

The USGA Green Section Record

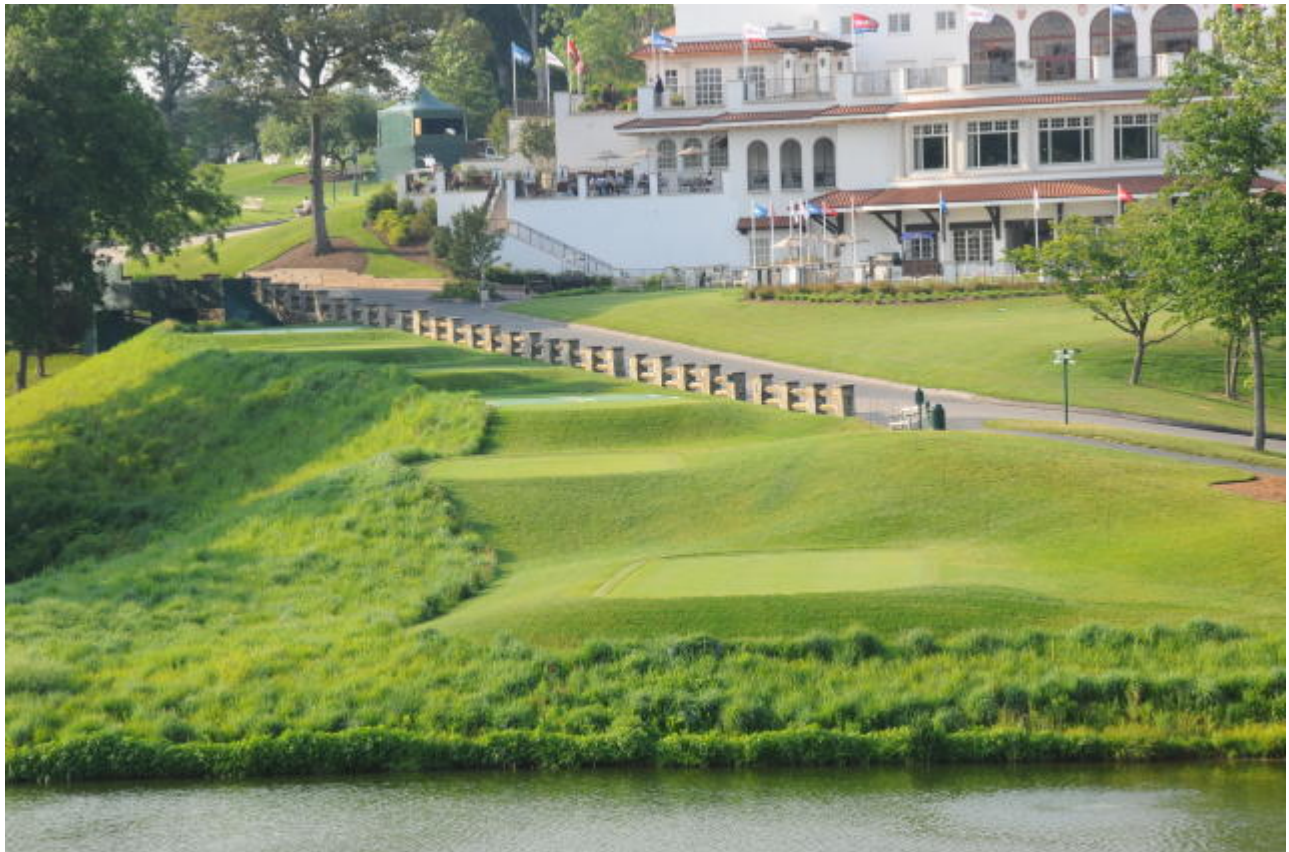


June 9, 2011 -- Volume 49, Number 23

2011 U.S. Open - Maintenance And Course Setup

Congressional Country Club Course Fact Sheet

by the USGA Green Section staff



With the 2011 U.S. Open scheduled for Congressional Country Club June 16-19, the competitors are preparing themselves for a stiff competition to identify the best player at the championship. Golf course superintendents across the country are preparing in a different way as they brace themselves for the usual battery of questions from golfers about how the golf course is presented and maintained. To be sure you have the latest information, here are several facts and figures about how the golf course has been prepared.

[Course Fact Sheet](#)

2011 U.S. Open - Inside The Ropes

A Green Section Podcast With Stan Zontek

by the USGA Green Section Staff

An amazing amount of preparation goes into holding a national championship and this year's Open at the Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland is no different.

This short podcast (approximately 20 minutes) features long-time Green Section agronomist Stanley Zontek and Kimberly Erusha (managing director of the Green Section) discussing many of the activities that go on "inside the ropes".



How many staff members and volunteers does it take to prepare a course for an Open? Listen to this podcast to find out.

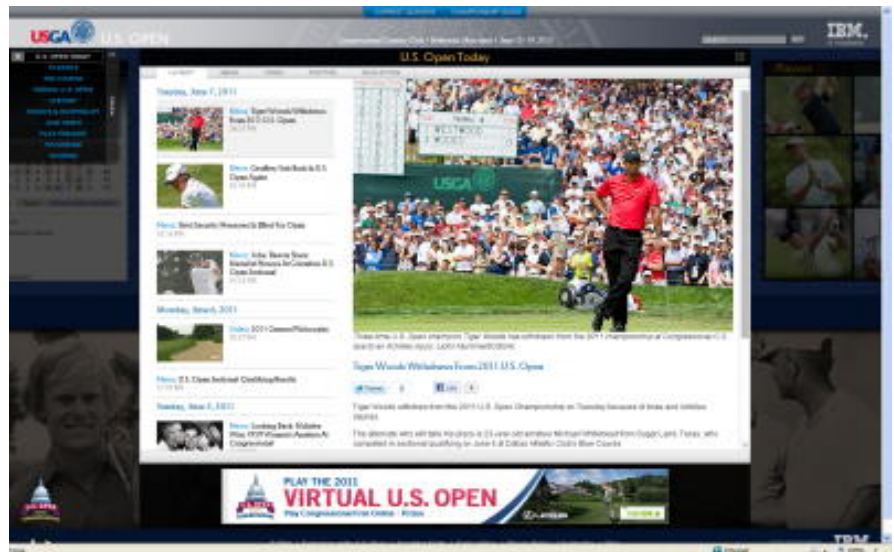
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Want More Information About This Year's Open?

Visit:

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On Course *With Nature*

Congressional Country Club Hosts The Wild And The Open

by [Joshua Conway](#), [Audubon International](#)

The Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland, was established in 1924 to provide a recreational space where legislators and businessmen could meet informally. The concept was innovative even by today's standards and allowed the country club to host names such as Hoover, Coolidge, Harding, Taft, Firestone, Carnegie, and Chrysler.

In the years since, the country club continues to make history in tournament golf. In June 2011, 56 players will compete at Congressional, as it plays host to its third U.S. Open Championship. For the past four years, staff from the United States Golf Association and Congressional have worked tirelessly to reinvent the Blue Course and make it even better than the 1997 Open.

Since 1991, Congressional staff have also been working with the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (ASCP). Under the guidance of a steering committee and Audubon International staff, Congressional set out to enhance the natural areas and wildlife habitats that the

Blue and Gold courses provide, while improving efficiency and minimizing potentially harmful operational impacts. Recently, as a result of their efforts, Congressional Country Club was designated a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary by Audubon International.

[Learn more about Congressional's conservation and environmental efforts.](#)



Congressional Country Club's vegetative buffers around water bodies serve to filter runoff and reduce erosion while increasing the visual appeal of the course. All shorelines that are not in the direct line of play have been naturalized.

Regional Updates



Southeast Region

The Summer of 2011 - Off To A Sizzling Start

by [Patrick O'Brien](#) and [Chris Hartwiger](#), agronomists

Ninety-three, 95, 95, 98, 99, 97? These are not your grades from your senior year in high school. We hope they are not your golf scores, either. No, these are high temperatures in Birmingham, AL for May 29 - June 3. Although summer does not arrive on the calendar until June 21, the summer of 2011 is picking up right where the summer of 2010 left off, hot and dry. These conditions leave golf course superintendents managing creeping bentgrass putting greens with a big challenge. Because every decision on a golf course involves agronomics, economics, and politics, dealing with difficult summer weather conditions requires a multi-faceted approach. Below are a few ideas and resources to assist you.



[Read the rest of this update.](#)



Mid-Continent Region

The Heat Is On

by [Bud White](#), director

Most of Texas, Louisiana, and New Mexico are suffering an incredibly severe drought and temperatures that are breaking 100 year old records. Some parts of west Texas have not received measurable rain since October 2010 while other parts of the state have already experienced numerous days of over 100 degrees.

Superintendents in Houston have recorded only four inches of rain to-date this year, when normally they would be at 16 - 19 inches. San Antonio has enacted Stage 2 water restrictions greatly reducing

the amount of water available to golf courses.

This has created significant problems for superintendents -- not just drought concerns, but other problems that dovetail into drought issues. These include:

- Controlling cart traffic to prevent damage to stressed turf
- Rapid total salts and sodium build-up
- The significant cost of water purchases
- The challenge of monitoring water allocations for June, July, and August instead of just August as is usually the case



Golf cart tracks make a substantial negative impact on the already-stressed turf. To prevent additional turf loss, cart restrictions are an even more important program when the turf is in significant drought stress. This program is handled differently by every golf course, depending on their situation, but must be considered by all.



(L) The putting greens at Champions Club are still in quality condition with careful management of water allocations while allowing the fairways and roughs to go more off-color. (R) Golf cart traffic must be managed even more carefully when the turf is drought stressed. Golfers must do their part by heeding ropes and directional signage.

Firm and fast conditions have been brought by the drought, whether or not the superintendents or golfers are ready. The above picture of the Champions Club (Houston, TX) is a perfect example of significant browning in golf course fairways and roughs, while the greens are maintained in high-quality condition. Superintendent Charles Joachim, CGCS, has a tremendous handle on dealing with these issues and has planned ahead for unrelenting heat and drought for the rest of the summer. Charles is taking the approach of providing only enough water in fairways and roughs to maintain survivability of bermudagrass and trees. He has purchased many water bags for trees, and has two people dedicated to filling these bags to protect the trees as best possible without using overhead irrigation.

[Read the rest of this update.](#)



Southwest Region

Formation Of The California Turfgrass And Landscape Foundation

by [Pat Gross](#), director

The California Turfgrass & Landscape Foundation is up and running. A diverse group of turf and landscape professionals throughout the state met at Palos Verdes Golf Club on June 1 to form a state-wide coalition with the goal of funding and supporting turfgrass and landscape research in California.

The new foundation is a charitable 501(c)3 corporation that will raise funds, and support vital research that represents the interests of stakeholders throughout the state in the areas of turfgrass, landscape and related water use.



"California is such a large geographic area, and up to this point, research support has been very regional and fragmented" said Bruce R. Williams, CGCS, who was chosen to serve as the Executive Director of the new foundation. "We expect that the California Turfgrass & Landscape Foundation will change that and help unify the industry while giving much needed support to our research institutions."

[Read the rest of this update.](#)



Mid-Atlantic Region

Proactive Measures Are Needed To Prepare For The Summer

by [Keith Happ](#), senior agronomist

With all of the rain over the Mid-Atlantic Region the last several weeks, the last thing turfgrass managers needed was a shift to instant summer conditions. Highs in the mid- 90's have exposed turf areas that have been weakened by spring rains. Active *Pythium* (a water mold most active when it is hot, humid and wet) developed, shallow root systems are suffering, the turf has begun to change color, and growth has slowed. It may seem a bit counter-intuitive, but the weak grass will require close attention with hand-held irrigation. Wilting grass has already been seen at several Turf Advisory Service visitations in recent weeks, and we have had only a few days of very hot weather.

Turf managers who have completed aeration -- venting with small-diameter coring or solid tine procedures -- have good internal and surface drainage and are tolerating the weather changes well. Turf managers who have had to react are already struggling. Weaker bio-types of *Poa annua* are wilting, and the goal now should be to maintain surface density first and playability second. Trying to do too much early in the season could create problems later in the growing season.

[Read the rest of this update.](#)

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by the *USGA Green Section Staff*

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