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Golf Ball: Terrific on closely-mowed fairways

New Mesa: Terrific on closely-mowed fairways

Golfdom

MAY 2007

VOLUME 63 • NO. 5



What they've got going at the Atlanta Athletic Club is something to talk about.

BY LARRY AYLWARD

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About the cover

Atlanta photographer Bob Maynard had no problem coaxing Ken Mangum to "say cheese."

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Frequent fungicide applications at low rates and rotation can keep pathogens from flourishing.

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What this world needs now are more people who give a hoot about awesome customer service.

By Ron Furlong

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Turfgrass Trends

This month, *Golfdom's* practical research digest for turf managers discusses wear and compaction stress on turfgrass, and it explores the best nitrogen source for perennial ryegrass. See pages 75-84.

Getting It Straight

A story in the May issue, "They champion Champion," refers to greens being reseeded with Champion ultradwarf bermudagrass. It should have said greens being replanted with Champion.

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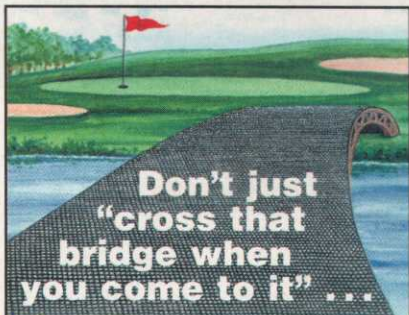
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We've Got Mail

■ LETTERS FROM THE FIELD

Global Warming Gets Cool Reception

Regarding Larry Aylward's column on Global Warming (Pin High, March), it is hard for me to believe the numbers of people who are now believers in global warming from the perspective that man is responsible. The Earth might be warming, but many believe that we mere humans are so powerful that we are mainly responsible for a degree or two of warmer-than-average temperatures compared to a relatively brief record of average temperatures where data was actually taken.

The Earth obviously went through a series of periods that were very warm/hot or very cold. What is normal or average? Consider the fossil records of dinosaurs in what are now cold climates of the world in a time where man didn't burn oil or coal for energy. There is oil in Alaska that is said to have come from tropical plants, biomass and subsequently fossil fuels. Obviously, the area that is now Alaska was much warmer than it is today.

Consider that we are a giant ball of rock and water. Earth, which rotates while it orbits around the sun roughly every 365 days, is not a precision object, and there are no man-made machines that ensure its accuracy revolving around the sun. The atomic clock must be reset every so often because the Earth is not precise in its orbit around the sun.

The sun is not precise, either. When you consider everything that happens in the universe without man's influence, it is amazing to me that the Earth doesn't fly off its gravitational orbit with the sun. It is even more amazing that the sun with all of its erratically burning gasses (solar flares and sun spots) doesn't just explode. With something as hot as the sun with a core that burns at an estimated, average 20-million degrees Celsius (a thermonuclear explosion generates brief temperatures approaching 300,000 degrees Celsius) most any solid becomes gaseous immediately.

Is the temperature of the sun always going to be consistently 20-million degrees C, or could it vary by a half degree or so? Why doesn't the sun explode or burn all of its gasses immediately like a tank of gasoline will when exposed to a match? To think that something this hot and massive can be controlled or affected by man is ludicrous to me.

If you blame man for burning fossil fuels as the cause for global warming, you might as well blame the Chinese for importing metal ore, concrete, rock

and natural resources for building so many new buildings and cars. All of this added weight on one part of the planet might just as easily be to blame for causing the Earth to tilt a little more in its rotation around the Sun, causing our proximity to the Sun to increase and resulting in warming temperatures.

I put more faith in a higher power than man when you consider the Earth, the sun and the universe as a whole and where it came from, why it exists and what lies in its future.

I enjoy your columns, but as humans, we seem to give ourselves way too much credit or blame. Our brief time on this planet is insignificant when you consider the bigger picture.

Steve Kammerer
Field Technical Manager
Syngenta Professional Products
St. Augustine, Fla.

The problem with the global warming alarmists is that they ignore the role of the sun and history. When northern Ohio was producing all that shale, it was deep under water. The limestone of Indiana likewise formed below an ocean. That is global warming. The planet warmed and cooled naturally for 4 billion years before we got here.

The alarmists never mention that the sun is hotter than it has been in some time. I am for a cleaned-up planet, but I am not converting to the global warming religion.

Since you are going to broaden your knowledge on the subject, you should read Michael Crichton's novel "State of Fear." He is a much smarter guy than Big Al (Gore). Relax.

Joe Kosoglov, certified superintendent
Wolf Run Golf Club
Zionsville, Ind.

I like everything Larry Aylward wrote in his op-ed on global warming except the implication that global warming is due to hydrocarbons.

"The sixth-warmest year in Earth's recorded history" is not even a blip on the screen of Earth's history. As for me and most others I know, we agree that the weather does seem to be warming from an historical short view. But as to whether that is due to an environment careening out of control, a long-term trend or even a short-term trend, we just don't know.

These same scientists were declaring an ice age was on the way just a few decades ago.

(After all, much of North America was covered with ice at one time, and the polar regions have been quite mild in history with extensive forests.) There is still much debate among the scientists themselves as to what is going on. So my opinion is let's not help fuel a wildfire of fear by taking sides until we know what is really happening. We all just need to be responsible for what each of us can control.

Besides, I would love to retire in Fargo. Florida is getting congested.

Michael Stem, certified superintendent
Alaqua Country Club
Longwood, Fla.

Can Job Satisfaction Be Found on Golf Courses?

"In Search of Greener Grass" (February *Golfdom Report*, p. 15A) is a great article and very pertinent to my situation. I left golf to be a grounds supervisor of a large corporate headquarters.

I have the same sense of ownership as a superintendent, but no golfers, no greens and no tees — just an immaculate tract of land with a lake, some forest, 1.5-inch turf and parking lots. I work 40 hours a week unless there's a snowstorm; then I'm paid time-and-a-half to plow. I get weekends and holidays off to spend with my family. And did I mention there are no golfers?

In my case, I was totally disenfranchised with the golf industry, having worked in it for 18 years with terrible hours and insufficient compensation. But like most, I was tricked into thinking that this was the way the world worked, and a better-paying superintendent job was just around the corner.

Then I got fired from my assistant superintendent job simply because I had been there too long, and I had to scramble. Through hard work, luck and perhaps a little divine intervention, I scored a job that I can retire from. It has excellent benefits, long-term stability and time for my family, which are things the golf course career could not provide me. So for me, the grass truly is greener.

Submitted at www.golfdom.com.

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I like to think I'm smart. I feel good about my brainpower most of the time. Until I meet some of the deep thinkers who work behind the scenes of the golf course maintenance industry.

And then I feel ... well ... humbled.

Over the years, I've toured the research facilities of the industry's major chemical companies and watched white-coated scientists fiddle with formulations. I've also visited the testing labs at the top irrigation companies and witnessed engineers at work on water-saving gadgets. And I've seen production lines in operation at mower and utility vehicle manufacturing plants and have come away amazed at the level of detail involved with the making of these machines.

I enjoy visiting these places and taking in all the information that is tossed at me. But I leave feeling a lot less brainy than when I arrived.

Who thinks this stuff up, anyway? And where do these people come from? Some of them possess more patents than I do polo shirts.

Seriously, where would the golf course maintenance industry be without its researchers and developers? These unsung heroes don't get nearly the credit that they deserve.

I ask you to stop and think about who these people are and what they mean to the industry. Let's do it together.

They are the people who create amazing turf varieties, from bentgrass to bermudagrass, to withstand more abuse than a crummy contestant on "American Idol."

They are the people who invent the greens mowers that can mow turf at one-eighth of an inch to help superintendents provide the closely cut greens demanded by their courses' clientele.

They are the people who create the fertilizers to help you green up turf faster than you can say "Peter Piper picked a peck of potassium."

They are the people who invent the pesticides that battle everything from dandelions to dollar spot on your greens, tees and fairways. And they continue to sustain these products so they can be applied at low and lasting rates.

They are the people who design sprinkler

The Einsteins of the Industry

BY LARRY AYLWARD



A LOT OF US
NEED THEM
TO DO OUR JOBS

heads to function as precisely as a souped-up Porsche.

They are the people who have brought biological products into being so superintendents can incorporate them into their turf maintenance programs.

They are the people who create intricate polypropylene-constructed contraptions to keep the sand in bunkers when Mother Nature gets mad.

They are the people who invent apparatuses such as aerifiers and verticutters so superintendents can give their turf extreme makeovers.

They are the people who invent the cool tools to help you probe your soil for content and moisture.

They are the people who devise utility vehicles that run so quietly that you can cruise up to a worker/slacker and catch him sleeping while he should be spot-spraying for weeds.

They are the people who invent specialty tools like hole cutters and bunker rakes that superintendents and their crews can't live without.

They are the people ... that superintendents and their crews can't live without.

No doubt you've heard the statistic that human beings only use 10 percent of their brains. That might be true for some of us, but it's a bunch of neuro nonsense as it applies to the creators that make the golf course maintenance world spin. These people are the Einsteins of the industry. A lot of us need them to do our jobs.

So the next time you encounter these behind-the-scenes stars of the industry — be it scientists, researchers or inventors — make sure to tell them how much you appreciate them for what they've given.

That would be a smart thing to do.

Aylward can be reached at 216-706-3737.