Mortality study raises questions, eyebrows

By Hal Phillips

DALLAS — Golf course superintendents were 79 percent more likely to contract large-intestinal cancer and 86 percent more likely to contract lung cancer than the public at large, according to phase-one findings of a University of Iowa mortality study commissioned by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

Death certificates of 618 former GCSAA members — who died between 1970 and 1992 — were gathered as part of the research, conducted by Dr. Burton Kross, UI associate professor of preventive medicine and mental health. Of the 618 deaths, 179 were cancer related.

"Because this is a statistical study, you can't establish any cause-and-effect relationship from the data," said Kross, who presented the study's findings at February's GCSAA conference in Dallas. "Results of the mortality study provide GCSAA with a scientific basis to encourage stop-smoking programs and improved pesticide-handling practices among its members.

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Golf Cars: Who has the purchasing authority?

By Peter Blais & Hal Phillips

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — With lockers, E-Z-GO, dinnerware, clubhouse architects, Club Car, chocolate mints, table linen, Yamaha, accounts software, tennis court contractors, Melex.

And so it goes, as one strolls the aisles and gazes into the booths at the Club Managers Association of America annual exposition here.

This is the third national trade show that golf car and utility vehicle manufacturers regularly attend. Those companies are also a major presence at the annual superintendents' and golf professionals' shows. They are easily the most visible segment of the golf industry to attend all three.

Just who is responsible for ultimately deciding what brand of golf cars to buy?

"This is something we've struggled to define since 1979," said Jim Stratton, president of the Club Car Products Co.

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Rohm & Haas wins Dimension sweepsakes

By Hal Phillips

ST. LOUIS — We have a winner.

After months of speculation and negotiation, Monsanto has signed a letter of intent to sell Dimension turf herbicide and other products in its worldwide pyridine family of chemistry to Philadelphia-based Rohm and Haas Co.

The sale is expected to be completed by mid-year, according to James Budzynski, Monsanto's product director for dithiopyr, the active ingredient in Dimension.

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Architects honor Dr. Watson with '94 Ross Award

By Mark Leslie

"Surprised but delighted" at his selection, turfgrass research and management pioneer Dr. James R. Watson will receive the American Society of Golf Course Architects' (ASGCA) 1994 Donald Ross Award.

A vice president and agronomist with The Toro Co., Watson is one of the most widely recognized researchers in the turfgrass field. His more than 60 research publications have been quoted by many in the industry.

Watson is a co-founder and the first president of ASGCA, which was formed in 1978 to promote the development of golf course architecture.

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GCSAA Wrap-Up

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Colleges Take Spirited Research Stance

Spring break is fast approaching, but the nation's collegiate laboratories will soon be realities at Clemson, U Georgia and Penn State. Meanwhile, superintendents are scrambling to attract the best turf scholars. See pages 15, 21-23.

WASHINGTON D.C. — A day after Congressman Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., unveiled the Clinton Administration's long-awaited bill to repair the nation's 300,000 crumbling roads and bridges, members of the House Transportation Committee held an all-day hearing to discuss the issue in Washington, D.C.

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In turf, as in life, once a disease has set in it becomes harder and more costly to cure.

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