



THE SWORD

News from the Turfgrass Information Center

USGA Turfgrass Information File

O.J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection

Michigan State University Libraries

!!! 100th SUBSCRIBER !!!

Congratulations to Mr. Joseph F. Basso, General Manager of Forest Hills Country Club in Chesterfield, Missouri. Forest Hills is the 100th subscriber to TIC services since USGA TGIF became available for direct Dial-up access just over a year ago.

On a continuing basis, every 100th subscriber or renewal will receive an extra 5 hour time credit on the system, in addition to every subscriber's 5 hour annual "free" time.

In the Incubator ...

Plant Hardiness Zones!

Based on user feedback and our own attempts to isolate citations based on biogeographical/vegetative/plant hardiness/grass adaptation regions, we have made a tentative, conceptual commitment to implement a third indexing "system" within USGA TGIF. Once in use, this would permit searching by vegetative region (in addition to or crossed with other criteria).

The use of "controlled vocabularies" (such as a vegetative region typology) permits searching with high levels of precision or accuracy (see the User's Manual, Section 4.1.1.3.2 for a discussion of how "precision" works). We currently use controlled vocabularies for the subject and geographic (political) descriptors.

Any thoughts on the usefulness and mechanics of such a scheme are particularly welcome right now.

Any suggested typologies? Special thanks for ideation on this scheme by Dr. Roch Gausson at Kansas State University.



Surprises In Orlando

We'll have some new features to show off at the International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando, Florida. Please stop by the USGA Green Section booth (#5529, 5530, and 5629) to discuss your ideas, concerns, needs, and see the new features. And it's a good opportunity to get some training on the system! Come by with your, "How do I...?", questions!

Pick up your simulator disk, too! This interactive tutorial will guide you (off-time) through a simulated log-on and search session. Use it for training new employees or learning to use USGA TGIF yourself. We hope it will fill a gap in orienting new users, as painlessly (?) as possible.

Questions from "the User"...

"Why not full text?"

Almost all records in USGA TGIF do not contain the "full text" of an article (i.e. the whole thing). There are many reasons for this, such as:

- 1) We currently cannot store pictures and figures within our database software, and, most importantly,
- 2) copyright considerations.

Publishers, in particular for-profit firms, do not take kindly on their work being used in full form without a contract. Can you guess how many different publishers are currently represented in USGA TGIF?

There are exceptions. Citations from the USGA-GCSAA Annual Turfgrass Research Report, for example, are included in their full form. To see that year's research reports, search:

SCODE=ATRRE and YEAR=198x

Are there other reports you'd like to make available in a fuller form? Call Pete to discuss the feasibility and implications.

Download to Upload...

A number of users are beginning to explore the possibility of uploading a file downloaded from USGA TGIF into a local (PC based) database manager. As many are discovering, this is not necessarily a simple or straight-forward process for several reasons:

- 1) Bibliographic data (which USGA TGIF is) can be highly variable in structure, length, and complexity. Manipulating bibliographic data is never as simple as it first looks. (And I never say "never"!)
- 2) Different database programs sometimes have differing upload format requirements. It probably will be necessary to customize or modify a download format at our end in order to produce a file which you can upload and then manipulate.

When a file is either 1) downloaded, or 2) sent to you on a disk (which we downloaded), the file is in an "undelimited DOS ASCII" format with field names and a paragraph-like record format. This is primarily designed to 1) be readable using DOS, and, more importantly, 2) be printable using DOS. In order to import a file, many database managers (or, in some cases, word processors) need a delimited file format, with masked markers to indicate the end of a field, the end of a record, etc.

Thus, a few suggestions and observations:

- 1) You should be fairly familiar with your software import requirements before tackling an upload.
- 2) If a database manager, do a preliminary database definition to identify the fields you want. For example, can you live with all the authors listed in one occurrence?
- 3) Call us to talk about number 1 and 2 above.

To do it well is not as easy as it looks!

Recent Additions to USGA TGIF and the Noer Collection

Several recently published major works in turf culture are now (or will shortly be) indexed in USGA TGIF and a part of the O.J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection. They include:

The Proceedings of the Sixth International Turfgrass Research Conference, (Japan, 1989)

To isolate these citations, search:

SCODE=INTRC AND YEAR=1989

Integrated Pest Management for Turfgrass and Ornamentals, (USEPA, 1989)

To isolate these 26 citations, search:

MCODE=IPMTO

User Hints...

Looking For Some General Reference Books On Pesticides?

USE THE GMD FIELD!

The GMD field (General Material Description) is a classification of "what is" a particular citation. Reference books, for example, are tagged "Reference" in the GMD field. If you wanted to quickly isolate the reference books on pesticides listed in USGA TGIF, search:

GMD=REFERENCE AND PESTICIDES

Other GMD designations useful in searching include:

- Software
- Slide set
- Database
- Videotape
- Patent

Most of these categories aren't used very extensively in USGA TGIF as of yet, but they can all be expected to grow in numbers in the future.



Are You Doing DEMOS?

If you are demonstrating or showing-off USGA TGIF at a meeting or conference, or are training students in a classroom environment, please call TIC ahead of time and we won't charge the connect time to your account. We'd like to encourage this kind of activity on the system!

Two Types of Abstracts... Informative and Descriptive

Some users have observed that not all abstracts in USGA TGIF are "done" in the same way. This is very true. In general, there are two basic types: Informative and Descriptive.

An informative abstract is highly specific and attempts to present actual results/conclusions/data. Informative abstracts are almost always used for reports of original research.

A descriptive abstract, on the other hand, does not attempt to communicate specific data. It summarizes the scope of what is discussed, and should be sufficient for you to evaluate whether it would be worthwhile to locate and read the entire original. Descriptive abstracts are often used with the "trade" and "professional" literature, which publish many articles reviewing the current state of knowledge on a given subject.

Often the two styles are combined, or an abstract may begin one way and end another. Every article we "do" is different, and each is handled in a way the Indexer and Abstractor feels is most appropriate in a given situation.

Who are our Indexers and Abstractors? Some abstracts prepared by our (very small - i.e. 1 3/4) "full-time" staff, many by our Graduate, undergraduate, and certificate turf students, and some by the authors of the original work. The latter is clearly the most preferable, both from the perspective of accuracy/completeness and also (our) time efficiency.

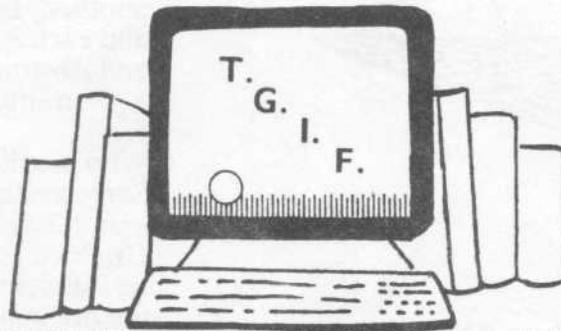
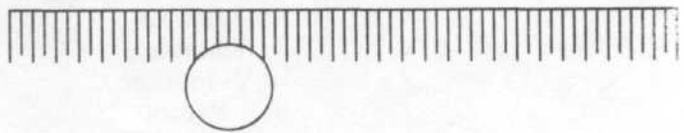
YOU CAN HELP US OUT! Pre-abstracted annual reports, etc. speed the construction of USGA TGIF greatly, and also help insure the highest possible degree of accuracy.



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