

Expectations surpassed; new goals lie ahead

With half the year past, I thought you might be interested to hear about some goals *Golf Course News* has achieved this year. You should know that we continue to invest in *Golf Course News* to offer you, our readers, the best news for the industry.

Here's a review of the first half of 1991, drawing some comparisons to last year.

Editorial: I think you'll agree the improved design offers easy reading of the news and features. The features received strong response from suppliers and readers. *Golf Course News* recently won honorable mention in the Best

Publication Redesign category of the American Society of Business Press Editors regional competition.

Circulation: *Golf Course News* is mailed to our readers free, provided the reader is qualified. A qualified reader is a person involved in the golf course business in these job title categories: superintendent; assistant superintendent; green chairman; director of golf/head pro;



Charles von Brecht

club president; general manager; owner/CEO; architect/engineer; research professor; builder/developer; others allied to field.

The quality of our readership is measured by the direct requests for *Golf Course News*.

Response has been overwhelming. Nearly 16,000 direct requests have been received. The majority come from the business reply cards found in every issue. If you have not filled out the card, please do, so that we may continue to send you the paper.

Response has been so strong that I'm pleased to announce that we will increase circulation to 22,000

effective with September's issue.

Advertising: It's the advertising that pays the bills. Fortunately, response from advertising clients has surpassed expectations. Our first full year with paid advertising was 1990, in which there were approximately 470 paid ad pages. So far in 1991, we have gained nearly 90 pages compared to the same period last year.

By year's end we should have an increase of more than 130 advertising pages.

I again wish to thank our readers, and our advertising clients, for supporting *Golf Course News*, the newspaper for the golf course industry.

COMMENTARY

Scientists continue seeking the elusive: Perfection

I've heard it said that in Heaven the grass grows and cuts itself.

But down here on Earth, we are the keepers of the grass. As my friend John Ebel, long superintendent at Barrington Hills (Ill.) Country Club, said: "Adam was the first greenkeeper. God put Adam in the garden to work it and take care of it."

For thousands of years afterward, the natural look was "in," except for ballfields, croquet lawns and the like — and golf courses. Yet now, especially in the last decade, the golf industry has been seeking the

elusive: Perfection.

Agronomists, horticulturists, ornamentalists — and other "ists" you might think of — are seeking ways to grow perfect turf, to care for it with the least amount of water, fertilizer and pesticides, and to keep it alive in the heat or cold.

The Musser International



Mark Leslie

Turfgrass Foundation has just awarded a \$4,000 scholarship to University of Tennessee doctoral candidate James E. Bond, who is researching genetic engineering of plants. He hopes to introduce such desired traits as cold-hardiness, and disease resistance into turfgrasses.

Perhaps he will succeed. Perhaps Isolite will work universally. Perhaps Green Life (see Sherman Hollow story on page 1) is a panacea. Perhaps Florida, California, Arizona and other water-hungry states will make more effluent available to golf courses, or build

affordable salinity plants.

Perhaps, even, the golfing public can be convinced that "brown is beautiful" and we can return to normalcy.

I'm reminded of a friend who hated to mow his lawn, so he didn't. He called it "the natural look." His neighbors were not thrilled with him, though.

And perhaps that is the root of our problem. One year, Course A was kept better than Course B across the street. So Course B members demanded Course A-type

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Where have all the cowboys gone? Huh?

By Bob Spiwak

It was an innocent beginning. In the index of Geoffrey Cornish's book "The Golf Course" I sought the name of the architect of Indian Canyon in Spokane, Wash.: H. Chandler Egan. My quest was soon forgotten as an astounding number of courses prefixed "Indian" leaped off the page. As of 1984 there were 40 of them, and this list seems not to cover nine-holes courses.

The spectre of discrimination loomed. Did courses prefixed "Cowboy" get equal space? Not a chance. Indians 40 - Cowboys 0!

Why? A subliminal vestige of returning lands, at least in name, to those from whom they were ripped off?

Having a disturbingly short attention span, this perplexing question was cast aside as I sought courses whose names began "Whispering." After all, while I did not expect to see my own Whispering Rattlesnakes in the tabulation, it was of interest to see what other course namers perceived as soft-spoken objects. Trees are good whisperers, I found: Firs (Tacoma), Oaks (Florida), Palms (California), and Willows (Michigan). In Conesus, New York, the hills whisper, while at Pompano Beach, Fla., the lakes do.

Again seeking equal billing for opposites, I sought courses that be-

gan with "Shouting." Nary a one. Roaring Gap, North Carolina, is as close as it comes — hardly equal.

There are fewer "Whites" than Indians, but they are scattered across the United States as well as the British Isles, the latter claiming no Indians. What things come in White? Barns, Bears, Beeches, Birches, Cities, Cliffs, Deer, Lakes, Manors, Mountains, Oaks, (which also whisper), Paths, Pines, Plains, Points, Rocks, Tracts, Webbs (?), Fish, Havens, Heads, Men, Marshes and Water. Thirty-two of them.

How, then, about "Black"? Pretty close, there are 30 — consisting of Buttes, Hawks, Licks, Rivers, Berries, Burns, Feet, Ledges, Lions, Canyons, Lakes, and more.

Satisfied with equity between Black and White, I discovered that Black and Blue were but a column apart. Who's "Blue"? ask you? The Hills in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, The Bahamas and Kansas City. (Hills in K.C.? Gimme a break.) Blue also are the Mounds in Wisconsin, the Mountains in Ontario, Canada, and Pennsylvania, the Rocks in Massachusetts and



Bob Spiwak

California. And others. Blues came in at a respectable 26.

Completing the tour of courses named for the usual tee-markers, there were 20 "Reds," not counting Redding, Redmond, Redwoods and Redfords, et al, which would have added another dozen or so if included.

By now you have surely concluded that I am imbued with a great sense of fairness, and in this spirit, I felt space should be dedicated to names that could be construed as unpopular. Perhaps "unique" would be a better term. As they are in a foreign tongue, courses such as Yamoussoukro on the Ivory Coast or Quinta de Marinha in Portugal, are not represented.

I rather like Oletangy in Ohio, gives me a vision of a dancing Swede. Also in Ohio is Zoar Village. "Where are you going, Honey?" "Zoar." "I'll beam you aboard for dinner."

The Bogey Country Club in Saint Louis has a real golfy ring to it; I bet they play Worst-Ball there.

The Duke of Marlborough club in New Jersey presents images of John Wayne astride his horse on the 7th tee lighting up a cigarette.

How about playing a round at Gay Hill, Virginia?

Take some dramamine if you head for Gasparilla in Florida.

Logo de Vita, if my Latin is still operable, means "sign of life." I would assume that this Pennsylvania course is close to medical facilities.

If you are familiar with the Seattle, Wash., area, you know of a town called Medina, which is so exclusive even the slugs dress for dinner. In Pennsylvania, on the exclusive Mainline, is Merion. They have no flags there; instead they have wicker baskets on the sticks. You know that Rule 17 deals with The Flagstick. Try as I might, I could not find any reference to the Wickerstick.

Medicine Hat is unique and close to my heart as I was in the service nearby. Was a golfer's instruction to his wife the genesis of Millinocket in Maine?

There are thousands of others, but I am taken with Pruneridge in California. You get the feeling that the members are all regular fellows.

What is the most used prefix? If the "Saints" could go marching in with the "San"s, it would far and away be the largest group. Alone, the Saints come in at a whopping 92, worldwide. But (the envelope, please), the winner and still champion is "Pine." There are 116 Piney prefixes.

Which brings me full circle. Somewhere, somehow, we need a Cowboy Country Club. Better yet, "Shouting Cowboy."

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Architects Society does have standards, but not as rigorous as others

To the editor

In the May issue of *Golf Course News*, I am quoted as saying ... "professional standards are neither required by the industry nor offered by some individuals and companies."

This statement does not properly reflect what I said to Frances Trimble, the author, but I can easily see how my comments might have been taken out of context in an honest effort to shorten the article.

It is my understanding (and I don't know the facts, since I resigned many years ago) that the American Society of Golf Course Architects **does** require a prospective member to attend three annual meetings, take some sort of test (which might or might not be graded), and work under a member of the

society for a certain number of years before being admitted.

I'm not sure that "being admitted" is the same thing as "being qualified to practice." But there are some sort of standards for the industry. So I do not want to appear to do the industry a disservice.

My comments during the interview were that the industry does not require the same rigorous educational standards required of engineers (and I happen to be one), architects, doctors or lawyers before the individual can claim he is a professional in the field.

Some individuals represent themselves as professionals without even the ASGCA requirements, and some do not offer the client

sufficient plans and specifications to obtain reasonable bids. In my opinion, the industry — from a professional and ethical standpoint — is lamentable and needs to be put on a sounder, more acceptable basis.

Those calling themselves "golf course architects" should have at least three years of college engineering or three years of landscape architecture, plus a year of civil engineering, plus at least one year of agronomy specializing in grasses and turf. It helps to be able to shoot in the 70s, but it is not critical if one doesn't.

I hope this clarifies my position.

Sincerely,
Joseph S. Finger, P. E.
Kerrville, Texas

Comment

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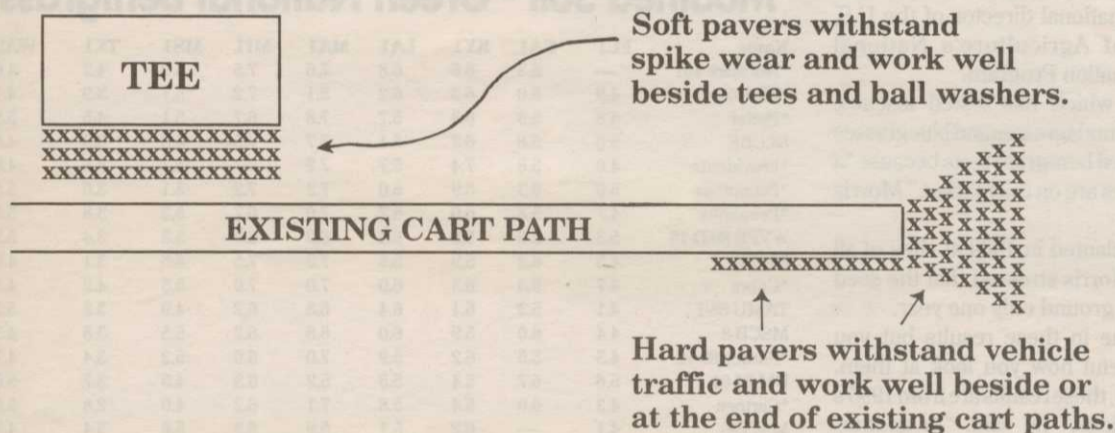
greenkeeping. Then Course C came along with even better grounds. Course A and Course B members took note and...

So here we are in this state of scientific research. Swiss author Max Frisch once said: "Technology. The knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it." Architect Pete Dye alludes to our golf courses as being maintained like billiard tables. Are we experiencing the world on these courses?

Whatever does happen and whichever researchers find grand solutions to turf problems, pray this, will you? That academician Alan Valentine is not proven right. He said, "Whenever science makes a discovery, the devil grabs it while the angels are debating the best way to use it."

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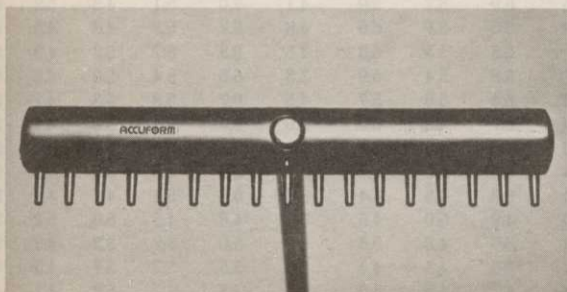
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