

Off The Fringe

Good Start at Green Start

Assistant superintendents learn from the best in the business at the Sixth Annual Green Start Academy

BY BETH GERACI

The morning air was cool and crisp as 50 assistant golf course superintendents gathered outdoors at the North Carolina State Turfgrass Laboratory. Their nervous excitement was palpable as the sun's pale yellow beams blanketed the property.

It was with that backdrop that the Sixth Annual Green Start Academy got underway, the 50 assistants having been handpicked for the two-day event based on essays they wrote. Green Start was as much a reward for the assistants' ambition and leadership as it was a valuable opportunity for them to propel their careers further still.

Hosted by Bayer Environmental Science and John Deere Golf, this year's Academy comprised two days of educational discussions led by some of the country's most renowned superintendents and turfgrass professionals.

The reputable lineup featured industry heavyweights such as N.C. State turfgrass professor Grady Miller, Ph.D.;

certified golf course superintendents Bob Farren (Pinehurst Resort, Pinehurst, N.C.); Patrick Finlen (The Olympic Club, San Francisco); and Paul Grogan (TPC Deere Run, Moline, Ill.); golf business authority Henry DeLozier (Global Golf Advisors); and many others.

Most of the Academy's discussions took place at the Bayer Environmental Science Development and Training Center, a picturesque 281-acre expanse in Clayton, N.C., where Bayer performs turfgrass research.

It was there that the assistants reaped advice and information from some of the best in the business. DeLozier urged the assistants to actively drive up the value of

their clubs, to "use this current economic environment and make it work for you." The GCSAA's Greg Lyman advised them to practice sustainability. Farren, Finlen and Grogan shared words of professional wisdom. And Chris Carson, CGCS, inspired the assistants to make the most of their careers.

"Figure out what you have that others don't and learn how to package it," he advised.

At its core, the Academy was an exercise not only in turfgrass science, business and career advice, but also in networking, motivation and forging new friendships.

"Everyone seemed to gel here," said Chartiers Country Club assistant superintendent Jonathan Dees.

What stood out most prominently about Green Start was the deeply rooted knowledge of all those who presented, and the passion and drive of 50 assistant superintendents determined to leave their mark on the field.



Assistant superintendents prepare for a tour of the Bayer Environmental Science Development and Training Center in Clayton, N.C.

PHOTO BY: BETH GERACI

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Assistant Scores Free Greens Mower



Stanek on the Toro Greensmaster TriFlex Hybrid she won. "It will have a big impact for golfers," she said.

Lori Stanek, assistant superintendent at Petrifying Springs Golf Course in Kenosha, Wis., recently won a new Toro Greensmaster TriFlex Hybrid riding greens mower. The giveaway was part of Toro's "Master the Greens U.S. Tour" equipment demonstration series hosted at golf courses this summer.

"When I found out I won I was in total disbelief," Stanek said.

Dave Hassel, Kenosha County's supervisor of golf conditions, added, "We are just so pleased to have the opportunity to receive this mower. The machine will be a tremendous asset for us in the future."

Quotable

"As natural disasters ravaged the country this summer, maintenance crews labored countless hours to get our courses back to playable. And most (superintendents) have done it with the tighter budgets brought on by a slumping economy. They deserve patience, time and our appreciation."

— *Golf Digest Editor-in-Chief Jerry Tarde in November's 'birdie of the month'*

[PEOPLE] in the news

Chuck Borman (1), CAE, will receive the Distinguished Service Award from the Carolinas GCSA at this month's Carolinas conference and trade show in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Borman is the former executive director of the Carolinas GCSA, and still works for the association as a consultant.

It was on Borman's watch that the Carolinas association experienced significant growth in membership, services and revenues. During his administration the Carolinas conference and show tripled in size; membership grew from 1,200 to 1,800; and the annual operating budget grew from \$400,000 to \$1.1 million.

"Chuck Borman's impact on the golf course superintendent profession in the Carolinas cannot be overstated," says Carolinas GCSA president John Davis of

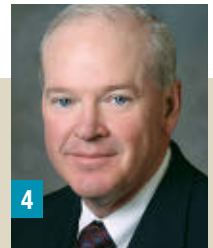
Secession Golf Club. "He took this association from a very solid base to being a force in golf in our region and a champion of the interests of every single one of our members. Superintendents for many years to come will benefit from his legacy."

Longtime superintendent **Jerry Kershasky** (2) has joined Reinders, Inc. to help serve the Chicago market. He will be a territory manager in the Soft Goods Business Group responsible for sales and product support.

For the past 37 years, Jerry has been the superintendent at Westmoor Country Club in Brookfield, Wis. He is a past director of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association, where he directed the efforts of the Turf Diagnostics Lab and raised funds for research.

Reinders, Inc. is the Midwest's largest full service distributor of products to the commercial green industry.

Jeff Higgins, Ph.D. (3), has joined the staff of Harrell's, manufacturer and supplier of performance-based turf and ornamental products, as Vice President of Business Development. He will lead Harrell's efforts in customer education and



manage national accounts for golf, turf and landscape markets.

Higgins joins Harrell's from ValleyCrest Golf Course Maintenance, where he served as the Director of Agronomy and was responsible for agronomics and maintenance of over 70 golf courses throughout the United States as well as all vendor relationships.

Marc Dufour (4) has been named president and CEO of Club Car, an Ingersoll Rand brand. Dufour will have overall responsibility for the operational performance and strategic direction of the golf car and utility vehicle manufacturer. Dufour is Club Car's fifth president in the company's 53-year history. He succeeds Gary Michel, who recently was named president of Ingersoll Rand's Residential Solutions Sector.

Lastly, GCSAA named **Richard Konzem**, who has more than 30 years of managerial experience, primarily in intercollegiate athletics, as chief operating officer. He started for the association last month.

