Nation's eyes on board ruling

BY VERN PUTNEY

The Vermont Environmental Board is sitting on a decision that could affect golf course development nationwide.

Scientists and turfgrass professors feel the Environmental Board has slighted their expertise by rejecting the initial request for a golf course in Huntington, Vt., on the grounds pesticides used on the course would threaten groundwater used for drinking as well as a nearby stream.

As the board ponders the developer's latest appeal in the case, more upset and worry are being aired in the golf course industry and science community.

"Does Vermont know something we don't?" asks Dr. Richard Cooper of the University of Massachusetts' Department of Plant and Soil Sciences. His comment is echoed by other scientists.

At the heart of the debate is the 4-year-old effort of Paul Truax and Vermont partners to build an 18-hole golf course as the forerunner of a planned $22 million resort that would embrace luxury condominiums, hotel, conference center, theater, sports center and chapel in Huntington.

The board, which Nov. 9 again rejected Truax' application to develop the course adjacent to the Sherman Hollow Inc., ski resort, met Jan. 11 at Williston to consider an appeal. Because of probable lengthy review, a decision isn't due until Feb. 7.

That ruling isn't expected to be the last word.

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Insurance spreading nationwide

BY MARK LESLIE

A veteran employee self-assuredly working with heavy equipment after so many years on the job, gets lackadaisical and a mower blade slashes off his index finger.

An inexperienced lady golfer hops onto a golf cart and promptly puts the vehicle into reverse instead of forward, pinning the caddy master behind her against a wall and breaking his leg.

A spectator at a golf tournament is hit in the head by a ball and returns the favor by suing both the club and the volunteer who was running the tournament.

In mishaps like these two parties can get badly hurt - the individual physically and the golf course in the wallet.

Physical danger seems to be inherent any time you combine machinery and people. The combination personifies Murphy's Law: "Anything that can go wrong will go wrong."

But by the end of this year golf courses throughout the country will be able to pro-

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Hyundai eyes cart market

BY MARK LESLIE

Giant Korean manufacturer Hyundai Corp. U.S.A. expects to be selling golf carts in the United States by the second quarter of this year, according to a company official.

S.S. Cho, senior manager for development at Hyundai's P.T. Lee, N.J., headquarters, said only the legal procedure for permission to import the carts to the United States is holding up production.

Cho, who is in charge of the golf cart project, said the "internal procedure is going

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Builders cite USGA section

The Golf Course Builders of America will honor the USGA Green Section Saturday, Feb. 11, for its "pioneering work in turfgrass research and management."

The GCBA will present the Green Section with its annual award at its banquet at the Anaheim (Calif.) Marriott Hotel, during the 60th annual International Golf Course Conference and Show.

Marion Farmer of Los Angeles, former chairman of the USGA Executive Committee and chairman of the USGA Green Section, will accept the award on behalf of the USGA. But Farmer passed on accolades to Green Section National

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Insurance

- Check the golf carts and cart paths.
- We coach the clubs to not allow kids to drive carts and we encourage operator training sessions,” Marks said. “Golf carts are a source of many claims for country clubs.
- Golf cars are a hazard if they are not properly operated.
- Courses designed and built 40 or 50 years ago never considered having carts on the course.
- We investigate the handling and storage of turf chemicals as well as the spill-containment procedure to ensure that the club is meeting state and federal guidelines.
- “One of the things we do is work closely with superintendents with usage and control of chemicals,” Berrigan said. “We offer risk management training and liability insurance which covers the club and its licensed pesticide applicators.

The insurance firm has contracted with Versar to survey courses and give them reports on their environmental situation; it is a preliminary survey on the club’s environmental exposures, and based on the report the club can decide on its own to proceed with further actions with Versar’s help.
- Check other areas and practices for safety and compliance, such as golf carts and carts, liquor, the cooking operations, exit signs and doors, emergency lighting and sprinkler systems.
- Why it works

The Keystone to FAI’s Country Club Insurance Program is its “strong safety and risk-management standards,” says Marks.
- Steve Campbell, the superintendent at Aronomink Golf Course in Newton Square, Pa., concurred, saying that superintendents and their crew work with a lot of heavy equipment and “courses need a lot of hand work” that can be dangerous.
- “Hydraulic pressure (on some equipment) often reaches 1,500 to 2,000 pounds pressure,” he said, “and you have to be careful. It’s comparable to some extent with farm work.”

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