

Managing Your Turf



by Larry Vetter
President, Turf
Management
Products, Inc.

Choices you make today affect future turf quality and maintenance budgets.

Today's professional turf manager is besieged by rising costs, heightened environmental awareness, the increased use of facilities with higher quality demands, and members who play numerous other courses and become arm chair quarterbacks commenting on your performance. In the face of it all, you, the professional turf manager, are expected to do things that Mother Nature never dreamed of doing.

It ain't easy being green.

You are asked to make plants grow under conditions they were never intended to handle. No self-respecting grass plant likes to have its top cut off every day, then trampled, ripped apart, kicked and scuffed, and then be asked to look and perform its best. But, that's exactly what we expect from grass plants in most of our turf areas.

The bottom line for the professional turf manager is that our job is to grow grass for a particular purpose but in a way that is "unnatural." The "unnatural" things we do to turf causes stress for the plant. To help plants survive, we make modifications such as increased watering, amended soils, nutrient and pesticide applications, and so forth.

Deliberations and considerations.

Since the "perfect" plant type does not exist for every turf situation, and probably never will, the turf manager must make some choices after carefully considering the aspects of each turf situations. Here are some of the things we must consider.

Locale. Grasses that like the climate in Orlando don't necessarily like Minnesota. (Even though there didn't seem to be much of a difference on some days in February.)

Usage. Is it a home lawn, putting green, park area, rough, fairway, roadside, etc? Usage determines a number of things including cutting height, the amount and type of traffic to prepare for, and so on.

Desired quality. Does it have to look perfect at all times? During certain seasons? Or is function more important than appearance?

How will it really be managed? Is irrigation available? Will it be fertilized? When and how much? Will the budget permit regular mowing? The use of fungicides? Budget is most always a critical consideration in making the best decision.

Some decisions are easier than others.

Sometimes, one of the above factors dictates the choice to be made. Warm season grasses simply can't survive Minnesota's climate. A putting green with a specified cutting height of 3/16" demands the use of a bentgrass. Usually, however, it is a combination of these considerations that the turf manager bases his choices upon, making the decision more difficult.

To make the best choice in each situation, we need to evaluate all of the appropriate considerations, identify our objectives and needs, and understand the basic strengths and weaknesses of our various grass choices.

We'll get further along in this discussion in future issues. But, if you need help in making the best planting decision today, give one of these Turf Management distributors a call. Or call us at 612-476-1650.

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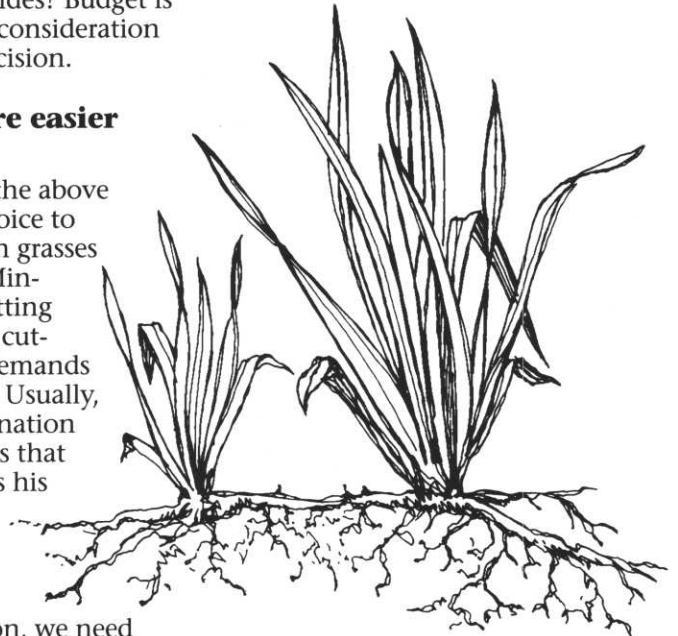
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Coming next issue.

Information that will almost certainly change the way you grow your turf!



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HOLE NOTES

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

And The Rains Came!



Flooded basements were commonplace. Golf courses had water in areas where no one had ever seen water standing before. When we should be getting buried with snow, it rains! Do you suppose we will see snow in August?

We are supposed to be able to have definite answers for winter preparation and always be able to second-guess Mother Nature, are we not? So when your membership wonders what happened to your course after the calm, mild winter we just had, be prepared to pin them down on the winner of the next Superbowl!

Here's what I am getting at. After this winter thaw begins and you see that you have lost some turf to winter-kill, be prepared to call on your fellow superintendents, your state association's Board of Directors and your area professionals at the University of Minnesota for help. Your association is doing a survey about what you do to prepare for winter. We all have different approaches to what we do, what ideas work or which do not. Please take some time during this busy time of the season to fill out this survey when it comes. It could benefit us all in the future.

* * * * *

I would like to say a hearty thank you to Dan Miller and Tom Haberman for the splendid arrangements they made for the MGCSA Hospitality Reception held during the 62nd Annual GCSAA International Turf Conference in Orlando. And, as well, to all of our Associate members, who support and sponsor this event. It is truly enjoyable to see some familiar faces when you are out of town...besides Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck! Thanks to you all! The attendance of the conference was near 18,000. The equipment show was incredibly large. One time through took eight hours!

* * * * *

I had the honor of presenting checks on behalf of the MGCSA to Mr. William Bengeyfield, retiring USGA Green Section Director, and Mr. James Snow, USGA Green Section Director. One was for \$1,000 to the USGA-GCSAA Research Project, and the other, a \$1,000 check to GCSAA President Dennis Lyons for our continuing support of the GCSAA Research & Scholarship Fund, at the Golden/Platinum Tee Club Reception on Sunday, February 25.

* * * * *

I also would like to thank the Lafayette Club and host superintendent John Harris for holding the GCSAA Regional Seminar: Business Communication & Assertiveness Techniques, and the MGCSA Spring Mini-Seminar. This cooperation and support is very much appreciated by all of us in the MGCSA.

* * * * *

Our next meeting will be held at the Owatonna Country Club on April 16. I know that our host, Randy Nelson, will have the course ready and open for us...if his second-guess is better than Mother Nature's. Hope to see you there!

—Kerry Glader, GCSA
President

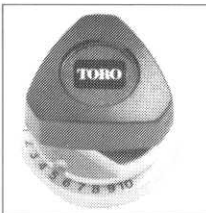


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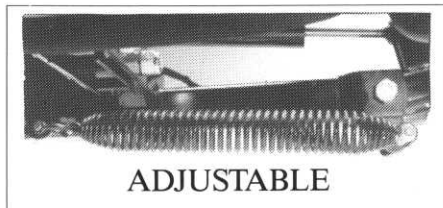
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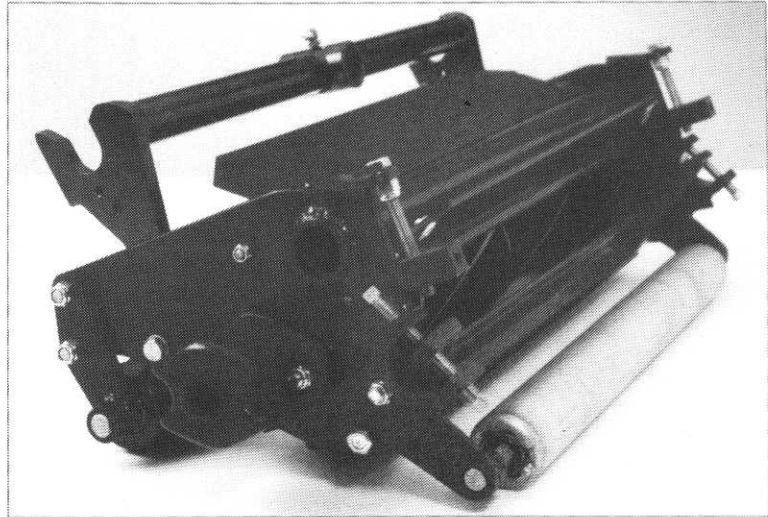
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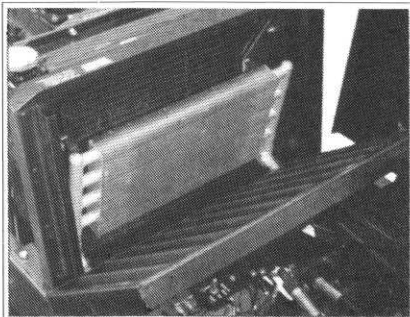
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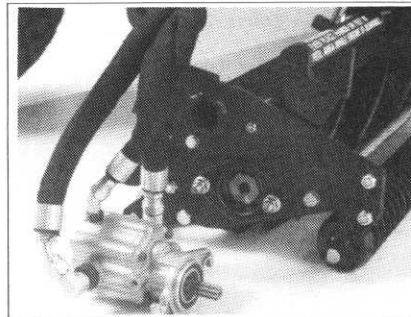


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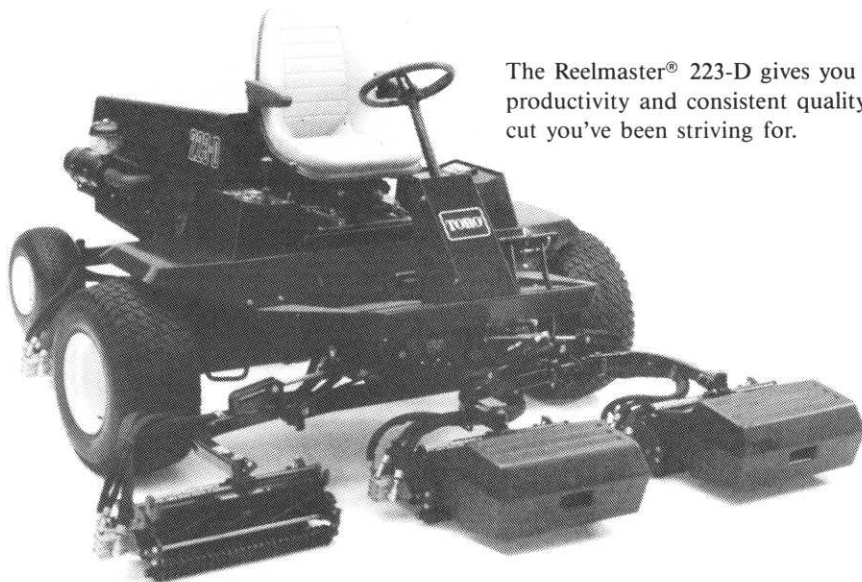
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Huge Crowds Jammed the Exhibit Area at the 1990 GCSAA Conference

—Photos by Dale Wysocki

Records Shattered at 1990 International Conference

More than 17,400 members of the golf community attended the 1990 International Golf Course Conference and Trade Show hosted by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

Held Feb. 19-26 at the Orange County Convention/Civic Center in Orlando, Fla., the conference and show broke all existing association records.

The 17,400-plus attendance figure represented a 20-percent increase over the previous record of 14,534 made last year in Anaheim.

A record 552 exhibitors showcased their products and services during the three-day trade show, almost 100 more than exhibited at the 1989 Anaheim show. The exhibition covered nearly 170,000 square feet, up from 143,000 in 1989.

International attendance was up as well with an estimated 1,500 participants representing some 25 countries outside the United States.

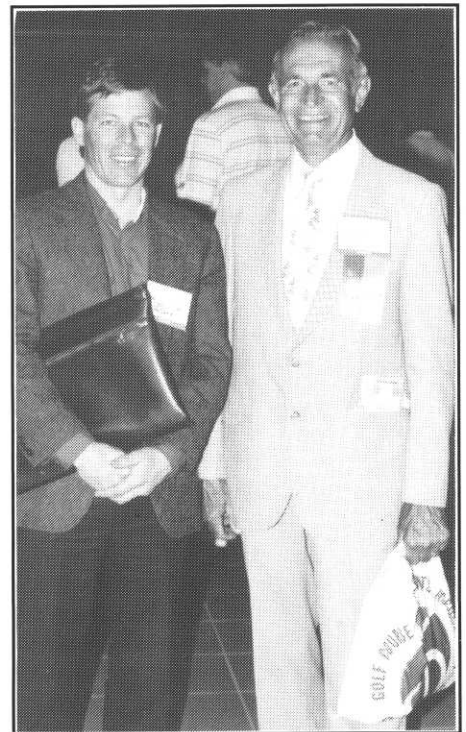
Highlighting the conference and seminar portion of the week were 38 continuing education seminars, a state government relations forum, a meeting of allied associations and an international roundtable. More than 2,200 members participated in seminars and symposia on environmental and water resource management, budgeting and financial management, safety and risk management, golf course design and more.

Dr. Ken Blanchard, author of *The One Minute Manager*, delivered the keynote speech at the opening session Feb. 22. A multi-projector slide presentation, "The Challenge of the '90s," which outlined the key environmental challenges facing superintendents in the next decade, rounded out the opening session.

At the association's annual meeting on Feb. 26, Gerald L. Faubel, CGCS, was elected president. Stephen G. Cadenelli, CGCS, was elected vice president and William R. Roberts, CGCS, was appointed secretary/treasurer.

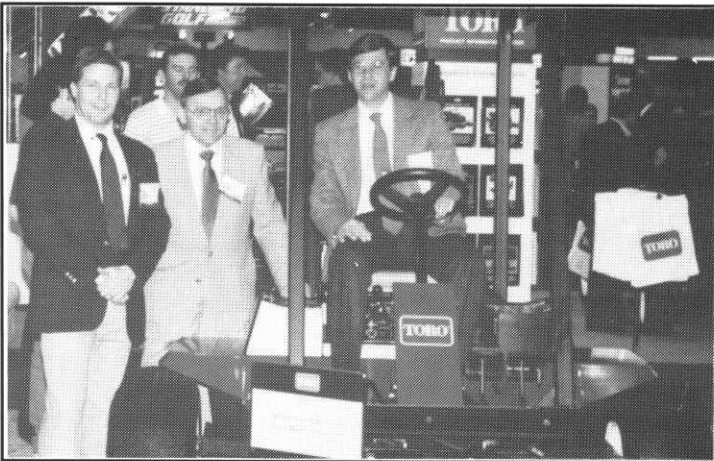
At the gala closing banquet following the annual meeting, Sherwood A. Moore, CGCS, was presented with GCSAA's highest honor, the coveted Old Tom Morris Award. Moore is the first superintendent to be honored with the prestigious Morris award.

The 62nd International Golf Course Conference and Show will be held Feb. 4-11, 1991, at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nev. The 1991 GCSAA Golf Championship will be held Feb. 4-5, in Scottsdale, Ariz.

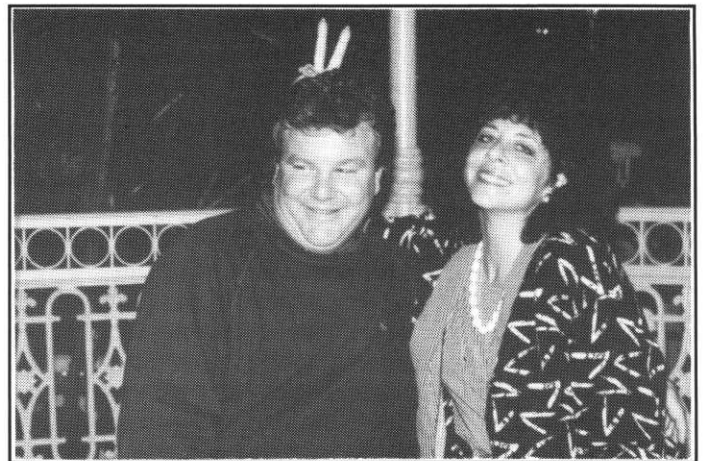


CHATTING with Sherwood A. Moore, CGCS, right, who became the first golf course superintendent to receive the coveted Old Tom Morris Award at the 1990 International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando, Fla., is John Harris, Lafayette Club, Minnetonka Beach, co-editor of *Hole Notes*.

Dale Wysocki's Candid Camera Captures Minnesota's Enthusiastic Participation at Orlando Conference



Tom Fischer, MGCSA vice-president, Edinburgh U.S.A., at wheel of Toro. Watching are Tom Haberman, left, and Glenn Rasmussen, both of MTI, Inc.



Jim Nicol, MGCSA treasurer from Bunker Hills GC, enjoying Orlando with his lovely wife, Barbara.



Scott Hoffman, left, Madden Inn Golf Course, with Tim Commers, Cushman.



Doug Mahalo, Minikahda Club, center, with John Wiley, left, and Tom McCann, both of Landscape and Turf.



Representing North Star Turf, from left, were Al Gerdin, Kirby Burmeister, Gordy Miller, Dan Miller and Scott Leustman.



Jim Lindblad, Wayzata Country Club, left, discusses products with a vendor.

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IN LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Construction Begins on New GCSAA Headquarters

Ground was broken on January 12 for the construction of the new \$4 million headquarters complex of the Golf Course Superintendents of America (GCSAA).

President Dennis D. Lyon, CGCS, said that the groundbreaking ceremony was an important step for the future of the association.

"We're excited to see the building becoming a reality," Lyon said. "This new facility will allow us to keep meeting the needs of our growing membership for many years to come."

Joining Lyon in the ceremonial "first shovel," were GCSAA Vice President Gerald L. Faubel, CGCS; GCSAA Secretary/Treasurer Stephen G. Cadenelli, CGCS; GCSAA Executive Director John M. Schilling and Mayor of Lawrence Robert Schumm.

Part of the building's planned 40,000 square feet will be a state-of-the-art educational facility. An extensive periodical library and advanced audio/visual equipment will aid the GCSAA education staff in the growth and development of its programs and seminars.

"It will allow us to bring GCSAA members here to Lawrence to attend educational activities in a facility that is custom-designed to meet our instructional needs," said Colleen Smalter Pederson, GCSAA Director of Education.

An eye-catching feature of the new headquarters will be the surrounding landscape. In addition to being situated on a championship golf course, the building will be highlighted by fountains and a wide variety of shrubs and flowers: approximately \$300,000 worth of professionally designed landscaping.

The landscape will tie in closely with the look of the neighboring golf course.

"We wanted the landscape to reflect the professional quality that our members maintain on their golf courses," noted Schilling.

The building design was completed by PKG Design Group, P.A., a Lawrence architectural firm. At the ceremony, Schilling announced that R.D. Andersen, Topeka, had been selected as general contractor for the project. Construction of the building has begun. Schilling said

plans call for the building to be ready to occupy in about 10 months.

The new site is one mile west of the current GCSAA building, which has been located on the Alvamar Golf & Country Club since the association moved to Lawrence in 1973. Despite the relocation, the new headquarters will still overlook an Alvamar course: a new 18-hole championship layout being designed by architect Ken Kavanaugh and developed by Alvamar owner Robert Billings. The new course is also expected to be open in 1991.



High-Tech Keeps It Green at Madden's

BY LEW HUDSON
Brainerd Daily Dispatch

It's more than human.

Madden's new golf course watering computer is in a class by itself.

You doubt that? Consider the facts. There are three courses at Madden's—Pine Beach West, Pine Beach East and the Social 9—45 holes in all.

Watering the greens, tees and fairways requires 600 outlets.

The computer, using information gathered from a weather monitoring station near the office of Golf Course Superintendent Scott Hoffman, programs each outlet to deliver precisely the amount of water lost that day by evaporation.

To do so it takes into consideration natural rainfall, wind direction, velocity, relative humidity and the amount of sunshine and cloudiness.

Plus it makes allowance for the type of vegetation at each watering outlet, the soil type, compaction, degree of slope and proximity to the lake or trees.

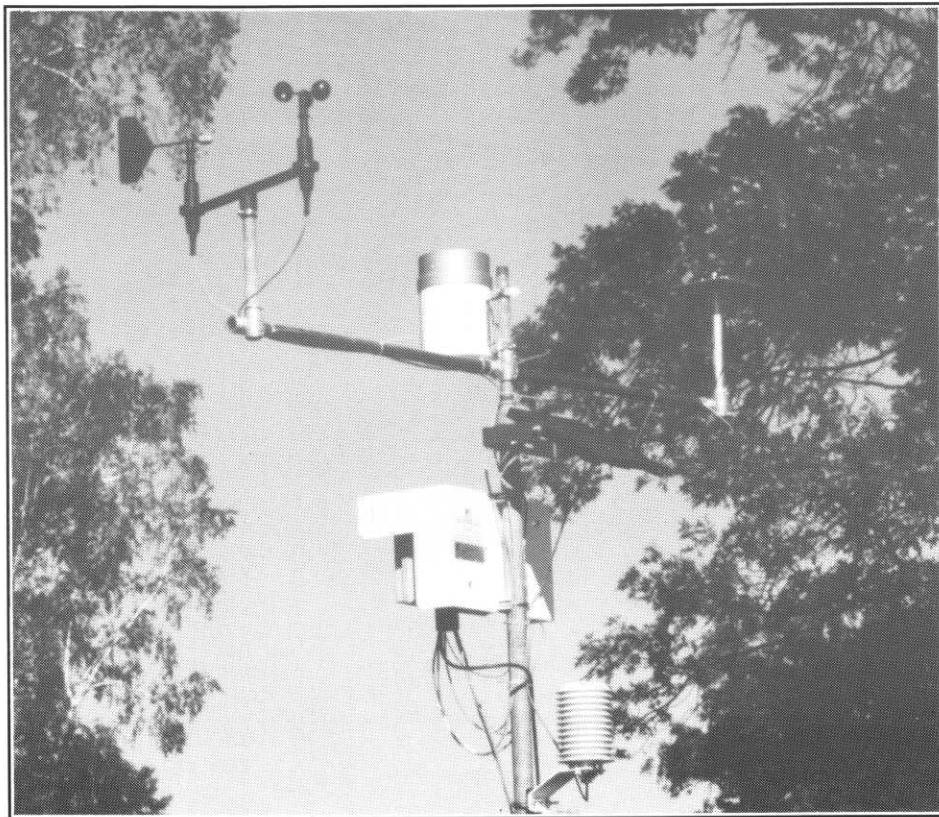
It even factors in effects of longitude, latitude, water pressure and chemical content of the water before deciding on the hydro dosage to be delivered by each individual sprinkler outlet.

Golf course watering used to involve a tremendous amount of tedious work with hydrants and hoses. No more. Now, more than 11 miles of underground, plastic pipe connects the 240 automatic pop-up outlets.

Madden's is the second course in Minnesota to install the computerized system. Oak Ridge in the Twin Cities was first.

Sold by the Toro Co., Bloomington, Minn., the system has been on the market only two years.

Hoffman has been directing work on the Madden installation for the last two seasons and expects to be finished by 1991.



Photos Courtesy of the Brainerd Dispatch

In addition to being labor-efficient, the system makes maximum use of every gallon. When you are pumping 120,000,000 gallons a year from deep wells, efficiency is important.

"We are trying to replace the exact amount of water that is lost on a daily basis," Hoffman said.

The computer is programmed to start the watering rotation in the evening after golfers complete their final rounds. Outlets are turned on and off on a rotating basis.

Normally the daily replacement is delivered in two cycles to allow the water to soak in rather than run off. Not only does the computerized system make maximum use of water, it also produces better grass by delivering exactly what water is needed—no more and no less.

It also monitors all 600 stations constantly and sounds an alert in case of malfunction.

Do you know any humans who can do that?

(Ed. note: This story was reprinted through the courtesy of the Brainerd Daily Dispatch.)

