

Brent Wadsworth points to integrity in accepting builders' Rossi Award

By MARK LESLIE

NEW ORLEANS — Citing him for "single-handedly inventing" the course construction business, Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA) President Bill Kubly presented Brent Wadsworth the 10th annual Donald A. Rossi Award here, Feb. 18.



Brent Wadsworth

Speaking at the GCBA awards dinner, Kubly said Wadsworth Golf Construction Co. has "stood out like the Empire State Building among two-story buildings. In an industry as fragmented as ours, Brent Wadsworth has managed to keep his company at the top of the industry as long as the industry has been around... Without him, many of us would not be here tonight. It is time that we, the golf course builders, honor our best."

The Rossi Award honors the memory of the former executive director of the association.

Golf course architect Arthur Hills said of Wadsworth: "His employees and friends know

that he will encourage them, challenge them, sometimes needle them and at other times put you on the spot. And even, at times, he will exasperate you. Yet he is beloved to everyone who knows him.

"One trait stands out, and that is his integrity. You know always that he and all his employees are going to do every last thing they can to make every job as

good as it can be. His company has always prospered, but prosper or not, each course is impeccably done and sometimes at a loss of a great deal of money."

Brent and his wife, Jean, also established The Wadsworth Golf Charity Foundation three years ago to give grants that make "the character-building attributes of the game more accessible to more people, with the ultimate goal of making the world become a more honorable, gentler place."

"It seems he has been fostering those goals during the 40 years that I have known him," Hills said.

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Gary Grigg, left, with Robert Trent Jones Jr. at GCSAA conference.

GCSAA past president joins Jones Jr. company

By MARK LESLIE

NEW ORLEANS — Gary Grigg has joined Robert Trent Jones Jr.'s Greenscape Ltd., which will make a major effort to restore Robert Trent Jones Sr. golf courses around the world.

As opposed to contracting, the new venture is primarily a service, providing Grigg, shapers and supervisors to construction sites in conjunction with the firms installing irrigation, drainage, etc.

"We will package each deal according to the needs of the owners," Jones Jr. announced at the GCSAA conference here. "We will continue doing a select number of new courses worldwide, as we always have. Gary and [course designer] Al Furber will supply a service of shapers and supervisors to the projects under construction. But secondly, we want to continue the legacy of my father, who started in the '30s, and carry on our work and the family tree. The brand name Robert Trent Jones is a recognized name. To maintain the integrity of his philosophy

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Best Builders MacCurrach, Miller cite employees

By MARK LESLIE

NEW ORLEANS — Allan MacCurrach III of MacCurrach Golf Construction, Inc. accepted the annual Golf Course News Builder of the Year Award, and Louis Miller of Golf Development Construction the Best Small Builder of the Year Award during a banquet held here by the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA).



Allan MacCurrach



Louis Miller

The award-winners were determined following surveys taken from golf course developers, architects and superintendents on projects completed in 1999.

MacCurrach, who three years earlier won the Best Small Builder Award, thanked the Lord and the "many, many people" who have been helpful to MacCurrach Golf.

His Jacksonville, Fla.-based company, he said, "has really been blessed. We used hard work to survive. We have transformed that hard work into success. It's an extra compliment that developers, architects and superintendents like our work."

Among his employees, he cited "Twin Towers"

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Ultradwarfs:

Know the positives and negatives, says Kloska

By MARK LESLIE

NEW ORLEANS — Know your golfers, is perhaps the most crucial advice when considering installing one of the new ultradwarf Bermudagrasses.

Though superintendents looking for a 9-1/2 to 10 roll on their Stimpmeter might jump at the chance to plant the ultradwarfs on their courses, perhaps their golfers want a less-slick surface, said Rob Kloska of Jupiter Island Club in Hobe Sound, Fla.

Kloska spoke on "Choosing Ultradwarfs for Greens," drawing on his own experience. In June 1998 he planted all seven varieties on one green: Champion, Tifeagle, Floradwarf, MS Supreme, Mini Verdes, along with the standard dwarf Bermudas Tifdwarf and 328. Champion and Mini Verde were developed in Texas, while Tifeagle hails from Georgia, Floradwarf from the University of Florida and MS Supreme from Mississippi.

The new ultradwarfs, Kloska said, offer many advantages, but those may be negated by disadvantages — notably the

need for intensive maintenance and their intolerance to shade.

Kloska listed a number of grow-in and maintenance tips for superintendents choosing ultradwarfs. But first, he suggested weighing certain factors, including the importance of a uniform root zone, and excellent irrigation and drainage.

"Older greens," he said, "are not designed for these [fast] Stimpmeter readings. Increased green speeds also mean fewer cupping areas."

Shade and lack of air movement will be the most difficult problems if the ultradwarfs are planted, he said, adding: "And if you have adequate staff and can do intensive care, it will be an easier transition. For us, it was not difficult, but for other people it will be."

Extra walk-behind greens mowers will be needed, and a good mechanic is important because more sharpening and grinding is required. "He will have to maintain a cutting height of .145 and as low as .110 or .100 inch," Kloska said.

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Aggressive management practices can compromise the health, quality and playability of traditional bermudagrass varieties. Tifdwarf, Tifgreen, and even some of the new superdwarf varieties become stressed when subjected to reduced mowing height, frequent verticuting, increased topdressing and minimal irrigation. TifEagle, on the other hand, was created to withstand just this kind of abuse. In test after test, TifEagle's quality rated superior to Tifdwarf and other warm-season grasses. Improve the speed, consistency and playability of your greens. Insist on TifEagle.

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Woodhead, GCSAA move ahead

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ployed by the golf industry.

• Former U.S. Open champion Jerry Pate and Kohler Co., CEO Herb Kohler were elected to the positions of GCSAA Foundation Board of Trustees chair and vice-chair beginning in August.

Former USGA Executive Committee member Ray Anderson will rotate off the board, with his spot being filled by Thomas Chisholm, vice president of automotive marketing with Eaton Corp. The "Investing in the Beauty of Golf" endowment campaign has reached the \$3.7 million mark, with a goal of \$5 million (increased last year from the original \$3.5 million target).

A new GCSAA Foundation mission statement was also approved: "The GCSAA Foundation enhances the game of golf through funding applied research and advanced education in golf course management.

The remainder of the GCSAA Foundation board of trustees includes GCSAA representatives Woodhead, Witt, Wallace, Fearis and Mona as well

as course architect Tom Fazio, former PGA of America President Joe Black, Toro Co. Vice President Michael Hoffman, and PGA Tour Senior Vice President of Communications Bob Combs.

• Iowa State University claimed the title at the sixth annual Collegiate Turf Bowl Competition conducted at the Conference & Show. It was the second consecutive honor for the school.

The winning team is advised by Dr. Nick Christians, professor of agronomy and featured students Kirk Golinghorst, John Lavelle, Aaron Patton and Chad Wilson. The event was a two-hour test requiring a written Q & A, math problems, and identification of soil, seed and weed samples. Students from Michigan State and Kansas State were second and third, respectively.

• Earlier this year, GCSAA membership topped the 20,000 mark for the first time.

• The 72nd International Golf Course Conference & Show is set for February 12 - 18 in Dallas. ▶

Ultradwarfs reach new goals and offer more challenges

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He said the "positives" of the ultradwarfs are numerous:

- When cut at the right height, its density is excellent.
- Its denser grass allows for a smoother surface.
- In some cases it eliminates overseeding. "But I caution you not to use that as a selling point," he warned, "because the money you save there must be used in other places, like for additional walk mowers, sand, fertility..."
- It allows 419 Bermudagrass to be grown on collars without encroachment into the greens. "That's an excellent, excellent characteristic," Kloska said.
- It mowed lower. "If you have Snowbirds who want fast greens even in the winter, this is an option," he said.
- It will maintain its color in cool weather, when soil temperatures get down into the 50s, "whereas with Tifdwarf you see discoloration in the 50s," Kloska said.

On the negative side, he listed:

- Accelerated thatch build-up. "I highly recommend that you be proactive about this," Kloska said. "Watch nitrogen levels and take care of cultural practices — aerification and top dressing.
- Much slower ballmark recovery because ultradwarfs do not grow laterally.
- Intensive maintenance.
- Very poor shade tolerance.

To grow in the ultradwarfs, Kloska suggested:

- Sprig heavily: 30 bushels per acre. "In 10 days we were verticutting and mowing," he said. "Get the height of cut down to 1/8 inch as soon as possible. We did it in eight weeks."
- Spike frequently: twice a week.
- Top dress lighter and more frequently: twice a week.



quently: twice a week.

• Fertilize more frequently: every three to four days instead of once a week.

• Consider buying a water injection aerifier. "It's very important," Kloska said.

• Mixed Nitriform and coated potash. "It will help you wonderfully."

Kloska's management tips included:

- Do more grooming instead of deep verticutting.
- The N-K ratio should be 1:2 or 1:3 in the summer and 1:5 in the winter.
- In the cold weather, aerify twice a week.

• Use finer fertilizers. "In some cases, the grass is so tight, fertilizer has a hard time getting in," he said. "You will do lighter and more frequent top dressing. We have gone so far as putting sand out with a rotary spreader. Even at that, we water heavily that night and hope it gets the sand down in."

• Because of the impact of the turf's density on water infiltration, a water aerifier is "extremely important."

• Aerify with smaller tines more frequently in the summer.

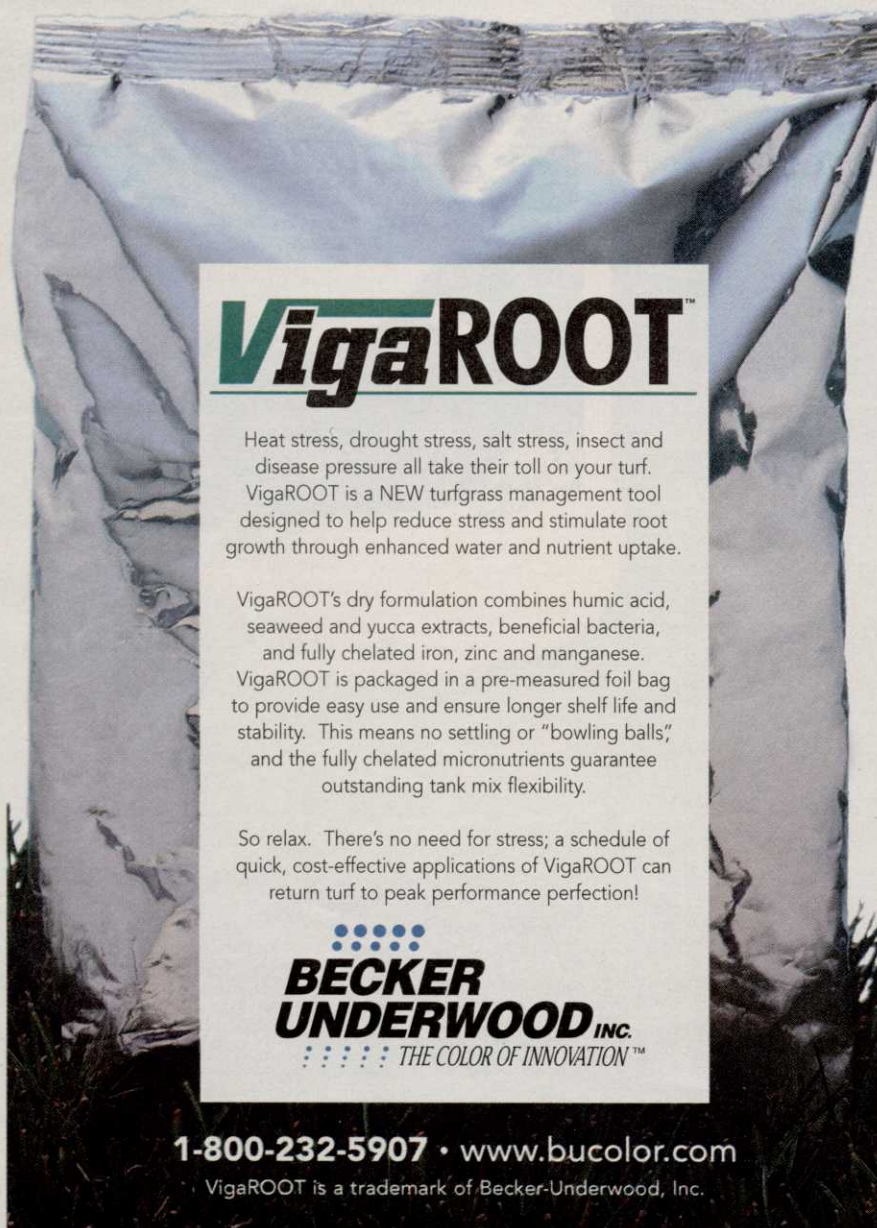
• Remember that ball marks heal more slowly.

• Monitor the surface temperatures of greens in the summer. "Remember you are top dressing every week and there is a lot of sand on top of that green. Also, you're mowing low at .150 or .130," Kloska said.

• Watch for disease, particularly during tropical weather patterns, and especially on stressed turf. The disease will show up where stress is occurring — shaded, scalped and heat-stressed areas.

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