Florida DEP claim rocks industry

By Nancy Oliver

Golf courses should not only be required to use reclaimed water, but also pay for its treatment and transmission to the course, according to a Florida state environmental official.

David York, director of re-use for the Department of Environmental Regulation, rocked golf industry officials with that opinion during last month's Florida Golf Summit in Tampa.

York said the golf industry should bear the financial burden of disposing of effluent because of its traditionally excessive use of ground water, a dwindling resource in Florida.

Courses should pay for transmission

First college architects class wins high marks

By Mark Leslie

University of Richmond (Va.) students have completed the first regular college class in golf course architecture and termed it a success.

Taught by architect Lester George of Colonial Golf Design, Inc. in Richmond, the 15-person class was "very enthusiastic," according to Dr. Donald W. Pate, founder and administrator of the university's Master of Sport Management Program.

Saying the program will be repeated next fall, Pate added: "The concept gets more exciting the more you get involved in it. There are people looking at that kind of work and there should be some kind of training for them."

A 1977 graduate of Richmond who spent three years as lead design coordinator and project manager for architect Algie Pulley Jr. of California, George said:

"We only scratched the surface of the myriad of issues involved with golf course design and continued on page 7.

Mendenhall remembered for grand contributions

By Vern Palme

GREEN VALLEY, Ariz. — It was typical of Chester Mendenhall to travel 1,500 miles to Lawrence, Kan., in early September to help the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America dedicate its new headquarters building.

"He got to do everything he ever wanted to do," said wife Sue. His last wish was to participate in building ceremonies. He did — with flair.

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Toro inks pacts with Olathe, Hahn

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — The Toro Co. has reached separate agreements with Olathe Manufacturing Inc. of Olathe, Kan., and Hahn Inc. of Evansville, Ind.

Toro will purchase all Olathe assets associated with the production and sales of its turf products line. The acquisition includes approximately 25 products including all Olathe sweepers, aerators, chippers, spreaders and attachments for accessories for Toro commercial products.

Toro will maintain a substantial interest in Olathe. Olathe will focus its efforts on debris management products such as larger chippers and tub grinders.

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Florida Golf Council hears hard facts and feelings

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lines and retrofitting irrigation sys-
tems, as well as a per-gallon charge
to offset the utility's expense for
processing reclaimed water, he said.

Tom Benefield, president of the
Florida Golf Course Superinten-
dents Association, argued that the
proposal placed an unfair burden on
the state's $5.5-billion golf industry.
"Every time someone flushes a
toilet, takes a shower, or turns on
their dishwasher, that water has to
be disposed of," Benefield said.
"Then there is the water used by
major industries."

"Society creates the problem. Yet,
we in the golf business are expected
to carry the lion's share of the ex-
penditure in recycling it."

"If golf courses weren't available
to take this effluent, it would have to
be sent to the ocean or deep-well
injected into the ground, never to
be used again."

"Golf courses, on the other hand,
are more than willing to accept this
effluent. Filtration through the grass
takes out all the impurities in the water
and replenishes the aquifer. Manufac-
turing plants certainly can't do that."

"Golf courses provide a tremen-
dous service to society, yet we're
expected to pay for it all."

Warned Woody Wodraska,
former executive director of the
South Florida Water Management
District and one of the state's most
active proponents of re-used water,
"Don't let the re-use issue become a
basket course issue."

Taxes also received much atten-
tion during the summit. Faced with
a major state budget deficit, legisla-
tors often view golf clubs as "fat-cat"
operations able to pay more than
most other businesses, golf industry
speakers said.

State Rep. Sandy Safley explained
his proposed bill for a 10-cent/1,000-
gallon surcharge for ground and
surface water. Safley will submit the
bill in January. The proposal could
cost the Florida golf industry an
additional $2 million annually.

"My primary concern is that, once
such a surcharge is in place, there is
no telling what the price might be by
the year 2000," said Florida Golf
Council Executive Director Bobby
Bradley.

Additional taxes on initiation fees,
special assessments and property
taxes are on the way, remarked Sen.
Richard Langley. Legislators have also
proposed a new luxury tax that could
affect golf courses.

Agricultural golf course owners
to owners facing their industry, like
the effluent and tax issues issues,
was the intent of the year-old Florida
Golf Council. The trade association
and summit sponsor is struggling
financially because of the apparent
apathy of many golf course owners,
according to Council supporters.

"It's time for owners and operators
to stop delegating this responsibility to
staff," said National Golf Foundation
Vice President Rick Norton.

With jacket on backwards to illus-
rate how cumbersome many regu-
lations can become, Ed Seay of
Arnold Palmer Course Design pro-
jected his audience forward into the
year 2002.

"Back in the '90s they promul-
gated regulations that pretty much
govern the way we conduct our-
selves now, as uncomfortable and
restraining as they may be," said Seay,
predicting that in the next century
that has banned pesticides, pro-
hibited all ground-water use by golf
courses and basically left the golf
industry for dead."

Ralph Simmons and Naomi
Florida Golf Council hears hard facts and feelings

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our staff charged with the responsibility of writing the various regulations that affect you. They don’t know all the aspects of your business.

“I have learned a lot (here) that I didn’t know before. But you people have a responsibility to meet with staff and explain it to them, just the way other industries do.

“It seems to me this can be done through the Florida Golf Council. You certainly have a qualified leader in Bobby Brantley. It sounds like you just have to get behind him.

"Society creates the problem. Yet, we in the golf business are expected to carry the lion’s share of the expense in recycling it."

— Tom Benefield
president, Florida GCSA

with the resources needed to get the job done."

To make the Council more effective, the board of directors voted unanimously during the summit to establish regional chapters throughout the state.

Those interested in joining the Florida Golf Council, or helping establish regional chapters, should call 904-803-9755 or 407-688-0800.

Nancy Oliver is director of communications of the Florida Golf Council.

VERONA Hills expanding

VERONA, Mich. — The semi-private Verona Hills Golf Course, considered the premier layout in the Thumb, will expand but at a carefully controlled pace.

President Bob Buckley said Verona Hills, owned by the 250 members, won’t become a giant resort stop. “Our club is based on 67 years of tradition and friendships drawn from six or seven communities,” he said.

Scenic Golf and Country Club in Pigeon, Bird Creek Golf Course in Port Austin and Verona Hills are agencies, others with the resources needed to get the job done.”

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Architects course

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development. But I’m confident the students left with a practical understanding of the business.”

The three-credit course — Programming, Financing and Construction of Sports Facilities — drew a cross-section of master’s degree students. The class included two engineers, two history majors, business, mathematics, English and accounting majors.

Pate said their common goal was to manage in sport. Two, in particular, aim to work in management in golf.

Others are interested in operating sports facilities or in being athletic directors. George is helping a group of three who decided to tackle course design as their semester project.

“In past years we’ve had groups of three do course projects on clubhouses and amenities,” Pate said. “This year the entire group was interested in golf. I’ve known Lester George for awhile and spoke with him about it. We decided to do something different and unique.”

The “unique” approach led to a class that went from classroom instruction to in-the-field work.

The Royal Virginia Golf Club in Hadensville, Va., a co-design of George and Pulley, was in the growing stage.

The students received topographical maps of the site, routed and designed their own courses, and presented their layouts for class critique.

“A couple of holes I thought were better than Lester’s,” Pate joked.

Pate said starting the lecture series was a critical decision. We like to give the students a variety. But I’m glad we went ahead with it... It will definitely enhance our program by adding another dimension to the curriculum.”

A teacher by nature, George said he especially enjoyed talking about the career he loves.

He said it helped that “the students were extremely sharp. They knew more than I thought about facility planning. Their questions opened a lot of discussion about other amenities like the clubhouse, lodging and conference facilities.”

George said having an actual golf course site available made the course solid.

Would he like to do it again? “I’d love it,” he said.

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