

TURF COMMS



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PURPOSE: To pass on what we learn willingly and happily to others in the profession so as to improve turf conditions around the country.

INTRODUCTION OF JONATHON L. SCOTT, CGCS

Jon will be writing a column for Turfcomms on computer use regularly from now on. Jon already has six GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT articles to his credit and comes to us for the fee of a life time free subscription to Turfcomms.

Jon first came to my attention in the mid-70s when he was superintendent of Montclair Country Club in Virginia and I was turf instructor at the Institute of Applied Agriculture in Maryland. We shared a student. Jon trained him on the job; I in the classroom. Jon currently is superintendent of the Valhalla Golf Club in Kentucky.

He has gained experience from Florida to Michigan. But, what is important to us is the experience he has gained with computers. He has an Apple IIc, Apple IIe, an Apple Macintosh, a IBM PC, will soon replace the latter with a IBM PS2 Model 60 and recently sold a well used Epson QX10.

GCSAA CONF & SHOW - HOUSTON 2/88 - Most memorable comment of the conference: "My water bill was \$119,000.00 last year." Larry Runyon, Coronado CC, El Paso, TX.

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TURF TECH

A COLLECTION OF OPINIONS ON COMPUTERS, SOFTWARE PROGRAMS, AND APPLICATIONS FOR THE TURF INDUSTRY

By

Jonathon L. Scott, CGCS

A few years ago, I wrote an article in Golf Course Management titled, "The Computerised Superintendent". At that time, a few of us brave pioneers (more accurately, we were, and still are, suffering from "terminal computeritis") found an excuse to bring our hobbies to the golf course and dazzle management with our spreadsheets, data bases, and word processors. "All this and more!", we cried, and more it was. Until, when we found all avenues explored on our primitive Apples, Kaypros, Commodores, and the enviable IBM PC's, we became bored. We asked ourselves the inevitable question, "Is this all there is?" And so it was...or so we thought.

The problem was, simply, each of us was doing our own thing with our computers. Outside of an occasional article or presentation at a turf conference, no one was really sharing any experiences, and with such a variety of computers being used, very little could be gained from someone else's expertise. All of that has begun to change as the computer industry has stabilized with basically two operating systems, Apple's and IBM/Microsoft. Coupled with the advent of computer irrigation control among the major manufacturers, more turf managers are starting to speak the same language. The problem still remains one of how to share this information with others.

In the months to come, I hope to address the problem of information sharing in this column with a series of opinions and experiences I have gained in my short six years of working with computers. I say short because I don't feel an expert by any sense of the definition. Yet, I can offer the novice or newly infected "computeritis" case ways to learn more about computers, software, and applications relating to turf management. I also hope to show how much fun one can have doing it.

For those of you already advanced in the ways of computers and telecommunications, we have something for you, too. Let me introduce you to TURFBYTE, the first, and as far as we know, the only golf course superintendent computer bulletin board in existence. We operate the board at 300 or 1200 baud, 8 bits, No parity, 1 stop bit. Our modem number is 913-842-0592, and we are able to take calls from 6:00 PM to 7:00 AM Central time. The Sysop for TURFBYTE is Duane Patton, CGCS, of the Lawrence Country Club in Lawrence, Kansas. He can be reached at the same number during working hours for voice communications and further information. If you have a modem sitting next to your computer collecting dust like the venerable editor of Turfcomms, get out the dust mop and plug into the world of telecommunications! More about this next month.

GARDEN CATALOGS - While my brief review was on the way to you I encountered another. For a review of 99 seed catalogs see the Jan/Feb 1988, issue of HARROWSMITH magazine. They have addresses and a short review of each catalog.

I sent for the only Texas one and "The Country Garden" catalog. The latter is strictly a seed catalog and the emphasis is on those suitable for cut flowers. They call themselves "the cutting flower specialist". Address is Route 2, Crivitz, WI 54114. I'm trying to start a cut flower bed on the north side of my house. Any suggestions?

For a list of those people and companies that specialize in seeds of the old time varieties your parents and grandparents raised see Modern Maturity. The April-May 1988, issue lists 15 such sources for flowers and vegetables on pg. 28.

PUTTING GREEN CONSTRUCTION AND MIXES:
a series of letters and phone calls
(continued from Vol. 4, Issues 1 & 2)

9/19/87; called Joe, Told him about the peat humus. We rediscussed his plans.

2/17/88; called Joe, Construction of first green was about six weeks behind schedule. Will use original peat at 25% and 75% local sand. Will mix off site. Will sod green in Spring.

4/5/88; called Joe, Green is almost complete. Expects to sod it within two weeks.

For those of you that have followed this far I will periodically up date you on how this project turned out.

WATCHING GOLF ON TV ? - Ever wonder why the ads shown during golf competitions such as the Masters are more "high brow" than other sporting events you watch? Maybe the demographics of golf enthusiasts as released by The Travelers Companies will help explain.

"The average U.S. adult who watches golf on television is college educated with a yearly salary of \$30,000 plus." "35 percent of U.S. adults who watch golf on television have yearly household incomes of at least \$40,000."

Twenty-two percent of U.S. adults who watch hold professional or management occupations; while 25.5 percent are college graduates. There is another factor; the sponsors some tournaments like the Masters and U.S. Open use very strict control over the advertisements to be aired during their tournament.

ORGANIC LAWN CARE - Had some questions on this topic lately? The following is taken from a 1988 Press Kit of The Lawn Institute (TLI) on that subject. TLI published this kit because it "receives more questions on 'organic' lawn care than on any other lawn topic."

"Public concern for safe use of pesticides is real and there seems to be an increasing realization that an over reliance on use of pesticides in lawn care must be brought under control. At the same time, we realize that uses of pesticides will be required in the maintenance of sports turf and where highest quality home lawns are in demand.

The term organic means - "compound containing carbon", nothing more. Some fast acting chemical fertilizers are organic; pesticides are organic. Even natural organic substances that provide food for the living populations of organisms within the soil may contain toxic fractions that are harmful to some plants. Thus, there is nothing magic about organic substances. "Organic" lawn care, on the other hand, is a meaningful concept. But there is much confusion about requirements and benefits."

Q - What is "organic" lawn care ?

A - "Organic" lawn care is a complete lawn construction, maintenance and renovation program that places equal importance on growth and development of lawngrasses, and on soil micro- and macro-organisms. Any practice that adversely affects soil organisms will also be detrimental in the production of high quality turf because organic matter and organisms make a living soil of highest productivity. In so far as possible, natural organic products are recommended; however, synthetic organic materials may also be used as long as soil microbiological activity is enhanced. Inorganic compounds applied uniformly in sufficiently small quantities to benefit soil biological processes are also acceptable.

If you find a need to answer related questions I suggest you request this press kit from The Lawn Institute, P. O. Box 108, Pleasant Hill, TN 38578, phone (615) 277-3722.

DEATHS:

DAVID BERELSON - A young golf course architect working out of Austin, Texas. Mr. Berelson and I had collaborated with on several projects. David had done his training under Charles Ankrom and Dave Bennett. He had just got started as an independent a few years. We had a lot in common and shared some thoughts on golf design. I however, had not been aware of his battle with cancer over the last eight years.