

## Necrology: James L. Holmes

Former USGA agronomist James L. Holmes passed away at his home in Weaverville, California, on September 19, 1998.

Jim joined the USGA Green Section in 1957 after working as a technical representative for Mallinkrodt Chemicals. As an agronomist working under Midwest Regional Director Marvin Ferguson, he opened the Green Section office in Chicago, Illinois, visiting golf courses in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Eventually, these states became a separate Green Section region, and Jim served as its director.

During his Green Section career, Jim was a strong proponent of the USGA Green Section method of putting green construction. He helped supervise the construction of the first two putting greens ever built to the USGA specifications — Orchard Lake CC and Oakland Hills CC — both in the Detroit, Michigan, area. Jim was a man who was seldom in doubt about anything, a characteristic that promoted the green construction program better than anyone else on the Green Section staff.

Jim left the Green Section in 1969 to found the soil testing lab Agrisystems of Texas with Dr. Marvin Ferguson and golf course superintendent Herman Johnson. After a few years, Jim left to begin a construction company, which was most active in Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma, both in new golf course construction and green renovation. His last construction job was at the



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Teal Wing Golf Course near Hayward, Wisconsin, where a beautiful golfing venue was carved out of the woodlands.

Jim Holmes left his mark on the Green Section and the golf industry. For many years after his departure from the Green Section, it was commonplace for newer staff members to hear stories about Jim and how he helped superintendents through tough times by way of his Turf Advisory Service visits. His broad knowledge and persuasive style were just what was needed during his dozen years on the Green Section staff.

## Revisiting Drainage and the USGA and California Construction Methods

The July/August issue of the *Record* included an article by Guy Prettyman and Dr. Ed McCoy entitled "Subsurface Drainage of Modern Putting Greens." The article summarized results of a USGA-sponsored research project designed to investigate how water moves through USGA and California-method profiles. Since the main purpose of the experiment was to assess the impact of layering and slope in the hydrology of the different construction methods, identical root zone mixes were used in both profiles. However, since the

California method utilizes unamended sand rather than a mixture of sand and organic matter, as is typical of the USGA method, the experiment did not provide a completely accurate representation of the California method. Although this does not diminish the value of the results of the research conducted, it is important to note that the experiment does not provide a true comparison between the California and USGA green construction methods.

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JAMES T. SNOW, Editor