

BRIEFS



IN HIS GRIP CO-AUTHOR

SPEAKING AT PRAYER BREAKFAST

NEW ORLEANS — Dr. Jim Sheard, co-author of *In His Grip* and *Playing the Game*, will speak at the annual Prayer Breakfast at the International Golf Course Conference and Show here at 7 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 20. Sheard, who wrote the books with former PGA Tour player Wally Armstrong, has written a third book, *A Champion's Heart*, which identifies the essential character qualities for success in life and sport. A former senior vice president for human resources and president with Federated Insurance Cos., and a former executive vice president with Personnel Decisions International, Sheard is co-founder of In His Grip Resources, headquartered in Owatonna, Minn.

LAKE CITY STUDENTS FIRST IN IA

ORLANDO, Fla. — Steven King, irrigation instructor at Lake City Community College, and students recently attended the 20th Annual Irrigation Association Conference & Show here. The LCCC students and King were recognized as the first student chapter in the United States of the Irrigation Association. The newly formed Irrigation Association student chapter at LCCC recently elected officers for the 1999-2000 school year, including President Todd McMahon. He is joined by Vice President Rick Helbling, Treasurer Mike Mcvickers, and Secretary Richard Adams.

TURF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

Brian Lentz of the Central Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association has presented Ricky Craig of Center Hill, Fla., with a \$1,500 Danny Burgess Memorial Scholarship at a ceremony at Windermere CC. Craig will attend the Golf Course Operations program at Lake City Community College to pursue a career in golf turf management. Craig worked last year at Disney's Magnolia and Palm courses and was nominated for the scholarship by Disney superintendent Scott Welder. Each year the Central Florida Superintendents Chapter holds the Danny Burgess Memorial Tournament at Windermere CC in memory of that club's former superintendent who died in 1994.

Scientists: Threats of drought loom in future

By GARY BURCHFIELD

COLUMBIA, Mo. — Golf course superintendents not prepared for drought may want to institute a long-range management plan that includes the possibility of extended dry weather.

Climate models developed by researchers at the University of Missouri, Columbia, indicate a good probability of extremely dry conditions in the next four or five years, especially in the country's mid-section.

The past four years already have seen major droughts across Texas, Oklahoma and the Southern plains, much of the eastern Corn Belt and along the Eastern seaboard. Southwestern states suffered drought effects in 1996, 1998 and into 1999. Forest fires ravaged parts of Florida in 1997.

Across South Carolina, 1999 rainfall

U.S. Drought Monitor



was 16 to 20 inches below normal. Farmers in several areas have suffered major crop losses. Lawns and golf courses have seen their share of stress in several regions. Now, forecasters are predicting a high probability of more dry weather ahead.

The Missouri scientists studied precipi-

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Drought-proofing a golf course

As the old saying goes, "You can't control the weather. But you can be prepared for the possibilities."

Here are some tips to counteract drought effects, or at least lessen their impact on a golf course.

✓ Long-range, consider finding an effluent water source for irrigation. According to Roch Gaussoin, Extension turfgrass specialist at the University of Nebraska, using wastewater to irrigate a golf course usually means the course will not have

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\$2 MILLION IN PROJECTS FUNDED

USGA's new financing eyes owls to turfgrasses

By MARK LESLIE

FAR HILLS, N.J. — The United States Golf Association (USGA) has continued its 17-year-old financial commitment to scientific research, to the point where it has "maxed out" its manpower resources.

The USGA Green Section Research Committee has doled out another \$848,763 for 17 new turfgrass and environmental research projects. Combined with some 72 other continuing projects, the donations total \$1,998,241 in 2000.

In the meantime, Director of Research Dr. Michael Kenna said: "Our commitment to research is not a problem. If this [research] committee wanted to go after

more funding, we could probably get it. But I personally have reached a point where we can't add any projects."

The problem is finding the manpower and time to oversee the research and process the findings.

"We get 900 pages of research reports," Kenna said from his office in Stillwater, Okla. "When I came aboard in 1990 we had 23 projects, compared to 89 now."

That number took a leap when the USGA Green Section added an environmental focus. Several years ago, it began its support of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Sys-



tem and created Wildlife Links, which deals with wildlife habitat issues regarding species that live on and are affected by golf courses.

The mostly highly funded new projects each obtained approximately \$75,000. They are:

- Development of gray leaf spot-resistant perennial ryegrass through breeding and biotechnological approaches, by Mark Faman at the University of Kentucky.

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Pellreene: Canada's best likes the old, loves the new

By PETER BLAIS

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Canada — He's built new courses that went on to host Canadian championships. He's refurbished classics that legends A.W. Tillinghast and Stanley Thompson would still be proud to call their own.

Whether it be ringing in the new or restoring the old, Canadian Superintendent of the Year Dennis Pellreene (as recognized by the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association) is the man for the job.

"New construction is always exciting because there are so many things that come up that you have to solve," Pellreene said. "But being involved with an old course is exciting, too."

Pellreene started his career in 1960 on a nine-hole, oiled-sand greens course in Camrose, Alberta. He converted the greens to turfgrass and was named greenkeeper during his four-year tenure.

He moved east with stops at St. Catharines Golf & Country Club and Erie Downs Golf Club in Fort Erie, Ontario, before Reg Acomb, general manager at Toronto's Glen Abbey Golf Club, approached him about building the Jack Nicklaus-designed course that eventually became the home of the Canadian Open. Glen Abbey opened in 1976 and held the first of four Opens under Pellreene's watch in 1977.

The two people Pellreene said had the greatest effect on his professional development entered his life during his Glen Abbey years — Ed Etchells and Jack Eggens.

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Dennis Pellreene at Capilano Golf & Country Club near Vancouver.

Pellrene felt influence of Etchells and Eggens

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Etchells, an agronomist with Golden Bear International, was Jack Nicklaus' superintendent at Muirfield Village (Ohio) while Pellrene was growing in Glen Abbey.

"It was a superintendent talking to a superintendent and I was able to draw on his expertise in how to run a major tournament," Pellrene said. "There was a tremendous amount to learn."

While at Glen Abbey, Pellrene took course work at the University of Guelph, where Eggens was a professor. "I admired the way he taught and what I learned in his courses," Pellrene said.

From Glen Abbey, Pellrene moved to Scarborough Golf & Country Club, where he whipped the A.W. Tillinghast track back into shape while undertaking a \$3.5 million erosion-control project.

Seven years ago, Pellrene returned to his Western Canadian roots, taking over Capilano Golf & Country Club near Vancouver. When he first arrived, members played just 16 holes because two greens had been seeded to bentgrass and failed. Pellrene converted them from bentgrass, which had trouble surviving the 120 inches of annual rainfall, to ryegrass that first summer and eventually to poa annua to match the other 16 greens. He came aboard in February and by July the two greens were back in play.

"They were slow, at first, but the members were happy to just have them back in play again," he remembered. "You can't grow bentgrass in this rainy, mountain climate."

Pellrene maintains a 10,000-square-foot nursery of poa annua plugs. He aerifies the nursery a half-dozen times a year and uses the nursery to repair problem areas. The poa annua greens are cut to an 1/8-inch and yield green speeds of nine to 10. Fairways and tees are a combination of poa annua and ryegrass.

Once the greens had been reclaimed, Pellrene began a five-year restoration project of the Stanley Thompson-designed bunkers in cooperation with architect Doug Carrick.

"This (Capilano) is an antique," Pellrene said, "with a prestigious designer in Stanley Thompson. We have 120 inches of rain a year. The bunkers were deteriorating and contaminated. We've solved some of those problems with ultra-drainage."

"I classify this as a sympathetic restoration project, sympathetic to the original architect because he was such a great designer.

We'll do a little bit every year until we bring it back."

Pellrene has concentrated on the bunkers and stayed away from greens. "We just want to make the old green sites work, make them compatible with today's standards," he said. "Primarily we're working on drainage and trying to get them back

to the way they were."

The biggest change over the past 40 years, he said, has been the public's growing interest in the environmental impact of golf courses and their operations. "They want to know what they are doing on the golf course. We have a long way to go in communicating what we

do to the public. We have a good understanding of what it is we're doing out there. It's up to us to communicate that understanding to the public. We are good stewards of nature.

"Computers and the materials we use have come a long way. We don't waste materials like we used to. The equip-



Dennis Pellrene

ment is second to none. At this site, the Verti-Drain has made my job much easier. It's really improved this golf course."

Pellrene, 58, plans to continue working to age 65.

"I'd like to eventually buy a diesel trawler my wife and I can drive up and down the coast once we retire," he said. ▶

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