

[ REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK ]

# Dispatches from a **USGA REGIONAL CONFERENCE** and **GEORGIA TURF TRIALS**

Last month GCI's assistant editor Katie Tuttle trekked to Georgia to check in on Valent's herbicide trials, then on to Dayton, Ohio, to attend the USGA Regional Conference. Here are a few items of note she picked up along the way.

### USGA REGIONAL CONFERENCE, DAYTON, OHIO.

**New Legislation.** A draft bill on nutrient management for water quality in Ohio circulated back in March. Comments on the bill

were due by April 5. While the bill does not apply to golf courses, this may change, so it's important for superintendents to keep up on the bill. There's a possibility that fertilizer certification (education) could be added to the pesticide applicator licensing.

**Better education.** The USGA is working on a new way to present the rules of golf, making it easier for newbies and students to understand the game. The five-year campaign will position the

USGA as the leading educational resource to help golfers better understand the rules, thus making the game less intimidating and more welcoming.

**Augusta quality? No way!** If you think you can get tournament quality playing greens all year round, think again. Paul Vermeulen, the PGA Tour's director of competitions agronomy, shared what exactly goes into making Augusta tournament-ready. The time and effort in the days leading up to the tournament can't be maintained year round, even at

tournament courses. To prove his point, Vermeulen showed pictures of Augusta not during the Masters. Believe me, it looked just like your course probably does.

**Excite, Engage, Execute!** If you want a good, well-running course, you're going to need to do one major thing: communicate. Whether it's your staff, your members, or the community you're a part of, it is important to stay in contact with everyone so you know what is going on. A course can't run on income alone, and it's your job to make sure everyone is happy and all concerns or problems are addressed.

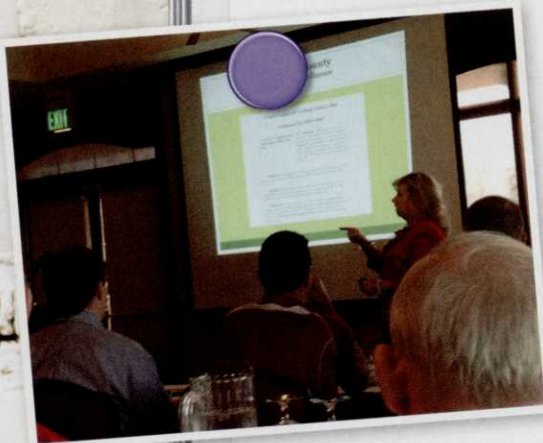
**A final note.** May 26-31 is Ohio Turfgrass Week, designated to increase public awareness of the importance of turfgrass to Ohio's economy and environment. May 29 is Turfgrass Day at the State House in Columbus.

### VALENT'S GEORGIA SUREGUARD TRIALS.

**What to expect.** In the south, crabgrass is the number one summer annual, replacing *Poa annua*, which is the biggest winter annual to control. Another problem grass you might see this summer is goosegrass. Once goosegrass is up and the plants mature, it becomes extremely tolerant to herbicides.

**Careful where you step.** Herbicides can be tracked, both by foot traffic and cart traffic. If you have warm season grass boarding cool season grass, they require completely different care and you want to be extra careful that you don't overlap the products. However, SureGuard solves that problem. You can apply SureGuard close to cool season turf and not have to fear tracking or damage to the grass.

**Temperature is everything.** When examining the testing plots, it was somewhat difficult to see extremely obvious results. The results were still there, but the unseasonably cold weather in Georgia had a very obvious effect on growth.



## What a difference a year makes...

Big thanks to our buddy Brian White, superintendent at Wichita Country Club, Wichita, Kan., for sharing these starkly contrasted images of his course with us.

"Here's an interesting comparison between a warm year and a cooler year," White says. "Zoysia is slowly starting to come around in the (2013) picture, whereas at this point last year we were already green." Credit goes to assistant superintendent Dallas Cockrell for taking the pictures.



# From THE FEED



[ DISPATCHES ]

When Randy Samoff's crew at the Redstone Golf Club gets ready for a tournament, he makes sure everyone knows what's going on. But his Twitter feed isn't just photos of beautiful greens - it's full of shots of those greens in the making, so the public can see his crew in action. Here are some of our favorites from the recent PGA Tour Shell Houston Open.



Randy Samoff @RedstoneSuper



Bunker plate packing crews getting some TV time for some of the upcoming preview shows.



Toro 5510s making some magic happen out there today. Precision cutting tool finely tuned by the best equipment staff!



Don't be long on #4. Trust me, it won't stop.



Euro Connection knocking it out on 10 today. Sweden and Denmark representing! Simon Mansson and Michael Jorgensen.



Join the conversation  
on Twitter @GCIMagazine!



## Bruce Williams reports in from China, Malaysia and Singapore

Bruce Williams, GCI's globetrotting reporter, recently returned from an extensive Asian trip that involved teaching, listening and learning. Here are some dispatches from his travel journal. Be sure to check out the iPad/iPhone app version of the May issue to read Bruce's entire Asia golf report and to view a slideshow spotlighting his trip highpoints.

### Making the trip

"A valuable lesson is to always take a business card or two from your hotel that will get you back home. The address is both in English and Chinese characters."

### The China Golf Show

"The show is not your typical golf trade show, but a show that involves all of golf. The goal is to promote all phases of golf including the consumer side of the business. So imagine a trade show that has several components... I do not have any firm statistics from the show but I have a gut feeling that numbers were up slightly in terms of booth space sold and also participants."

### Education

I attended seminars taught by Dr. Beth Guertal from Auburn University and also by Pat Finlen, President of GCSAA. All the seminars were in English and with standing room only. Simultaneous translation was available and used by about 25 percent of the participants. I have found that Chinese superintendents are eager to learn. They are bright and pick up things quickly. Undoubtedly it is imperative to keep providing continuing education in order that golf course maintenance can prosper in Asia.

### Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

"Imagine a golf course with 18 holes and 200 workers. I saw greens being aerified with a single bit from an electric drill run off of a generator (it could take a week to finish a green). Fairway verticutting was cleaned up by ladies that were elbow to elbow with brooms and dustpans. All weeding was done by hand."



### Singapore

"There are some great golf courses on this city/country island and the superintendents are veterans. As usual I pick up new tricks on weed control and pest management on every visit."

