Pedaling to par in the Northwest

Inventors adapt mountain bike technology to golf cars to provide exercise and fun

By Bob Spiwak

Mike Valentine of Everett, Wash., was golfing in Palm Springs, Calif., last year. The course was crowded, play was slow, and he waited at each hole, sitting in an electric golf car and stewing.

Then the 32-year-old Boeing Co. employee, a lead mechanic on 767 airplanes, had an idea: a pedal-powered golf car.

So-called "mountain bikes" with gear combinations allowing as many as 23 speeds have been the rage for several years. Valentine considered this technology for a golf car. It would provide exercise, speed up play and be environmentally sound. Gollers of all ages could propel the four-wheeled machines.

Valentine, who has several inventions under his belt, all the property of Boeing, got together with his younger brother in Everett and came up with the T.T. — Transportation to tomorrow.

The prototype vehicle is about five feet long and 30 inches wide. With chrome alloy tubing for the frame, it weighs 40 pounds. It has drum brakes on the front wheels and conventional brakes at the rear, with 1-1/24 inch tires.

While the prototype lacks them, production plans call for independent front suspension and adjustable seat stays.

"It has convenient access to the seat so the vehicle can be mounted and dismounted quickly and easily," said David Valentine, who is in charge of marketing.

The brothers, both golfers, acknowledge the machine has limitations. It is probably best suited to flat, dry courses. In the Puget Sound region, where they live, the turf might be too wet. But, east of the Cascade Mountains and across America, thousands of courses are less literally watered by Mother Nature.

Ash Court, owner of Bear Creek Golf Club in Winthrop, Wash., expressed interest. "My only concern would be what effect it would have on the wetter areas of the course," he said. "Otherwise, it might be a good idea."

Said Tom Kemmell, a 2-handicapper, mountain climber and owner of an outdoor equipment store (which also sells and rents mountain bikes): "It sounds terrific. If the tires didn't tear up the course, it seems like a great idea."

Aerostar Industries to appeal federal court ruling

MINNEAPOLIS — Aerostar Industries International Inc. of Chaska, Minn., will appeal February's federal court ruling that its pond aeration device patent is unenforceable, according to company President and Chief Executive Officer Daniel J. Durda.

"We believe the court made a grievous mistake and will definitely appeal," said Durda of United States District Court Judge Donald D. Alsop's ruling that Aeration Industries' "Method For Treating Water" patent is not enforceable. Aeration Industries manufactures the Aire-OZ horizontal aerator for, among others, The Toro Co.

Alsop's decision involved Aeration Industries' patent infringement suit against Aeromix System Inc. of Minneapolis filed in November, 1989. Aeromix filed several countersuits. Alsop's ruling allows Aeromix to seek recovery of legal fees from Aeration and press ahead with other suits that could total millions of dollars in damages.

Despite the ruling, Aeration Industries' patent remains valid, states a company news release. Judge Alsop did not invalidate the patent, nor did he make any findings on the issue of whether or not the patent had been infringed, it reads.

R.C. "Bob" Sears, the Irrigation Association's executive vice president, has accepted the newly created position of vice president, said: "This move will put our industry and the measures the state is taking to conserve water will serve as models for the nation.

"It's imperative that we become more active players."

Protection certificates issued for turfgrasses

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently issued certificates of protection to developers of new varieties of red fescue, tall fescue, annual ryegrass and perennial ryegrass.

Issued certificates were:

• Thoroughbred variety of tall fescue developed by Pickseed West, Inc. of Tangent, Ore.
• Rustmaster variety of annual ryegrass developed by Daehnfeldt, Inc. of Albany, Ore.
• Pinnacle variety of perennial ryegrass developed by Norman, Inc. of Tangent.
• Surprise perennial ryegrass developed by Cebeco Zaden, B.V. The Netherlands.
• Barrage variety of perennial ryegrass developed by Barenbrug, B.V. The Netherlands.

Certificate machine for Surprise and Barrage are being issued to be sold by variety name only as a class of certified seed and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owner.
Sandoz Crop Protection is providing bilingual labels on three of its specialty products: Mavrik®, Pentac® and Enstar®.

"In many parts of the country, the primary language of applicators in the greenhouse, nursery and landscape maintenance industries is Spanish," said Ron Fister, director of specialty sales. "So we took the innovative approach of not only meeting the needs of our customers but also the needs of their employees."

This approach is especially welcome in California where, since January 1991, all applicators are required to be certified. With bilingual labels, Sandoz customers will not save time and money in the transition process, but also avoid potential mistakes that occur through misinterpretation.

"As one of the larger growers of ornamentals in Southern California, the training program for our applicators is extensive," said David Patterson of Western Farm in San Marcos. "Since we use a lot of Mavrik, the new bilingual label is a big plus. It adds credibility to the product and shows sensitivity and respect for the user. Our applicators feel more comfortable with the product and do a better job."

Mavrik is a non-restricted insecticide, Pentac a broad-spectrum miticide and Enstar an insect-growth regulator.

A key point is to provide a bilingual label for each product. Not all specialty chemicals, even those used extensively in California, are exposed to bilingual labeling. Mavrik, Pentac and Enstar are. With the introduction of bilingual labels, Sandoz customers will be well-equipped to meet the needs of their applicators.

The company's total annual sales.
From 1988 until joining Toro, Anderson, 43, was vice president of sales for Waterous Co., a business group of American Cast Iron Co., suppliers of hydrants and valves to municipalities.

Anderson spent most of the previous 18 years with American Hoist & Derrick where he held many posts including vice president and general manager of sales and marketing. In 1978, he left American Hoist & Derrick to become sales manager for Equipment Sales Co. of Phoenix, Ariz., before returning to American Hoist in 1983.

A native of Minneapolis, Anderson, his wife, Margaret, and their three children live in Woodbury, Minn.

Mobay buys production rights for granular DYLOX

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Mobay Specialty Products Group has bought the federal registrations that pertain to the production and sale of trichlorfon from Kaw Valley, Inc., Leavenworth, Kan.

Prior to the acquisition, Mobay offered an 80-percent soluble powder, DYLOX. Mobay now can offer to the turfgrass professionals under the Mobay label both the 80-percent soluble powder and DYLOX, 62 granular.

When Pythium conditions are right, you can either take out the best Pythium control money can buy: CHIPCO® ALIETTE® brand fungicide. CHIPCO® ALIETTE® brand is unlike any other Pythium-prevention fungicide. Its true systemic action spreads protection throughout every blade of turfgrass, including the roots. Protection that lasts up to 21 days from a single application.

Plus, the unique chemistry of CHIPCO® ALIETTE® brand actually stimulates turf's natural ability to fight off infection. So you get two-way protection that can't be beat. Now add to that the fact that a Foliar application of CHIPCO® ALIETTE® brand prevents Phytophthora and Pythium on a wide variety of ornamental and landscape plantings, and you've also got the most versatile fungicide on the market today.

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