

# TURF STUDENTS BUSY ON LEFT COAST

BY DAVID GREEN, PH.D.

**T**urfgrass management at California Polytechnic State University (better known as Cal Poly, SLO) continued to grow in 2003-04. With numerous activities and post-graduate job opportunities, Cal Poly students actively prepared for their future careers while having some fun along the way. Some of the highlights from 2003 include building a new teaching golf green, turfgrass research, hosting a joint meeting, competing in the annual Collegiate TurfBowl at the GCSAA meeting, and golf social outings.

A unique opportunity for our turfgrass students during 2003 was the construction of a new 9,000 square-foot teaching green. This green was designed by students to demonstrate the differences in turfgrass growth and management between the USGA and "Push-up" styles. Students were actively involved in the entire construction from design, through site analysis, construction, and final turf propagation.

Other experienced-based learning achieved by Cal Poly's students included a diverse array of internships from across the country. Some of these internships included sport field management with The Brickman Group in Pennsylvania and prestigious golf courses such as Rancho Santa Fe and Meadows Del Mar in San Diego County, and Poppy Hills in Monterey.

In addition to the normal coursework and internship requirements, Cal Poly's turf-

grass students are heavily involved in applied research. During the past year these students have been actively involved in improving management techniques of seashore paspalum and annual bluegrass for golf course and sports field use. One example of this was conducted by recent graduate Joe Prygodzynski, who examined weed control on seashore paspalum by integrating commercially available herbicides with saltwater.

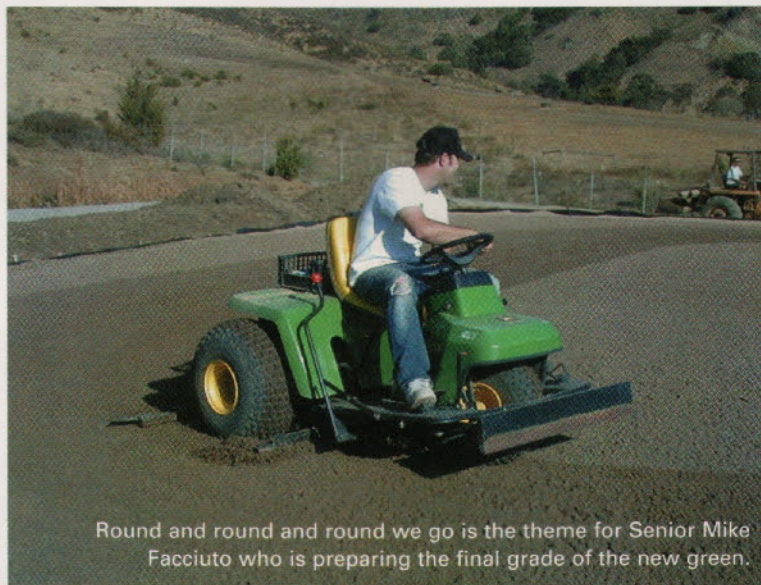
One other recent achievement by our students this year was placing in the top 10 at the Collegiate TurfBowl at the GCSAA conference in San Diego. This competition includes a comprehensive 3-hour exam that would challenge the most experienced turfgrass manager. Students competed in teams of four, with more than 70 teams participating. Cal Poly's placement in the top 10 ranks them with

other elite turfgrass programs such as Iowa State, Penn State, Ohio State, and Rutgers.

Although the students worked hard this year they once again found time to get together to have a good time. Several organized (and unorganized) golf outings at local courses provided occasions for the students to relax and have fun. Additionally, the students had a great time in organizing fundraising events such as 'closest-to-the-pin' contests at local golf courses and their annual putting course for Cal Poly's Open House.

More information can be found at [www.calpoly.edu](http://www.calpoly.edu). **ST**

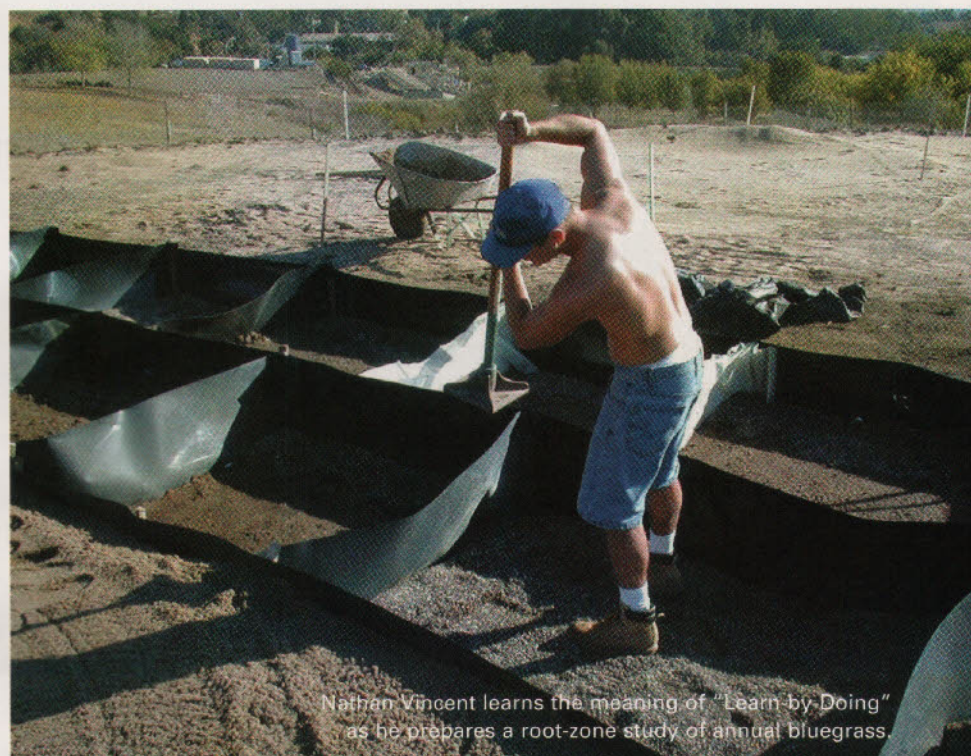
*Dr. David Green is a professor of turfgrass science with the Environmental Horticultural Science Dept. at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo.*



Round and round and round we go is the theme for Senior Mike Facciuto who is preparing the final grade of the new green.



Recent graduate Mark Weitz is hard at work spraying a green for anthracnose during his internship at Rancho Santa Fe Golf Course.



Nathan Vincent learns the meaning of "Learn by Doing" as he prepares a root-zone study of annual bluegrass.