



TURFGRASS MATTERS

March/April 2002

Volume 73, Number 1

HOW TO MANAGE PUTTING GREEN SPEED

By Steven Langlois

Monitoring golf ball roll has been of interest since the 1930's. Edward Stimpson monitored golf ball roll in 1937 using an inclined plane which he had developed. The United States Golf Association (USGA) modified Mr. Stimpson's device and produced the version that we use to measure golf ball roll today. They honored Mr. Stimpson by calling it the stimpmeter. The USGA also developed standards for golf ball roll. By measuring the length of golf ball roll in feet and inches, we can determine if greens are slow, medium or fast (Table 1). Hence, the term used for measuring golf ball roll is putting green speed.

Table 1

6 feet	6 inches	— Slow
8 feet	6 inches	— Medium
10 feet	6 inches	— Fast

It has been 25 years since the release of the stimpmeter by the USGA and during this time, a lot of research has been conducted to determine how turf management affects putting green speed. Universities across the United States including Rutgers, Penn State, Ohio State, Nebraska, Michigan State, North Carolina State, University of Arizona, Texas A & M, Virginia Tech, University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Florida have investigated this issue. Research has also been done overseas in the United Kingdom and Australia. By knowing how to change the speed of greens, we can make greens faster or slower by the way they are managed. In the remainder of this article, I would like to highlight the results of this work.

One of the first things learned using the stimpmeter was a wide variation in putting green speed. Researchers in the late 1970's

and early 1980's went out and determined speed on many golf courses. Three things were proven regarding putting green speed:

1. Speed differences of five to six feet existed between golf courses.
2. Speed varied by as much as two feet within a course.
3. Speed consistency varied weekly by as much as one foot and seasonally by as much as three feet. 6

This initial information created controversy between golf courses. The stimpmeter became a tool used by golf courses to compete with one another. While this was not the intended purpose it is still used that way today by many in the golfing industry. However, its original purpose holds true; it is an invaluable tool to determine putting green speed consistency within a golf course.

I will now discuss some of the maintenance practices used to change putting green speed. These include mowing, rolling, plant growth regulators, irrigation, nitrogen fertility, and topdressing. I will also report the findings of different turfgrass varieties on speed as well as one study that was performed to determine how well the golfer can determine speed differences.

Mowing

Mowing has the greatest impact on putting green speed. The height of cut and the frequency of cut both play a role in determining speed. For every 0.03 inch reduction in height, a speed increase of six to eight inches will be measured. However, once cutting height has decreased below .125 of an inch, the increase in speed is only four inches for every 0.03 inch reduction in height. Also, these extremely low mowing heights can severely stress the turf leaving

the turf manager to decide if the speed increase is worth risking poor turf quality. Frequency of cut also affects putting green speed. After the first mowing, an eight inch increase in speed has been measured. If double mowing is maintained for at least three days and additional eight inch increase in speed is likely to be found.

Rolling

Rolling is a practice that has been used on putting greens for a long time. Its effect on speed has been studied for the last 20 years. We know that rolling increases speed. Single rolling will increase speed six to twelve inches while double rolling adds an additional six inches. These increases will last from one to two days.⁴ However, the concern exists regarding the negative affects this rolling will have on the turf. Recent information indicates that frequent rolling between four and seven times per week decreases turf quality and increases compaction. The good news is that rolling three times or less per week appears to not have negative affects on the turf quality.

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President's Message

Michael Evans

The mission statement, or purpose, of the MAAGCS as detailed in Article I, Section C of its By-laws is— to promote research, and the interchange of scientific and practical knowledge relating to the care of golf courses and turfgrass operations, including the production, maintenance and improvement of tuffgrasses. In tune with those ideals, your Association is working hard for you as evidenced by many events in recent weeks. On March 12, the MAAOCS held its second annual full day Educational Seminar at the University of Maryland's Inn and Conference Center. I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to Lynn Matson, Lance Ernst, and everyone at Turf Equipment and Supply Company for partnering with us again, as the title sponsor for our March Seminar. As you might imagine, a great deal of time and effort goes into planning this event. Many days are spent gathering topics, securing quality speakers, and coordinating travel arrangements and accommodations. Kudos to Ken Ingram, CGCS, Tom Ritter, CGCS, and Executive Secretary Charlotte Norris for orchestrating another strong educational program. For the one hundred and twenty in attendance, I trust it was worthwhile, and hope to see you again next year.

At the same time our Educational Seminar was unfolding, Government Relations Director Dean Graves was in Annapolis, attending a meeting of the Maryland Drought Emergency Task Force. As you may recall, Mr. Graves was appointed to the Governor's



Task Force after the drought restrictions debacle of 1999. Thanks to Dean's hard work and persistence, Maryland superintendents now have a reasonable set of recommendations in the event of future water restrictions. The Governor, however, does have the discretion to circumvent these recommendations.

For quite some time now, the MAAGCS has given financial and human resource support to the Maryland Alliance of Green Industries. Lobbyists for MAGI represent the interests of the green industry, including golf courses, in the state legislature in Annapolis. On March 13, many representatives comprising MAGI, and MAGI lobbyist Joe Miedusiewski testified against House Bill 809. Simply stated, HB 809 would require businesses that use restricted use pesticides to run federal criminal background checks on all employees with access to restricted use pesticides. The bill also, requires that a certified applicator be present, or in constant radio contact, during the mixing and spraying of any restricted use pesticide. The feeling here, is that HB 809 is nothing more than an anti-pesticide bill cloaked under the clever guise of homeland security in the wake of September 11. On behalf of the MAAGCS, I was pleased to testify against this bill, and proud that our Association sup-

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Bullets from the Boardroom

 The MAAGCS Board of Directors approved President Michael Evans appointment of Rick Wakefield, CGCS to the vacated board position left by Rich Sweeney. Mr. Sweeney resigned from the Board of Directors due to a position change that moved he and his family to Pennsylvania. Mr. Wakefield will be the Newsletter chairman.

 The Board unanimously approved monies to be appropriated for funding of Dr. Peter Dernoeden's (University of Maryland) research on Alternative Methods for Dollar Spot Control.

 The Association will be a major sponsor for the Shields Memorial Tournament. The proceeds from this tournament benefit the Institute of Applied Agriculture Scholarship Fund.

MAAGCS 2002 Membership Dues

If your membership dues are not received by May 31, 2002 you will be dropped as a member of the Association.

If you have any questions please contact the MAAGCS office at 888-643-8873 or maagcs@maagcs.com

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News About Bentgrass Dead Spot

John E. Kaminski

Bentgrass dead spot (BDS) is a relatively new disease of creeping bentgrass. The causal agent, *Ophiosphaerella agrostis*, was first isolated from a golf course in Maryland in 1998. The disease has since been found in creeping bentgrass as far north as Michigan, as far west as Missouri, and along the eastern seaboard from Massachusetts to North Carolina. Cultivar evaluation trials have shown that all major *Agrostis* spp. used on golf courses are susceptible to BDS. In addition, the pathogen also has been found to infect hybrid bermudagrass greens in Texas and Florida.

On close-mown creeping bentgrass grown on golf course putting greens, BDS appears initially as dime-sized, reddish-brown spots which can increase to about 3-4 inches in diameter. During early stages of disease development, the reddish-brown or copper-colored spots often are confused with ball-mark injury. The disease generally develops on greens that are in open locations and along ridges and on mounds and south-facing slopes of individual greens. As the disease progresses, grass in the center of the spots becomes tan, while leaves in the outer edge appear reddish-brown. The severity of the disease may vary from a few spots to several hundred per green. Spots may be distributed throughout the putting green or localized, but generally do not coalesce. Spots recover very slowly as stolon growth in the center of dead patches appears to be inhibited. Regrowth generally is from bentgrass tillers along the outer edge of diseased spots and in severe cases, BDS spots will not fully recover prior to winter. Foliar mycelium is not observed in the field, but sexual fruiting structures, known as pseudothecia, often can be found in the field on necrotic leaf, sheath,

and stolon tissues and may be used to diagnose the disease.

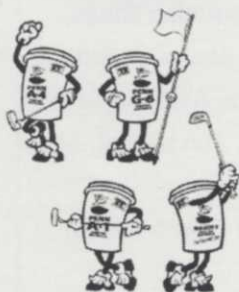
The disease is most commonly found on greens within 2 years following the seeding of new greens or older greens that have been fumigated with methyl bromide. Field observations confirm that the disease may decline dramatically within 1 to 3 years. The oldest greens where BDS was found, however, were 6 years old. Bentgrass dead spot appears restricted to sand-based greens, collars, and tees, and has not been found in bentgrass or bermudagrass grown on native soil. The disease initially was thought to be a problem during late summer and autumn months. In the mid-Atlantic region, however, the disease is most prevalent in July and August, but may appear as early as May and can remain active in bentgrass as late as December. Disease symptoms in bermudagrass may appear as early as March.

Several fungicides have been shown to reduce BDS severity including Banner MAXX, Daconil Ultrex, CL3336, Medallion and Chipco26GT. It is important to apply fungicides on a 7 to 10 day interval when the disease is active. During the summer months, tank-mixing small amounts of nitrogen with each fungicide application may help reduce disease severity.

The University of MD Turfgrass Diagnostic Laboratory is seeking additional BDS samples from various turfgrass species. If your course has been diagnosed with BDS or you think that the disease may be present at your golf course, please contact the UMD turf pathology lab at kaminski@wam.umd.edu or call 301-405-1337.

John Kaminski is a graduate research assistant at the University of MD.

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MD Nutrient Management

There seems to be confusion and numerous rumored requirements regarding nutrient management standards for Maryland golf courses. Starting May 2001, superintendents have been required to keep nutrient application records. The actual guidelines recommended by Dr. Turner and the University of Maryland should be completed sometime this spring. The following information is required for the Maryland Nutrient Management Plan:

1. Records must be kept in a form approved by the Department;
2. Provide commercial fertilizer recommendations prepared for the land and for the plants, documenting that University of Maryland Cooperative Extension recommendations were followed, including:
 - a. Soil tests
 - b. Production or management objectives
 - c. Timing of nutrient application.

For each application of nutrients to the land and to plants, the person shall make and keep for least three (3) years a record that includes:

1. The amount of nutrients applied to the land and to the plants
2. The location of the nutrient application
3. The timing and rate of the application
4. The nutrient content of any fertilizer applied to the land and to the plants.

Should you have any questions, please contact Earle Canter, Marland Department of Agriculture at 410-841-5959.

Putting Green,

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Plant growth regulators

With the high use of plant growth regulators on greens in the past decade, their affects on putting green speed needed to be determined. Research has shown that six to ten days after an application, a six inch increase in speed was measured without changing the mowing practices.⁷ This management tool has allowed superintendents to reduce the amount of mowing and rolling treatments to greens if they so desire.

Irrigation

It is often commented that wet greens are slower greens. One study has disputed this claim. This study compared irrigated turf to nonirrigated turf over a ten day period. The turf area did not receive any rainfall during the ten day period. The researchers expected to see gradual speed increases in the nonirrigated turf. However, the nonirrigated turf did not have a speed increase. While the researchers could not explain this lack of speed increase, they did report a severe reduction in turf quality. They concluded that drying out the turf was not a good practice for increasing putting green speed. This was further supported by findings on the irrigated turf area. The irrigated turf area showed speed decreases of only six to eight inches immediately following irrigation. Once this moisture evaporated, (within one hour), the speed returned to prewetting levels.

Nitrogen fertility

Applications of nitrogen will cause a decrease in speed. Speed reductions of twelve inches have been recorded when 0.5 lbs of soluble nitrogen are applied. ⁴ Spoon feeding of nitrogen, a common practice on golf greens using 0.1 to 0.125 lbs of nitrogen per application, will have less noticeable impacts. However, seasonal nitrogen rates have shown decreases of three inches for every 1 lb. of nitrogen applied.

Topdressing

Topdressing is a practice that most believe will increase speed. The research is conflicting. One study showed a long term increase in speed while a second showed no change. Since topdressing is a practice that has many other benefits to golf turf, affects on speed have not become an issue.

Varieties

Several creeping bentgrass and bermudagrass variety studies have been performed. There have been no significant differences in speed reported between varieties.

Golfers and Putting Green Speed

There was a study performed to see if golfers could determine differences in speed. Researchers have been able to prove that golfers cannot detect speed differences of six inches under any conditions and they cannot detect differences of twelve inches without there being a change in the mowing height.

Final Thoughts

As the golf course superintendent, you have the tools to change putting green speed. Use the stimpmeter wisely and you will have more consistent green speeds. Using the stimpmeter only for speed increases, obtained through very low cutting heights

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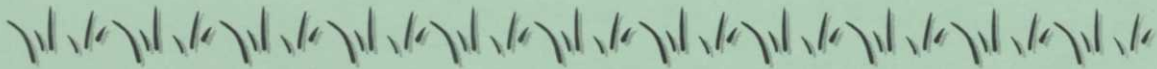
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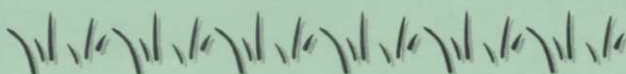
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2002 Event Calendar

(Dates and Places are Subject to Change)



<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>EVENT/SPEAKER</u>	<u>HOST</u>
January 29-30	Baltimore Convention Ctr Baltimore, MD	MTC 2002	
January 29	Marriott Hotel—Pratt St. Baltimore, MD	MAAGCS Reception	
February 3-9	Orlando Convention Center Orlando, FL	GCSAA Conference & Show	
February 7	Radisson Barcelo Orlando, FL	MAAGCS Reception	
March 5-8		New England Conference	
March 12	U of M Inn & Conference Ctr. College Park, MD	MAAGCS Educational Seminar <i>in partnership with</i> Turf Equipment & Supply Co.	
March 19	DuPont Country Club	USGA Mid-Atlantic Sec. Seminar	
April 9	Hunter's Oak Golf Course Queenstown, MD	Two-Man Team Championship	
May 14	Heritage Hunt Golf Club Gainesville, VA	Superintendent/Pro	Steve Cohoon, CGCS
June 11	Country Club of MD		Bill Augustin
July 9	Mayo Beach	Annual Family Picnic	
July 24	U of MD Research Facility	U of MD Field Day	Dr. Peter Dernoeden
July 30-31	VA Tech	VA Turf & Landscape Field Day	Dr. Dave Chalmers
August 12	Chevy Chase Club Chevy Chase, MD	Stewards of the Chesapeake	Dean Graves
September 10	University of MD Golf Course College Park, MD		Bryan McFerren
October 8	Hayfields Country Club Hunt Valley, MD	Annual Championship	Charlie Ulevich
November 12	International Town & CC Fairfax, VA		Rick Wakefield, CGCS
December 10	Loews Hotel Annapolis, MD	Annual Meeting & Elections	
December 10	Loews Hotel Annapolis, MD	GCSAA Educational Seminar	



Another Successful March Seminar



Lance Ernst welcomes MAAGCS members

On March 12th the MAAGCS continued its new education format begun last year at the University of Maryland Inn and Conference Center. The seminar participants were excellent and spoke on a variety of subjects - from the future of turfgrass research to planning your financial future. The day's line-up included many leading turf professors, Dr. Peter Dernoeden, University of Maryland, Dr. Frank Guoin, Retired - University of

Maryland, and Dr. Bert McCarty, Clemson University. USGA Agronomist - Stan Zontek, Dr. Clark Throssell, GCSAA Director of Research, Dr. Tom Hoogheem from Monsanto, retired golf course superintendent George Thompson, CGCS and Theodore Doremus, a Certified Financial Planner rounded out the informative sessions. GCSAA awarded .6 CEU's for those in attendance at this year's event.

The University of Maryland is a central location site for MAAGCS members and the Inn and Conference Center has the excellent facilities needed to host a first class event - free parking, adequate meeting rooms, audio/visual equipment, catering, and overnight accommodations. For those of you who have attended both MAAGCS seminars and missed the ice cream bar as your afternoon snack this year, please be assured that ice cream will be back in 2003.

As always, quality events can't be a reality without help from our industry partners. Our thanks go to Lynn Matson and Lance Ernst of Turf Equipment & Supply for acknowledging the importance of education and stepping forward to be the title sponsor of the event. Thanks go to our Silver Sponsors - Summit Hall Turf Farm and Newsom Seed and Bronze Sponsors - Egypt Farms, Finch Equipment, and Syngenta.

If you have any suggestions for speakers or topics for next year's seminar, please contact the MAAGCS office at 888-643-8873 or email at maags@maags.com.

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Student News



Since December the student chapter has been involved in several events. On January 20 and 21 a number of students participated in the 2002 Toro University, sponsored by Turf Equipment and Supply Co. (TESCO). The educational program was excellent and the chapter also conducted several fund raising events, such as a 50/50 drawing and operating 2 popcorn machines at Toro U. Students manned a booth at the Maryland Turfgrass Council Education Conference and Trade Show in Baltimore on January 29-30 in which shirts and windbreakers were sold.

Two teams competed in the 8th Annual Collegiate Turf Bowl at the national Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Conference in Orlando Florida this past February. The Collegiate Turf Bowl covered seven topics within the area of golf course management from weed and turf identification to fertilizer and pesticide calculations and calibration problems. In a field of 58 teams the University of Maryland team of Eric Long, Adam Newhart, Jed Vail, and George Waranowitz placed 5th with a team score of 234 and the best team placement to date in this competition. The team of Rob Rosier, Chris Pence, and Josh Jordan placed 32 nd with a score of 174. In addition to the Collegiate Turf Bowl competition students attended educational seminars, visited the trade show, networked with superintendents, and attended the University of Mary-



land Turfgrass Alumni and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAAGCS) receptions. The seven students that participated would like to thank the MAAGCS, Mr. Steve Evans and Dr. Kevin Mathias for their support and efforts in preparing the teams for this competition.

Students from the chapter are looking forward to some upcoming spring events such as the 2002 MAAGCS Education Seminar to be held here on campus. Also many students are pulling out their golf clubs to prepare for the Third Annual Mid-Atlantic Challenge Cup with Virginia Tech and the University of Maryland's Ag Day on April 27. One other expectation this spring is the 2002 NCAA Basketball Championship.

GCSAA COLLEGE TURF BOWL 2002 RESULTS

	<u>Total Points</u>	<u>Institution</u>
1st	264	Iowa State A
2nd	245.5	Iowa State B
3rd	245	Mississippi State
4th	240.5	Purdue
5th	234	University of Maryland

Putting Green, *continued from page 1*

and reduced irrigation, may lead to poor turf.

When trying to develop a management strategy for putting green speed, I recommend three things:

1. Pick the speed you and your golfers want your greens to be year round.
2. Use the different management practices to maintain that speed on all greens without making them slower or faster at any time during the year.
3. Remember that most golfers prefer to putt on good turf.

Steve Langlois is a professor at Rutgers University in the two-year Golf Turf Management Program. He has a Masters Degree from Penn State University and wrote his thesis on green speed.

President *continued from page 2*

ports such a professional group as MAGI.

In closing, the Board of Directors earlier this year, approved funds to support Dr. Peter Dernoeden's research on alternative methods for dollar spot control. This promises to be an interesting study, on what has become an increasingly difficult problem, and we look forward to Dr. Dernoeden's results. The MAAGCS remains committed to supporting university research and the Board has set a goal of funding another trial this year.

Best wishes for a successful 2002.

Golf Notes

by Charles Poole

Several of the association members competed in the annual tournament in St. Augustine, Florida this year.


MAAGCS winners in the Golf Championship were:

Glen Smickley, CGCS	First Flight – 5th Gross Point
Sean Remington	Second Flight – 6th Gross Point
Mike Evans	Fourth Flight – 2nd Net Point
Ken Ingram, CGCS	Fifth Flight – 6th Gross Point
Jeff Tschudi	Fifth Flight – 3rd Gross Point
Paul Masimore, CGCS	Sixth Flight – 5th Gross Point

The Four Ball Championship winners were:

Rick Sweeney	4th Net II Div. – Two Man
	2nd Net II Div. – Four Man
Matthew Richter/David Nehilla	
	10th Net II Div. – Two Man
	3rd Net II Div. – Four Man
Mike Evans/Paul Masimore, CGCS	
	12th Net IV Div. – Two Man
	5th Net IV Div. – Four Man

Mike Evans/Paul Masimore, CGCS/
Ken Ingram, CGCS/Scott Reeside
3rd Chapter Team Competition – Net Point



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MAAGCS Meeting Reservation and Golf Policy

The following policies have been adopted by the MAAGCS Board of Directors. Please read each one carefully. Beginning with the first monthly meeting in March these policies will be strictly enforced.

* Reservations and cancellations must be made through the MAAGCS office. Do not call the hosting club, pro shop, or superintendent. These reservations or cancellations are not valid!

* Reservations for golf, dinner, or lunch must be received by the deadline set or you may not attend, no excuses!!!

* Reservations not honored will be billed through the Association for reimbursement of a no show. The Association must fund no shows for counts given to hosting clubs. Unpaid reservations are considered a special assessment and will be dealt with according to the by-laws.

* Members signing up for golf will be automatically put on the dinner or lunch reservation list and pay for the whole day at sign-in. Members who play golf and do not attend the meeting for any reason will be reprimanded:

1st Offense - letter from the President

2nd Offense - suspension from golf for a period of one year

* As a courtesy, reservations for golf that can not be kept should be canceled ASAP.

* Members will be allowed to sponsor guests at meetings provided they are in attendance. A member may sponsor one (1) guest for golf per meeting. Members may sponsor more than one guest for lunch or dinner.

* MAAGCS members at a hosting club will be comped for lunch or dinner reservations. The hosting club will be responsible for their guests as determined prior to reservation deadlines.

* Shorts are proper attire for the golf course only! Stated attire must be worn during the educational and social portions of each meeting.

* Cellular telephones and beepers are banned from all meeting rooms and the golf course at all MAAGCS events. These devices may be used in the parking lot, or outside the meeting rooms, unless otherwise prohibited by the club hosting the event.

News & Notes

New Members

Class A

Dennis Ingram, CGCS
John C. Jordon
Thomas Milligan

TPC at Avenel
IGM at Tantallon C. C.
Gunpowder Golf Club

Class B

Jeffrey L. Berg
John W. Casady
Christopher Stevens

Goose Creek Golf Club
Kenwood Country Club
Lee's Hill Golfer's Club

Class C

Bill Beal
Robert Boyer
Jeffrey Fitcher
Jeffrey Knoblock
Matthew Madsen
Christopher R. Pence
Steven B. Thomas
Scott Winder
Tom Zimmerman

Mount Vernon CC
South River Golf Links
Chevy Chase Club
Wilmington C C
Woodlands Golf Course
The Elkridge Club
C C at Woodmore
Piney Branch Golf & CC
Glade Valley Golf Club

Class D

Michael Bostian
Shaun Kerr
Jason Snyder
Loren P. Walsh

Worthington Manor CC
Virginia Tech University
Chevy Chase Club
University of Minnesota

Class F

David Climenson
Dan Rozinak

Greenmax Turf
U H S

Congratulations

To **Wayne Evans** upon the birth of his granddaughter, Madelyn Hope

To **Doug and Kim Fleming** upon the birth of their son, Andrew Thomas

To **John and Mary McDonald** upon the birth of their son, John A. McDonald, III

To **Tom and Carol Wunch** upon the birth of their son, Jacob Thomas

To **Lou Bettencourt, CGCS** upon completing his GCSAA Certification

Get Well Wishes

To **Rhys Arthur** after surgery

To **Ben Stagg** after recent surgery

To **George Thompson's** wife, Jacqueline, after surgery

To **Rick Wakefield, CGCS** after surgery

Condolences

To the family and friends of **Todd Cowing** upon the passing of his brother

To the family and friends of **Mike & Joey Evans** upon the passing of her sister-in-law

To the family and friends of **Bruce Cadenelli** upon the passing of his father

To the family and friends of **Tim Norris, CGCS** upon the passing of his father

To the family and friends of **Charlie Poole** upon the recent passing of his mother

To the family and friends of **Bob Wilbur** upon the passing of his mother-in-law

People in the News

Bob Collins, CGCS of Cripple Creek Golf & CC and **Merrill Frank, CGCS** of Columbia Country Club were winners of the 2002 Golf Pendulum Award. The award, cosponsored by GCSAA and BASF Corporation, recognizes golf course superintendents who have demonstrated outstanding ingenuity in golf course management.

Clyde Luther of Burke, Virginia was named USGA 2002 Joe Dey Award Winner. This award is given in recognition of meritorious service to the game of golf as a volunteer.

John A. "Jack" Emich, recognized as "Mr. Golf" of Maryland, recently passed away at the age of 83. He served many golf organizations through the years including, the Maryland State Golf Association, Middle Atlantic Golf Association and the USGA.



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