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# IN-THE-MIDDLE

by Bruce F. Shank, executive editor

## Scott's sets up lawn care division

A trip to last fall's Lawn Care (PLCAA) Show in Tampa was all Ron Gagne needed to recommend to Scott's management they create a special lawn care division. The advice was taken and the division was separated in March from the Pro-Turf Division.

A new group of tech reps has been assigned to deal with the 'profit-motivated' lawn care industry. "We will be offering special products and prices for the lawn care industry," says Gagne.

## Target's new truck sales shine

Landscape managers in the Midwest are used to seeing Lesco's trailer show rooms at shows. So, the truck at the Cal Poly Sports Turf Institute did not strike this midwestern editor as anything unusual. That is, until I read the name on the truck, Target Chemical Co.

Target is a big factor in chemical sales to landscapers and golf courses in California, out of stores in Cerritos, San Jose, Fresno, and Phoenix. The truck was an experiment, says Lon Records, president. Target's Donna Browne said the experiment has been successful and more fifth-wheel showrooms may be coming.

When a customer sees the assortment of products in the truck they are often reminded of other things they may need. It has worked for Lesco, it can work for Target. By the way, Lesco has announced it will have its trucks roaming Palm Springs and San Diego this spring.

## Toro splits North Carolina lines

The Toro Company has named East Coast Equipment, Inc., in Burlington, N.C., its consumer equipment distributor for the booming region.

E. J. Smith & Sons, Charlotte, used to have both consumer and commercial distribution in the Carolina market, but that company has neither line today. Instead, Smith Turf & Irrigation, Charlotte, a company which split away from E. J. Smith & Sons, has the commercial Toro line.

The Carolina market continues to be red hot according to Joe Porter, president of Porter Brothers, the Jacobsen dealer in the region.

## Storr gives customers a good rub

Storr Tractor customers can rub their way to savings with a new rub-off coupon campaign launched in February.

The direct mail coupon campaign represents nearly \$250,000 in savings for landscape and golf course equipment buyers, according to Paul Des Champs, Storr president. The Toro dealer is one of the most aggressive distributors in the New York metropolitan area.

In-the-Middle covers the turf and landscape distributor and dealer. Distributors are invited to send news items to Weeds, Trees & Turf, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130.

## INDUSTRY

### Seed Research gets Champion registration

Champion, trademark for a blend of perennial ryegrasses from Seed Research of Oregon, Inc., recently received registration from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The new certified mixture is used primarily by golf courses for winter overseeding in the bermudagrass region and as a permanent fairway grass from the transition zone northward. It is also being used by schools, parks, landscapers, and other professional grounds managers.

Seed Research of Oregon claims the components of Champion will vary depending upon which varieties perform best in the area of use, and that it will always contain three of the top varieties as rated by universities and golf course superintendents.

In related news, a new technical brochure on Prominent creeping bentgrass is now available. Seed Research reports.

## SEED

### Scotts adds services; eyes market growth

Four new services by O.M. Scott & Sons Company, Marysville, OH, are being targeted at the domestic seed trade.

This year Scotts is offering turf seed variety licensing, contract seed production, contract varietal research and development, and contract stock seed multiplication.

"These are things we've been doing for ourselves for a number of years," Bill Junk of Scotts tells *Weeds Trees & Turf*. "Now we're hoping to do it on a more major scale."

Scotts has varieties of Kentucky bluegrass, tall fescue, perennial ryegrass and St. Augustine available for licensing.

As for seed production and varietal research and development, Junk says Scotts is stressing the "custom" nature of its services. "We want ours to be a little more service oriented, tailored to meet the particular needs which exist today."

Seed production will be handled by Scotts' research personnel in Gervais, OR, who are experienced in the production of cool season grasses, while varietal research and development—for both season grasses—is available from five research stations across the country. Private varietal development will also be available through the biotechnology department at Scotts headquarters in Ohio.



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# SPORTS TURF

by Ron Hall, assistant editor

## Grounds tricks spice baseball

There's a place where a good, sneaky trick is still appreciated—the baseball diamond.

Forget about the players and the old "hidden ball" trick.



Forget about the managers and their sign-stealing stratagem. An experienced groundskeeper might be able to win more ball games for the home team than both of them put together.

Groundskeeper Jim Anglea hinted as much this winter when he moved from the Cleveland Indians to Texas.

"I put 10 points on Julio Franco's (Cleveland shortstop) batting average," says Anglea just after moving south. "Bobby Bonds (Cleveland batting coach) told me to make the ground around home plate, about 15 feet out, hard, real hard. He said, 'Make it so hard the ball

will bounce out of the Stadium.' Franco often chops the ball at the plate and got a lot of hits that way."

Roger Bossard—he babies Comiskey Park in Chicago—is one of baseball's masters of creative groundskeeping.

"The groundskeeper is the ball player's man, the 10th man," Roger says. "A lot of new guys haven't been taught that."

Bossard is convinced an experienced groundskeeper, tailoring a park to the personality of the home team (or exposing the weaknesses of competitors), can put extra wins on the board each season. The fun of it all, he says "is being able to get away with it without the other team finding out."

When the Chisox were loaded with sinker ball pitchers, Bossard turned the area in front of home plate into a "swamp." Forget about high hoppers over the mound. His brand of "moisture control" has also slowed visiting jackrabbits on their journeys from first to second bases.

"You take this sod lifter and put it down about three inches apart and lift the soil, and you soak it real good underneath," Bossard says almost gleefully. "It looks dry, but..."

Softening the power alleys in right and left centerfields gives plodding outfielders a step or two on line drives, while the skillful drawing of the batter's box closer to the mound can give home hitters a chance to jump on a junkball pitcher before his stuff dances. Or, if the box is slyly moved back, that extra peek at a 90 mph fastball.

Subtle adjustments to the height of the pitcher's mound (both in the bullpen and on the field) has bedeviled more than a few skiddish pitchers.

"There are things done in the field that if you had false teeth, you'd drop 'em," says Bossard. "There isn't a series that goes by that something isn't done to a field to help a team."

A groundskeeper's bag of tricks is only as full as his knowledge of turf and his team, his imagination... and his cunning.

## PEOPLE

### Names in the news

North Carolina State University professor and researcher **Dr. William Gilbert** and retired golf course superintendent **Ross Taylor** received Honorary Lifetime Membership awards at the recent North Carolina Turfgrass Conference. Others recognized at the conference included **Dr. Joseph DiPaola**, assistant professor of turfgrass research at NCSU and **Charles Jordan**, USS Agri Chemicals, both receiving Outstanding Service awards, and **Dr. Glenn Burton**, Tifton, GA, winner of the Presidential Award.

The 1985 officers of the North Carolina Turfgrass Council are: **Gary Stafford**, golf course superintendent, Cardinal CC, president; **Les Kuykendall**, Porter Brothers, Inc., vice president; **Bob Turney**, Catawba Valley Technical College, secretary; and **H. Eugene Maples**, Pine Needles Country Club, treasurer.

The New England nursery industry lost a leader with the recent death of **Cliff Corliss, Sr.**, a past president of the Massachusetts Nurserymen's Association. Corliss held plant patents for perennials, annuals, and shrubs, and helped popularize the idea of living Christmas trees.

Noted golfer and golf course archi-



Bill Diddel

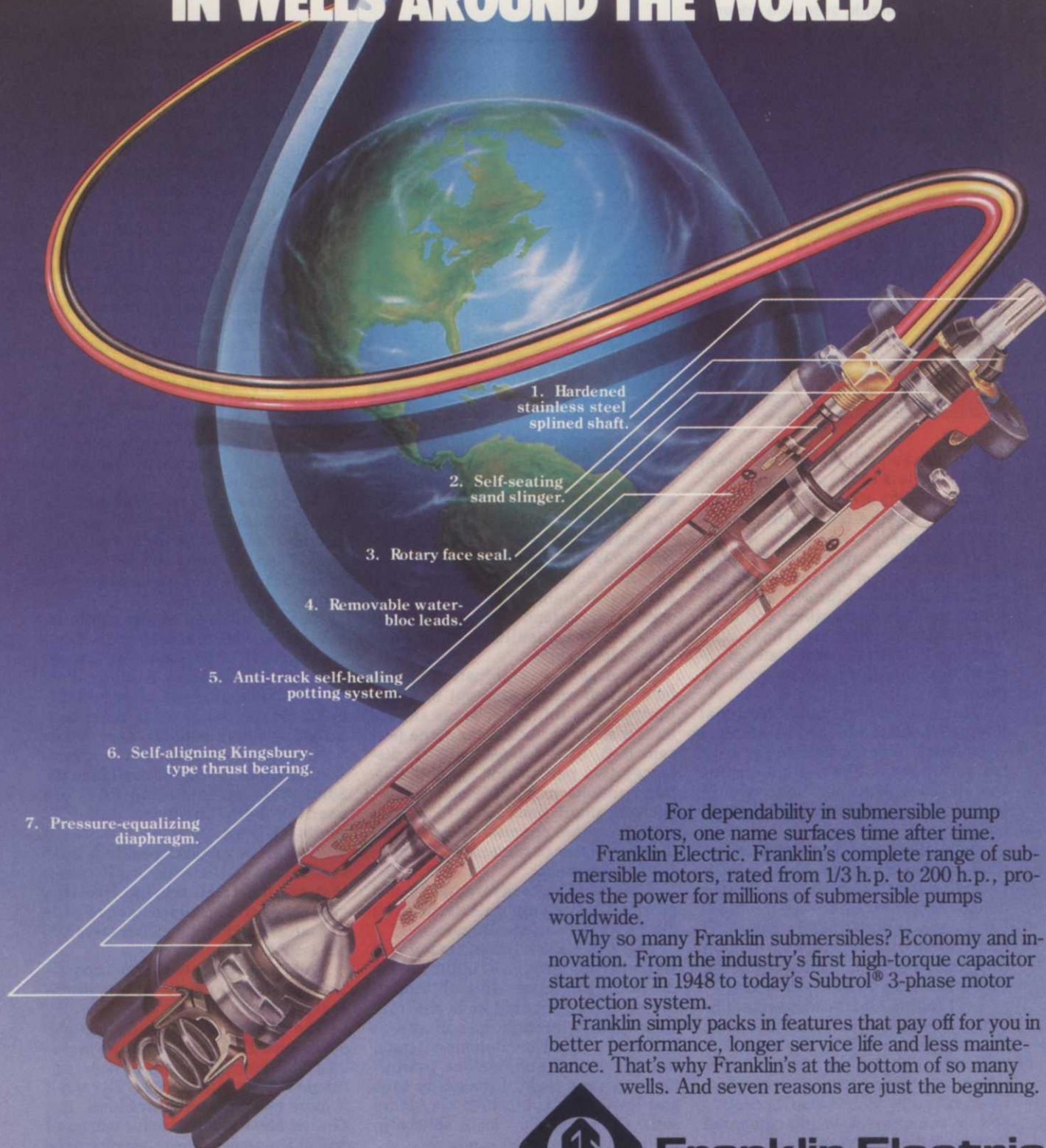


Dieter Rappsilber

tect **Bill Diddel**, died Feb. 25 in Carmel, IN, at the age of 100. He designed and remodeled more than 300 courses. Diddel became involved with golf before the turn of the century and won his first tournament in 1904 before going on to win the Indiana state title five times. Among some of his better known courses are Bardmoor CC, Largo, FL; Woodlands, Carmel, IN; Speedway 500, IN; and Sunset Ridge, Northbrook, IL.

Mobay announces the appointment of **Dieter Rappsilber** as director of marketing for its Agricultural Chemicals Division, which includes the Specialty Products Division. Rappsilber succeeds **Heinz Wehner**, who was recently named vice president and general manager of the Ag Division. Rappsilber has been an international marketing specialist with Bayer AG, owners of Mobay, since 1958.

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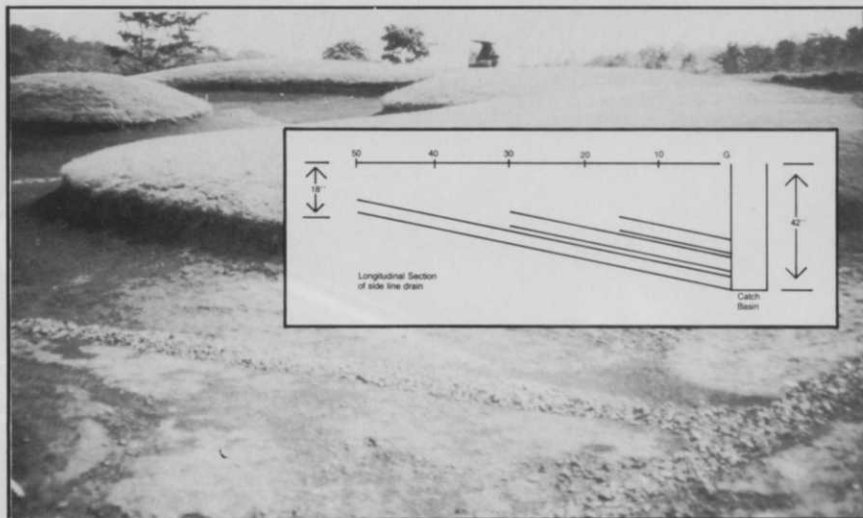
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# Soil Drainage: Looking at the Landscape from the Bottom Up

by Bruce F. Shank, executive editor



**Golf bunkers become catch basins without correct drainage. Proper slope of drain tile is necessary to move solids. (See inset).**

soil to increase infiltration or install drainage tile or tubing spaced 10-30 ft. apart. Daniel recommends placing the tile 3-5 ft. deep in clay and western soils and 1-2 ft. deep in sandy soils.

Tile should slope .5 to 1 percent. Tile size depends upon length. Lines under 2,000 ft. in length can be 4-in. in diameter. Six-inch tile is needed from 2,000 to 3,000 ft.; eight-inch for up to 3,500 ft.; and ten-inch for 4,500 ft.

Landscape managers have found that wrapping the tile, or tile and gravel backfill, with geotextile has provided silt protection. The tile should be elevated slightly from the bottom of the trench with pea gravel for the same reason.

Not all trenches require drain tile. Narrow trenches filled with sand or gravel also provide improved drainage. Even aerifying compacted soils is considered a drainage improvement technique.

The ultimate in drainage combines controlled soil textures with drain tile, such as United States Golf Association or Prescription Athletic Turf systems. Increased use of natural turf fields for sports has made these controlled systems popular. One sports field contractor uses USGA Green specifications for the baseball infields. Sand systems, including PAT, are used by both European and U.S. sports facilities.

The most critical problem with sand fields is the sand itself. Sands that are too small seal up like silty clay. The sand particles have to be in the range of .25 to 1.0 millimeters and not less than .1 mm.

Field managers are also incorporating more organic material into previously all-sand fields.

The average turf or landscape may not require the same drainage as an athletic field, but better drainage does contribute to overall plant vigor. The result is more efficient use of nutrients, less disease, and deeper roots for increased drought tolerance. These benefits make drainage improvements justifiable to any landscape manager. **WT&T**

**D**rainage and soil texture are live or die matters to the greenhouse operator, yet they are treated almost incidentally by the landscape maintenance industry.

Rather than improving drainage many try to cover up the symptoms; such as disease, chlorosis, and malnutrition. They overfertilize and over-treat with fungicides. They even renovate to tolerant plant material instead of fixing the primary problem, drainage.

During a recent major National Football League playoff, helicopters were flown over the field to dry it off before the game. The copters, costing the stadium \$300 per hour, would have been unnecessary had the field been properly drained.

Installation contractors will sometimes choose to ignore a drainage problem rather than lose a bid by adding the dollars necessary to do the job right. Landscape subcontractors are often forced to cut corners to get a job done on time and on budget, making up for the time and money mistakes of others.

Let's face it, all landscapes can't be built to USGA Green specifications. The plants cared for by the landscape industry are not in greenhouses where everything can be controlled. Drainage correction is also disruptive and on the expensive side compared to regular maintenance.

But, let's also admit it's easier to treat the symptoms than understand

concepts like infiltration rate, percolation rate, particle size, runoff, and soil type. These concepts are all factors in landscape drainage.

Books such as *Turf Manager's Handbook* by W. H. Daniel and *Turfgrass Science and Culture* by James Beard have sections on drainage. Learn the basics even if you intend to hire a drainage consultant. Consultants have been known to disagree.

Drainage is a combination of surface runoff and movement of water through the soil. Turf areas should have a slope of no less than one percent (1 ft. drop for each 100 ft. distance), two percent for sports fields. Interruptions to surface water flow, such as plant beds, should be designed to either channel water around the obstruction or underneath by subsurface drainage.

Where surface drainage is not practical, more emphasis needs to be placed on subsurface drainage.

Soil will allow a limited amount of water to pass through it. Infiltration is the rate water enters the soil through the surface. Percolation is the rate water passes through the soil after it has entered. Both are dependent upon the soil texture and content. Infiltration rates are highest for sandy soils and lowest for compacted clay loam soils. Clay and clay loam soils also hold more water than sandy soils.

To overcome limitations with soils the landscape manager can amend the

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