

Cobb Receives 2001 USGA Green Section Award

DR. PATRICIA A. COBB, retired extension entomologist with Auburn University, was selected as the recipient of the 2001 Green Section Award. Granted by a distinguished panel of experts in the turfgrass field, this annual award recognizes persons for distinguished contributions to golf through work with turfgrass. It was presented to Cobb at the Green Section's Education Program at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Conference and Show in Dallas, Texas, on February 17, 2001.

Dr. Cobb is known throughout the industry as one of those rare educators who is able to share her extensive scientific expertise and wisdom in a manner that is understandable and practical. This trait, combined with her sense of humor, enthusiasm for turf insects, and the ability to "tell it like it is," makes her respected throughout the industry and always in demand for educational programs. In presenting the award, John O'Neill, a member of the USGA Executive Committee and chairman of the Green Section Committee, noted, "Dr. Cobb is an extraordinary person who has a light touch, a razor-sharp mind, and is extremely accomplished in her field. What a great legacy she has created."

Pat's interest in entomology began in an unusual way. As a child, she worked on her family's farm, but she was intensely terrified of insects and had nightmares about them. Her parents took her to the doctor, who said she was fine. He advised her parents to show her which insects could and couldn't hurt her. Her father went overboard and showed her everything, including how to catch them. As a result, since she was eight years old she has wanted to be an entomologist.

After obtaining a B.S. degree in biology and chemistry from Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama, she spent the first five years of her career teaching high school chemistry, biology, and general science courses. She returned to school and obtained her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in entomology from Auburn University.

Having worked for 21 years as a dedicated extension entomologist at



John O'Neill, USGA Executive Committee and chairman, USGA Green Section Committee, presented Dr. Pat Cobb with the 2001 USGA Green Section Award for her distinguished work with turfgrass.

Auburn University, Cobb is known for her knowledge and integrity. She specialized in turfgrass integrated pest management (IPM), management of soil insect pests, and IPM for landscape and woody ornamentals. While at Auburn, she conducted more than 175 field trials and demonstrations that enabled her to make reliable insecticide recommendations and develop new IPM strategies. These programs resulted in substantially reduced costs and pesticide use, and increased environmental awareness.

Much of her work focused on how to manage mole crickets and fire ants, two of the most destructive turfgrass insects in the southeastern United States. Her techniques for mapping, sampling, and field research have become standards for mole cricket research. Dr. Cobb's management plans involve all interest groups throughout the turfgrass industry. This thorough approach ensures that the management plans are practical and increases the likelihood that the plans will be implemented.

One of Cobb's greatest strengths is her ability to communicate with turfgrass professionals, whether they are seasoned veterans or in their first years

as golf course superintendents. Her ability to deliver the message clearly is valued throughout the industry. She will let it be known when an error has been made, but she does so in a manner that is not to affix blame, but rather to educate, provide solutions, and help golf course superintendents be more successful in their profession.

A noted author, Dr. Cobb has published more than 45 extension publications and written more than 44 trade journal articles and 22 research reports. She is co-author of the book *IPM Handbook for Golf Courses* and for many years co-taught a seminar of the same title for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

She has shared her expertise through work on many industry committees, working groups, and other activities. Currently serving as a visiting scientist on the USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Committee, Cobb lends her practical expertise to the review of new research proposals brought before the committee and participates in visits to USGA-sponsored research sites throughout the year.

As a result of her dedication, expertise, and caring for those around her, Dr. Cobb has had a tremendous positive influence on people in every phase of the turfgrass and academic communities. She has served as a challenging mentor and excellent role model for many in the turfgrass industry, always interested in student success and engaged with learning and positive outcomes. Her outstanding character, cooperative spirit, excellent communication skills, and boundless energy make her an ideal recipient of the USGA Green Section Award.

In accepting the award, Dr. Cobb stated, "This award represents to me the work of a whole lot of folks besides me. You've encouraged me along the way. I want to dedicate this award to the golf course superintendents and to those allied with the golf course industry. It's been a team effort, and I've just been privileged to be one member of that team. You are the people who have given me a chance to follow a dream." The turf industry is certainly glad she did.