

The United States Golf Association Green Section's *Specifications for a Method of Putting Green Construction* was introduced in 1960, and through several revisions has remained the most widely-researched and successful method in the world.

When built and maintained properly, USGA greens have provided excellent results over many years for golf courses in most regions of the United States and the world. Nevertheless, through the years, a number of problems and questions have arisen, and since 1990, the USGA has taken several important steps to address these concerns.

► The specifications received a thorough review and updating by a committee of prominent scientists, and the latest revision was published in 1993.

► Standardized laboratory procedures were developed by a committee of scientist and laboratory practitioners, and in 1995, the procedures were approved by the

American Society of Testing and Materials, the largest standards organization in the U.S.

► A laboratory accreditation program was established by the Green Section in 1996, through the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (ASLA), to help ensure the best possible results for golf courses that test materials for green construction. Three laboratories have become accredited thus far, and several more are completing necessary steps.

► In 1996, the USGA's Turfgrass and Environmental Research Committee initiated research projects at 12 universities to increase our scientific understanding of green construction methods and materials. Some of these studies will cover a period of five to 10 years. More than \$850,000 has been allocated, and additional studies will be funded as other questions arise.

► The USGA established a Construction Education Program in 1996 to help educate and pro-

Better greens a worthy USGA goal



James T. Snow

JAMES T. SNOW
Guest columnist

GOLF

PAGE 46 ►

Bermuda breakthrough for greens

PAGE 86 ►

Pelican Hill, nature's partner

PAGE 126 ►

An easy way to track equipment

PAGE 166 ►

Seattle course faces big cleanup

PAGE 196 ►

Good tees need feeding, aerating

vide the latest information to golf course architects, builders, developers, superintendents and others about green construction and other golf course construction and renovation topics.

The Green Section is working with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) to test new bentgrass and bermudagrass varieties on golf course practice greens built to USGA recommendations. Construction will be financed in part by the USGA, and it is hoped that construction can begin during the spring and summer of 1997. We are in the process of identifying fifteen courses located in various climatic zones throughout the country that will participate in these variety trials, which are expected to last for five years. Green construction is one of the most visible aspects of golf course management, to superintendents and course officials alike. Greens are one of the most costly features on a golf course to build and maintain, and the USGA is committed to providing the best possible information on green construction and management to everyone involved. **LM**

Guest columnist James T. Snow is national director of the USGA Green Section, Far Hills, N.J.