

Top International Golf Environmental Award Goes to Switzerland

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In recognition of their commitment to environmental stewardship, Golf Park Nuolen in Wangen, Switzerland, and its golf course superintendent, Steven Tierney, MG, an international superintendent member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) have been named the overall winners of the 2012 GCSAA/Golf Digest Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards (ELGA).



“This year’s winners are to be commended for their commitment to environmental stewardship on the golf course,” GCSAA President Sandy G. Queen, CGCS, said. “It is evidenced by our overall winner that the idea that golf courses can be compatible with the environment, and in many cases enhance it, is seen around the world.”

Winners of the ELGA program will be featured in communications by *Golf Digest* magazine and by GCSAA, including its monthly publication *Golf Course Management* magazine. Syngenta Professional Products and Rain Bird Corp. – Golf Division are the presenting partners of the award.

Golf course superintendents and their courses that have been named national, chapter or merit winners were formally recognized during the Opening Session of the 2013 GCSAA Education Conference, held this week in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show in San Diego.

The Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards recognize golf course superintendents and their courses for overall course management excellence in the areas of resource conservation, water quality management, integrated pest management, wildlife/habitat management and education/outreach. In addition, these categories are judged on sustainability, criticality, originality and technology implementation/use. An independent panel of judges representing national environmental groups, turfgrass experts, university research and members of the golf community conducted the award selection.

In addition to using state-of-the-art irrigation systems with thousands of sprinkler heads to deliver pinpoint accuracy and efficient use of water; extensive recycling programs; compost programs for grass clippings, leaves and other herbaceous debris; energy-saving light bulbs; and stringent integrated pest management programs for the judicious use of golf course products; this year’s ELGA winners went above and beyond in their environmental stewardship.

British-born Steven Tierney, a 22-year GCSAA member, has been the superintendent at Golfpark Nuolen, in Wangen, Switzerland since its opening in 1997. The course was designed by **Peter Harradine**, is built entirely on reclaimed land and **GEO Certified™**.

Tierney oversaw a water-farming project that featured seven miles of drains to divert run-off into irrigation ponds. The facility no longer needs water from nearby Lake Zurich, and it has saved the course \$20,000 per year in electricity. The new maintenance facility, due to open in 2015, will be almost completely self-efficient from solar panels and deep-drilled pilings to utilize natural heat.

The local wildlife benefits from a tunnel built underneath the main road leading to the golf course. Constructed by Tierney and his crew, the tunnel allows amphibians to safely take advantage of the course’s natural areas.

Golfpark Nuolen www.golfpark.ch

GCSAA www.gcsaa.org

The Environmental Institute for Golf www.eifg.org