

EDITORIAL

Surfing the Internet - An educational experience or a waste of time



While interviewing Dr. Ken Carey for the article on world wide web at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute I was impressed with the amount of turfgrass information that is available to anyone who wishes to surf the Internet. Certainly much of the information that I saw, as Dr. Cagey deftly hit the right icons, was not new. But it is only in its infancy - less than two years!

Will this new format for information transfer replace the written word? This is a matter which the Sports Turf Association must seriously debate. Will the Sports Turf Manager become redundant? Should it be placed on the Internet? What are the financial implications? And many more questions should be asked.

It occurred to me that a major problem with information obtained from the Internet is its authenticity. Scientific publications have a review procedure which prevents the publication of information not supported by appro-

priate scientific procedures. Most reputable magazines have an editor who establishes the reliability of what the magazine contains. Who edits the Internet? At the moment, nobody.

This means each user of the Internet must be able to separate the wheat from the chaff. Thus the reputation of the organization originating a "home page" must be known to the surfer. Certainly GTI, Cornell, Ohio, Michigan have that reputation.

A waste of time? Certainly letters to Ann Landers suggest surfing the Internet may disrupt ones family life. But I have spent many enjoyable hours browsing among books in the shelves of the many libraries and have enjoyed every minute. If this computer were connected to the Internet I would be doing what is essentially the same - surfing, not browsing; on the screen, not in the shelves; on home pages, not in books - and still be within hollering distance of my wife. Oh for the quiet of the library shelves!

New Members

Mark Fluhrer, Kingston Parks and Recreation

Rusty Warkman, City of Toronto
Clayton Brant, Town of Port Hope

Duane Boutang, Manitoba Baseball Association

Paul Beswetherick, Whistler, B.C.

Doug Bowen, City of Nepean

Alan Dungey, Ottawa Links Baseball Club

Erratum (March 1996 Issue):

Iain Souter, Aldershot Landscape Contractors

World Wide Web at Guelph Turfgrass Institute

In November, 1995, Dr. Ken Carey established a home page on the world wide web for the Guelph Turfgrass Institute. At that time there were three pages on the internet, today there are over ten major sites. The Guelph site is averaging ~1500 "hits" per week, with people from around the world signing their guest book.

The Guelph pages are designed to deliver timely and useful text and graphical information about turf management and the turf industry via the internet. The address of the Guelph page is

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/GTI/gtihome.htm>.

The site offers a collection of turfgrass links, that is, the URL's (addresses) of other turf related sites on the internet, a popular part of the Guelph page.

In addition they have the GTI Annual reports on file as well as OMAFRA fact sheets on turf. A bulletin board is available where turf managers and researchers can "pin" announcements, turf management questions and answers, equipment buy and sell notices, jobs available/wanted postings and general graffiti.

Information about the history, mandate, research and educational programs offered by the GTI are listed.

The site also offers a home page for the turf industry organizations using the G.M. Frost Research and Information Centre. This includes a home page for the Sports Turf Association.