

USGA, MICHIGAN STATE COMBINE TO HELP POPULARIZE T.G.I.F.

To students at many colleges and universities, TGIF means getting away from books and getting an early start to the weekend.

In one department at Michigan State University, however, it means nothing of the sort. In this case, TGIF stands for Turfgrass Information File, a cooperative effort by the United States Golf Association and Michigan State to provide information on turfgrass management and research.

Begun in 1984, TGIF is a bibliographic computer database designed and developed by the MSU Library. The system, the first of its kind, provides access to all published materials reporting the results of research that affects turfgrass and its maintenance.

"Nothing like this has ever been done before," explained Peter Cookingham, project manager of the Michigan State Libraries. "There are thousands of bibliographical databases out there, but never before has there been one on turf. Some of the material has been out there, but prior to this only searching professionals would know

where to go to find it."

The collection is a compilation of materials both old and new. With more than 2,000 new records being added each year, the database has grown to total some 14,000 records. Included in the collection are early works on turf culture, such as "Golf Greens and Green-keeping," published in 1906, and "The ABCs of Turf Culture" (1928).

The TGIF project was located at Michigan State because of the previous existence there of the O.J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection. Including books, journals, research reports and conference proceedings, the Noer collection is recognized as one of the best in the country. Noer was the 1963 recipient of the USGA Green Section Award.

A private foundation, the Turfgrass Information Center has been created through the joint efforts of the USGA and Michigan State. Its goals are threefold: to develop and maintain the collection; to provide computer access to the bibliographic data of turfgrass research; and to deliver documents from the collection to researchers, practitioners and other appropriate users.

Much of the use currently being derived of the project is of the problem-solving nature by golf course superintendents. The first block of subscribers has drawn nearly equal proportions of academic institutions and the private sector, such as landscape firms and architects.

Although the librarian at TGIF acquires much of the materials needed for the collection, a network of researchers and practitioners in the field is being developed to assist in its growth.

Access to the collection is provided by the USGA TGIF, an on-line computer-based bibliographic database, to which anyone can subscribe for an annual fee.

For a basic subject search, more than 13,000 possible keywords are available to the user. The computer will then find records in which the term entered appears, either as part of the title or as an assigned subject. The computer also enables the user to locate specifics, such as the retrieval of records by certain authors, from specific journals, or proceedings within a particular year or range of years.

The information is not restricted to those in the agronomy field, or even to those with access to the Michigan State facilities.

Anyone interested in a subject can either call the center or submit a request by mail. If done by mail, it is helpful to be as specific as possible about the subject matter.

It even is possible to search the database on one's own computer. Although the TGIC needs to be contacted to receive the necessary technical details and forms, dial-up



access can be supported by most IBM PC or PC-compatible systems with the necessary software. The computer is available daily 18 hours per day.

"With a computer, the intermediary is removed," explained Cookingham. "With a PC and link you can self-research. The procedure really is quite easy."

Although TGIC can provide limited photocopies or facsimile transmissions, the goal is to soon expect full text retrieval. Response to most requests currently is 48 hours.

Phone requests for information can be made at 517/353-7209, or by writing: Turfgrass Information Center, W-212 Library, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824. Additional information also is available by calling the USGA Green Section at 201/234-2300, or by writing: United States Golf Association, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, NJ 07931.

TURF TIP

Leasing becomes an option for equipment acquisition for undercapitalized golf clubs. See your associate members or contact your local bank for details.

NEW DIRECTOR SPEAKS OUT



New director Andy Lindquist of Brookview Golf Course will be on the Conference and Education Committee as well as the Membership Committee. Let's all help Andy by recruiting new members. Andy pleads with all of you to keep current. Send your address changes to the MGCSA office as soon as you move.



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