

[REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK]

Sustainability in Golf...Beyond the Green

Bill Brown reports on what the industry is doing to make golf more sustainable.

Sustainability: There may be as many definitions as there are groups trying to define and implement it. As a former superintendent, I was consistently faced with questions on the topic of being environmentally friendly, native areas and sustainability. During my 20 years in the industry, I have seen several attempts by people or groups thinking they are going to make the industry sustainable or initiate environmental changes on a global scale, only to find these lose steam and die.

Earlier this month, Experience Green, a non-profit organization founded in 2010 that focuses on the what, how, why and when of sustainability launched an initiative called Sustainability in Golf... Beyond the Green, in Hilton Head, SC. Presented in partnership with The Sea Pines Resort and Syngenta, the event was a pioneering initiative bringing together all the segments of the golf industry to advance sustainability to benefit the planet, its people and prosperity or what they call the triple bottom line. The event hosted a slew of other partners/sponsors including RBC, John Deere Golf, NGCOA and ePar to name a few.

I was cautiously optimistic. The schedule of events and speakers looked great. Most of all, the



diversity of the audience is what intrigued me the most. Teresa Wade, Founder and Executive Director of Experience Green, expressed having three goals for the Sustainability in Golf event. The first goal was simple, to get all the key players of golf in one room. The first goal was accomplished, the event had total buy-in from each segment in golf. There were speakers and attendees from course maintenance, club managers, owners, golf professionals, the public and even a few junior golfers were in attendance. That last was impressive!

Day one was broken down into the three key segments, People, Planet and Prosperity. Each segment featured speakers representing these areas followed by time for panel discussions. Each group was charged with presenting how they are doing their own little part to



make golf more sustainable.

Following the panel discussions the attendees and partners broke out into their respective groups. One of the questions they had to answer was, "What do they need from the other segments of golf to help with sustainability at their facility?" The answer was simple, total buy-in.

Our last day featured a tour of The Ocean Course at Sea Pines Resort lead by Jim Cregan, golf course superintendent and Joellen Lampman from Audubon International. It was great to see many of the sustainable initiatives put in place at the Ocean Course. Jim and his team do a tremendous job. But I was equally excited to hear them communicate the cost of sustainability. Being sustainable on a course doesn't mean you will simply discontinue a practice, it is the reallocation of resources.



See the app version of this story for Bill's complete report from the event

From THE FEED



The golf course is a dangerous place, especially between seasons. Some sudden severe weather can close down the course instantly, but sometimes it's better to deal with the problem you can ride out rather than random acts of vandalism.



Ridgewood CC Grounds @RCC_Grounds

Microburst hit club today 50+ trees down, another 100+ tops sheared off. Course closed tomorrow. More later.



↑ **Jake Brooks@jakebrooks04**
Won't be needing that fan anymore.



Sam Leatherberry @SamLeatherberry

Seemed like a good idea to move back on August 1st. Seriously snow in October? #whoops



Fowler's Mill GC @FowlersMillGC

Needless to say, we are closed for the weekend #snow #christmascard.



Scott Reaves @ScottReaves5

Good morning.



↑ **Ian Nichols@IanANichols**
If there is a bright side least it wasn't burnt out in the middle of a green.



↑ **Scott Reaves@ScottReaves5**
Credit for persistence. This was their fourth or fifth attempt.



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LIVE FROM GIE+EXPO 2013

Turfheads came to learn and try out new equipment at GIE+Expo 2013 in Louisville, Ky., with lots of new opportunities for education and plenty of iron to ride. Here are a few of the highlights from the show:



-Chuck Bowen, the editor of GCI's sister publication Lawn & Landscape, moderated a Power Panel discussion with a group of smart, vocal landscape contractors on topics like using the H2B Guest Worker program, employee referral programs and new employee training.

-The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute launched a new education campaign aimed at alerting equipment users about the danger of misfueling small engines with E15 gasoline. The Look Before You Pump campaign starts the conversation about fuels with up to 15 percent ethanol. The campaign's website, LookBeforeYouPump.com, has educational resources about the new fuel.

-New equipment from many manufacturers, including several alternative-energy choices, like a dealer-installed propane kit for the John Deere ZTrak series, the Cub Cadet electric RZT-S Zero and the new Mean Green Mowers STALKER mower, complete with night camo finish.

-The maiden voyage of the AeroLawn 3000, our very own remote-control drone, which gave us a bird's eye view of all of the great machinery on display in the demo area.



SUPERINTENDENT R.A.D.I.O N.E.T.W.O.R.K

Podcast pick of the month

Sure, irrigation expert and president of Irrigation Consulting Brian Vinchesi shares his views on the importance of smart water usage on the golf course here in the pages of GCI every month as a featured columnist. But you don't have to go far to be a part of his intelligent irrigation bootcamp series on SRN, covering the how and why of efficient water usage. Head to <http://bit.ly/16iYxZC> to hear it.