of grass. We'll have to do some serious aerification and overseeding to recover it. That's all part and parcel of hosting an Open."

COURSE CARE

After dealing with dozens of tents and other structures foreign to golf courses, turfgrass is a world apart and normally easier to deal with, according to the superintendents.

"Very few Opens have been played on Bermudagrass," said Pinehurst's Kocher. "It's easier to rut things up in heavier soils and cool-season grasses. But here we have Bermuda on a sand base, so the damage to it, even if we get some rain, is minimal."

Jett said his biggest challenge at Pinehurst was "getting everything mowed back out and grown back in for our regular member and resort play."

His crews started widening the fairways on Tuesday after the Open, he said.

No. 2's fairways had to go from 28 to 32 yards wide back out to 35 to 40 yards.

"A lot of areas at 3 inches are now down under 1/2 inch," Jett said. "We took rotary mowers out, set them as low as they could go and scalped it down, then used fairways mowers to cut to regular height. Then we let them green up again and started from scratch just like they were coming out of dormancy from the winter. That took about three weeks until when we mowed it, it didn't turn brown again."

For the Open the greens were cut at 0.135 inch and some were mowed three or even four times

"The rough was quite powerful this year and that has stood us in good stead for all the traffic."

— John Philp, super Carnoustie Golf Links

in the morning until they reached the Stimpmeter speed for the day — 11.6 on Sunday. The slopes and tees were mowed at 0.225 inch; the fairways at 0.375 inch; intermediate rough at 1-1/4 inch; and primary rough at 3 inches.

Today, the greens are cut at 0.130 inch, but mowed only once a day. The fairways are at 0.400 inch, intermediate rough at 0.875, primary rough at 1.5, and slopes and tees at 0.275.

At Augusta National, whose tees and fairways are Bermudagrass overseeded with rye and whose greens are bentgrass, the grounds crew relieves the turf from compaction by various means of aerification. In the sites that are in sunshine and open to air movement, the Bermudagrass underneath will repair itself for next year's overseeding, Benson said. In more shady and isolated locations, ryegrass seed is applied for the rest of the season. After the club closes, those areas are re-sodded.

Benson and Owen are developing a process that allows the agronomic staff to move sod from sunny areas to shady locations. The weak Bermuda in the shady sites is ground up, then spread in the sunny locations, Benson said, adding that this is positive environmentally because it re-uses topsoil and does not move other dirt from its original location.

Dealing with bentgrass and far different conditions outside Chicago, Medinah's Quast compared his experience hosting the Open in June and this year's PGA Championship in August.

"After the Open, you had your worst growing period," he said. "After the PGA, you have the best growing period. In Northern grasses the fall is usually your best growing time. After the U.S. Open, it was hot and humid and you got nothing to come up but crabgrass. This time around it should be favorable weather for recovery."

At Carnoustie, Philp is confident of an early return to normalcy. "The rough was quite powerful this year and that has stood us in good stead for all the traffic," he said. "Where all the public walked, it's padded it all down. The turf was so strong to start with, it's going to help with recovery. The players might not have liked it [the rough], but it's beneficial here with the recovery. There will be bits and pieces, no doubt. The 1st fairway and the [Barry] Burn will not be back to normal until next year. That was quite intense traffic. The public putting green on Links Parade had the physiotherapy unit on it and the BBC studios. It will not be a putting green again until at least next year."

Philp, too, has made changes for non-professional golfers to enjoy Carnoustie.

"A lot of the rough has disappeared now," he said. "A normal golfer could not get around in less than six hours. One of our first jobs was to cut down the rough to enable normal traffic to get round, but the fairways are just the same."

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