



# News Notes for Autumn 1984

## Oppps - upped \$50

In spite of air fare price wars on coast-to-coast and some north-south routes, travel costs have continued to increase in 1984 and are responsible for a small but necessary increase (\$50) in Turf Advisory Service (TAS) fees for 1985. Even so, the Green Section's Turf Advisory Service is still the best buy in the management of golfing turf today, less than one-quarter of one percent of most golf course maintenance budgets in the U.S.A.!

The Green Section Staff, recognized worldwide as an authority in scientific and practical turfgrass management, serves and directly assists golf course

superintendents and green committees of USGA Member Clubs subscribing to TAS. Direct visits to your course, written reports, unbiased recommendations and consultation by the experienced staff throughout each year continue to be the Green Section's pledge to you and your club. And the USGA Green Section has been at it and the leader in this field since 1923!

The following TAS fee schedule will be in effect as of January 1, 1985.

**One-half day visit:** \$500 if paid on or before April 15; \$550 if paid after April 15.

**Full day visit:** \$800 if paid on or before April 15; \$850 if paid after April 15.

Over 1,000 USGA Member Clubs, large and small, subscribed to TAS this year. We need your continued support! To the other clubs and their superintendents who have not been sub-

scribers, join us in 1985 and let us assist you in providing the best golfing turf your club has ever known.

## **Billy Buchanan, Mid-Atlantic Director and Green Section Agronomist for Championships Resigns**

**Billy Buchanan**, a member of the Green Section staff since 1970, announced his resignation on July 15, 1984, to become Tour Agronomist for the PGA. During the past few years, Buchanan served as the Green Section Agronomist for USGA Championships, including the United States Open, United States Amateur and other major USGA events. He also served as the Mid-Atlantic Regional Director and, earlier in his career, visited TAS clubs throughout the East. His real interests developed in tournament golf. All of us thank him for his contributions and service and wish him well in his new adventure.

or footprinting. Footprinting is further enhanced when a frozen subsurface disrupts water percolation, leaving a wet layer on top.

Now the superintendent is faced with a real dilemma and a difficult decision. Should such greens be removed from play (using alternate winter greens if they're available) until complete thawing occurs, or should the regular greens be aerified in the early spring to check upper profile compaction and improve the soil-to-water-to-air ratio in the root zone? If they are aerified in the early spring, the superintendent and members can anticipate an increased crop of *Poa annua* on the greens later in the spring and summer (with all of its attending problems)! It's not an easy choice. Many other circumstances must and will influence the final decision. For example, what percentage of the members play in the late winter and early spring and how important is that play compared to quality putting surfaces later in the year? It's a decision to be shared by the green committee,

the superintendent and perhaps even the Board of Directors.

**A**SSESSING winter injury on warm-season grasses can easily be initiated in late winter just before spring green-up. The easiest method is to collect five to ten plugs from suspect winter kill areas and pot them in a greenhouse or similar light and temperature conditions. This provides an excellent representative evaluation of winter damage. Renovation plans, etc., if needed, may be made early. Healthy areas should green-up nicely in two to three weeks, and weaker areas will green-up accordingly, if at all.

Many letters and articles are published every year in an attempt to educate golfers to the potential problems of playing on frozen or partially frozen turfgrass areas. Golf course superintendents or club officials should educate golfers in the fall regarding the problems with playing frozen greens so the golfers themselves have a better understanding of the damage that occurs when traffic is imposed on frozen or partially frozen

turf. In most cases, informing golfers of suspended play due to frozen greens is inadequate and sounds more like an excuse than a reason. However, if care is taken to educate members through a seminar, newsletter in the golf shop, or a handout distributed directly, it will help members understand exactly what happens when foot traffic is placed on frozen and partially frozen putting surfaces, and it also informs them of winter traffic damage to the turf in general. Perhaps most important of all, it gives the membership, through the green committee, the opportunity to decide if alternative winter greens should be provided and are economically justified under their conditions.

If the golf course superintendents and other club officials make a concentrated effort to educate their memberships as to why traffic is not allowed on the golf course on particular winter days, they will gain support and will eliminate the current Saturday morning standoffs at the pro shop and the descriptive name-calling sessions which inevitably arise.