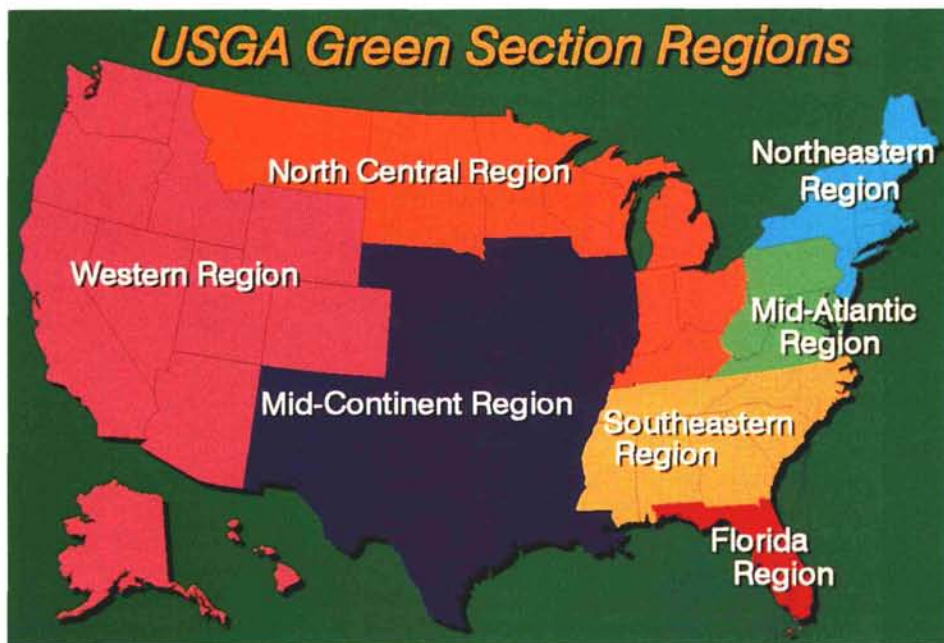


WINTER NEWS NOTES

USGA Green Section Regions



Several Green Section Regions Are Reorganized For 1995

In an effort to provide better service to the clubs and courses that participate in its Turf Advisory Service, the Green Section has reorganized several of its regions. The changes also will accommodate a slight reduction in the size of the staff, with the retirement of Jim Latham, and will more evenly distribute the current workload among the regional agronomists.

Four of the seven Green Section regions will see changes in the states they serve, and three regions will see changes in personnel as well. The changes are based in part on the success of establishing more than one office in a region, as was done in the Northeastern Region 10 years ago and in the Western Region in 1993. By locating agronomists closer to the areas they serve, we have found that better service can be provided and greater use is made of the Turf Advisory Service.

Beginning in the East, the states of Ohio and Kentucky will become part of the new North-Central Region and will no longer be serviced by the Mid-Atlantic Region office. The North-Central Region will encompass the states of Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Montana. These states will be serviced by newly appointed regional director Bob Brame, in Kentucky, and Bob Vavrek, who will stay at his present location near Milwaukee. Stan Zontek and Keith Happ will continue to service the Mid-Atlantic Region.

The Mid-Continent Region will gain the states of Illinois and Iowa in the reorganization, but will give up the states of Colorado and Wyoming. Jim Moore will remain the regional director, located at his office in Waco, Texas, and Paul Vermeulen will be moving from the Western Region office to establish a new office in central Illinois. From there he will provide advisory services

to the northern section of the Mid-Continent Region.

The Western Region will pick up the states of Colorado and Wyoming, and will be replacing Paul Vermeulen with Mike Huck, a newly hired agronomist. Larry Gilhuly will remain as regional director from his office near Seattle, and Pat Gross and Mike Huck will continue to service the southern part of the region from their office in Southern California.

It has been more than a decade since major changes were made to the alignment of states in the Green Section's regions. Although the changes may bring new faces to TAS subscribers in some states, they also bring new opportunities for these clubs and courses to obtain a fresh perspective on their maintenance programs. And you can be sure that the agronomist who visits your course is experienced and excited about helping you bring out the best your course has to offer.

Stimpmeter® Available Through the USGA

The Stimpmeter® is available for purchase by turf management professionals through the USGA Order Department. Developed in 1976, the principal purpose of the Stimpmeter is to provide golf course superintendents a means of evaluating the effects of different management programs on the playing characteristics of putting surfaces. It also provides a precise method of evaluating greens for general play or competition play and for maintaining consistency from green to green.

To encourage its proper use, the USGA restricts sales of the Stimpmeter to golf course superintendents and course officials. The Stimpmeter is available through the USGA Order Department for \$30 (plus shipping) by calling 1-800-336-4446.



Lois and Jim Latham

Jim and Lois Latham Retire to Texas

If you know anything about the Green Section's Great Lakes Region, then you are bound to know Jim and Lois Latham. And you probably know that after 10 years as regional director and office manager, respectively, Jim and Lois retired at the end of 1994. You might *not* know that both of them worked for the Green Section for 3½ years in the late 1950s, Jim as agronomist in the Southeastern Region and Lois as his secretary. In between, he served for 25 years as agronomist with the Milwaukee Sewerage Commission.

Jim will be sorely missed by his friends and associates on the Green Section staff and by the hundreds of golf courses he has helped along the way. In the terms of the current vernacular, Jim's work as an agronomist for the Green Section has been *awesome*. He's been an extremely hard worker and seemed to thrive on travel. In fact, he was kiddingly referred to as our Road Warrior for his frequent journeys through the hinterlands of Minnesota, the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming, visiting golf courses with nothing between them but hundreds of miles of pavement and lots of beautiful scenery.

After a 40-year career in the turfgrass business, Jim and Lois have retired to their native Texas. But unlike some of the putting greens Jim has had to deal with over the years, they're not going to let the moss gain a foothold on them! Lois is taking up golf again, and Jim has accepted a seat on the USGA's Turfgrass Research Committee, where he will attend regular meetings and help make monitoring visits to projects funded by the Committee. He also has agreed to help us sort through old Green Section files (1920 to 1960s) and put together a long-overdue history of the Green Section. With the experience, knowledge,

and enthusiasm Jim has yet to offer, we want to be sure that, when asked, he will use that oft-quoted axiom, "With all I have going on in retirement, I wonder how I managed to *work* all those years!"

Their friends on the Green Section staff wish Jim and Lois many happy years in retirement.



Paul Vermeulen

Vermeulen Relocates to a Modified Mid-Continent Region

For seven years Paul Vermeulen enjoyed the ups and downs of life in the California sun, making Turf Advisory Service visits to golf courses throughout California and much of the Southwest. He also assisted other regions when they were in need, making him the most widely traveled agronomist on the Green Section staff. Now Michigan-born Vermeulen has taken a big step returning to the Midwest, establishing an office in Illinois (location not determined at the time of this writing) as part of the restructuring of the Green Section regions. The states of Illinois and Iowa will be joining Vermeulen in the Green Section's Mid-Continent Region, which is overseen by director Jim Moore from his Waco, TX, office. As part of the regional changes, the states of Colorado and Wyoming will join the Green Section's Western Region. In moving to the Mid-Continent Region, Vermeulen is replacing George Manuel, who resigned from the Green Section staff to become the golf course superintendent at the Pine Forest Country Club, near Houston, TX.

Paul brings outstanding experience to his new position. He is a Michigan State grad and received a Master of Science degree from Texas A&M University under the tutelage of Dr. James B. Beard. He can claim some hands-on experience in the Chicago area, having served his summer internship working at the Olympia Fields Country Club during 1983 and 1984, in the midst of the reconstruction of their North Course. Since joining the Green Section, Vermeulen has made more than 1,000 TAS visits throughout the country, written extensively for trade publications, and spoken at countless meet-

ings and conferences. The courses utilizing the Turf Advisory Service in the northern section of the Mid-Continent Region will be well served by the knowledge and enthusiasm Paul brings to the job.



Bob Brame

Brame Named Director of North-Central Region

Bob Brame, who for five years has served as an agronomist in the Green Section's Mid-Atlantic Region, has been named director of the newly formed North-Central Region. Joining him in making Turf Advisory Service visits in the region will be Bob Vavrek, who for the past four years was an agronomist in the now-defunct Great Lakes Region. Included in the North-Central Region will be the states of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana.

In providing advisory services to the region, Brame will be located at his office in Covington, KY, while Vavrek will work out of the former headquarters office of the Great Lakes Region in Mequon, WI. By establishing two offices in the region, it is hoped to provide more effective, efficient service to clubs and courses that subscribe to the Green Section's Turf Advisory Service. It is expected that Brame will concentrate his visits in the states of Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana, while Vavrek will visit clubs along the northern border, from Michigan to Montana.

Bob Brame brings a wealth of experience to his new position as director of the North-Central Region. A graduate of Purdue University with B.S. and M.S. degrees in agronomy (turf option), he served from 1973 through 1989 as golf course superintendent at four different courses, the last being the Broadmoor Country Club in Indianapolis, IN. He began his golf career in 1966 as an assistant in a local pro shop, played on the golf team through high school and college, and today can pound a 1-iron as far as most of us can hit our drives.

Bob and wife Rhonda have a son, Scott, and a daughter, Jennifer. The Green Section wishes Bob the very best in his new position.

George Manuel Leaves Green Section Staff

George B. Manuel, agronomist for the USGA Green Section, has left the staff to become the golf course superintendent at Pine Forest Country Club, in Houston, Texas. George joined the staff in 1990 and has made Turf Advisory Service visits in the Mid-Continent Region, working with regional director Jim Moore. George's agronomic expertise and sense of humor will be greatly missed. His friends on the Green Section staff wish him continued success in his new position.

Turf Advisory Service Fee Changes for 1995

To keep up with the increasing costs of providing top-quality advisory services to its member courses and the game of golf, it's

necessary for the USGA to increase the fees charged for the Green Section's turf advisory visits from time to time. Despite the increase this year, the USGA will be subsidizing the Turf Advisory Service with more than \$1 million in 1995, reflecting a commitment to provide golf courses with the best services from a top-quality staff of 15 full-time agronomists.

Following is the fee schedule for 1995:

	If Paid by May 15	After May 15
Half-Day Visit	\$ 900	\$1200
Full-Day Visit	\$1400	\$1700

A visit by a Green Section agronomist is still a bargain for the many benefits that can be realized, perhaps more so now than ever. Please schedule your Turf Advisory Service visit early, and plan to join us for great golfing turf in 1995!

Subscription Changes for the Green Section Record

Due to rising production costs, 1995 subscription rates for the *Green Section Record* must be increased. Following is the annual fee schedule for 1995:

U.S. subscription	\$15
Canada/Mexico	\$18
International (air mail delivery)	\$30

Six issues per year provide the most up-to-date information regarding agronomics, equipment, research advances, environmental issues, and maintenance philosophy in the field of turfgrass science. The *Green Section Record* is a favorite magazine of golf course superintendents, Green Committee members, and golfers interested in turfgrass and golf course management. Be the best in the business by reading the best information available in the business!

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

A LOW-IMPACT GOLF COURSE? PROBABLY NOT!

by KEITH A. HAPP

Agronomist, Mid-Atlantic Region, USGA Green Section

THE USGA and the New York Audubon Society are jointly working to make golf courses enjoyable habitats for golfers and wildlife alike. Golf course architects focus on fitting courses into the environment, allowing for the use of the land while developing green space. The benefits of green space, both physical and emotional, have been documented by research. Turfed areas provide erosion control, filtration following rains, and generate oxygen that is returned to the atmosphere. No matter what the level of maintenance, I propose that many golf courses are not low impact.

Golfers themselves can have a tremendous impact on the manner in which their courses are maintained. Tolerating slight imperfections rather than insisting upon a zero-tolerance base would allow superintendents to implement integrated management approaches. A wait-and-see approach could be utilized. At times slight weather changes can affect disease activities. If the weather

changes for the better, disease treatments may not be warranted. For many turf managers, this option is not available. Fear of losing employment more often dictates that preventative pesticide applications are the norm rather than the exception.

Golfers who love the game must be willing to tolerate some minor inconveniences during the season, such as aeration, so that turfgrass managers can implement the cultural programs needed to strengthen the turf and thus provide better wear and disease tolerance. Superintendents know that cultural and chemical programs must be balanced to provide the turf conditions desired. Players should view aerification as a proactive management approach and not postpone it until it is less inconvenient or disruptive. A healthy turf recovers from aerification much sooner, thus minimizing the disruption of play. Sound cultural programs implemented when they are most beneficial will have a tremendous impact on course conditions as well as the environment.

Television golf has given the false impression that golf courses are in perfect condition every day of the year. Perfection is impossible to achieve. Most tournament courses are prepared a year or more in advance to peak for a single week during the season. Even at these courses, during an entire season, turf conditions and playability change. When the superintendent is free to implement foundation cultural programs (when they are most beneficial), changes in turf quality and playability are less noticeable. More consistent playing conditions result.

No matter what the level of course maintenance (budget), golfers can have an impact on how the course affects the environment. If the superintendent says the turf needs to be aerified, then support him or her. Turf quality will be enhanced, but most important, the balance between cultural and chemical inputs can be maintained. Balanced inputs can easily be equated to the turf conditions golfers desire and the "low-impact" golf course most people speak of!