In an effort to lead, Golf Digest muddles the message

For months now, the staff here has tried to pin down and report details on an environmental summit first proposed by the Pebble Beach National and Naples Whiteface Federation. But surfaced in January of this year and reported in GCN's February edition. But try as we might, we couldn't get further information about the conference from either party. We couldn't even get a date.

Now I know why. Golf Digest has emerged as the summit's co-sponsor and the magazine wanted to do the announcing. Fair enough.

For the record, Golf Digest and the Naples Whiteface Federation are co-sponsoring the event, subtitled "Charting a Sustainable Future" and scheduled for Jan. 15-18, 1995, at the Inn at Spanish Bay. CRM Director Terry Minger will facilitate the meeting, which will open an event at which golf industry members and environmentalists will communicate their concerns and desires, face to face.

We at Golf Course News support the upcoming summit and the ideals that prompted it. However, the golf course industry needs to attend this conference on the environmental defensive, something Golf Digest assumes it will.

In the magazine's September edition, Executive Editor Roger Schiffman dwells on why the conference is necessary, offering several examples of alleged on-course agronomic and developmental abuse. For instance, he notes that three courses in the Tampa, Fla. area consume 50,000 tons of water per day, enough to "meet the daily water needs of more than 5,000 Tampanians."

I doubt very much that Tampa residents would want 25 percent of those 500,000 gallons because they're re-claimed and non-potable. And for the sake of perspective, something with which Schiffman wasn't overly concerned, Florida golf courses use 600 million gallons of water per day — most of which is returned to the water table and reused. Commercial users in Florida use 30 billion (yes, with a "B") gallons of water per day, only a small portion of which is re-used. Non-profit institutions in Florida — government agencies, schools, etc. — use an additional 25 billion gallons per day.

In the words of Bob Yount, executive director of the Florida Turfgrass Association, water use on golf courses in Florida is a pimple on the backside.

Schiffman also quotes a Cornell University study that says, "A newly established site with limited turf cover appears to have the greatest potential for pesticide leaching." Of course, dirt does provide an ideal atmosphere for leaching, whereas turfgrass is one of nature's optimum filters. Funny that we should be worrying about pesticide use in situations when they're already on the scene.

In his attempt to be even-handed, Schiffman goes on continued on page 12

Does the golf course industry need an attitude adjustment?

You've heard about Attitude Adjustment. I go through an Attitude Adjustment daily when I look back and repent for how I've messed up but I just got a couple more Adjustments to enter into The Equation of The American Experience: Aptitude, Latitude, Platitude and Platitude.

It's time for an Attitude Adjustment. You know how the Army makes mechanical dummies into mechanics and turns people who want to be firefighters into security personnel? Same as what's happened in politics. In fact, maybe it has the right idea.

Even the peanut farmers and school teachers whom we have elected to the presidency didn't do as poorly as the career school teachers whom we have put in the aquatic management business or the more junior defensive, something Golf Digest assumes is all equal in The Equation, is Attitude Adjustment. With so much hot air coming from the environmentalists, let's stick a pin in the balloon: a truckload of the facts coming out of scientists' research combining these four — Aptitude, Latitude, Platitude and Attitude and you get true Attitude Adjustment. Does the golf industry as a whole need an Attitude Adjustment? Probably. Most of us do individually, as well as corporately. But there's the Good News and the good news. Both can do the trick. The best good news is the results U.S. Golf Association Green Section supported environmental research (see story page 1).

Three years of extensive investigation have yielded a truckload of dynamite for the golf industry to use in an assault environmental scareism. This information will be like giving superintendents, architects, and developers heat-seeking missiles to continue into battle.

continued on page 37

Letters

CONNOLLY: THERE'S MORE TO FIGHTING ALGAE THAN AERATION ALONE

To the Editor:

I would like to comment on the product feature and management report in the May 94 issue of Golf Course News. I have a background in natural resource management and have written several articles on water quality. I see an advertisement for aerifiers being a solution to poor water quality, I cringe. Oxygen is not a single component of water quality. I see an advertisement for aerifiers being a solution to poor water quality, I cringe. Oxygen is not a single component of water quality.

Aerators, according to the EPA test results, improve water quality in less than 50 percent of the applications.

In an article published, Mr. Steve Brown, President of Air Lake Aeration Inc., says, "We're seeing more and more algae growth on tees and greens. It's usually caused by bad irrigation water coming out of the ponds." This is a questionable statement.

The major reason for algae forming on greens is because the turfgrass is under some sort of stress, resulting in turfgrass thinning allowing algae to bloom. Algae is a natural component of most soils. However, algae is not a competitor with turfgrass under normal conditions. There is no substantiation for the statement that algae are grown on ponds or green causing algae blooms.

I'm not sure if this article was an advertisement or a technical write-up. However, it is important to review some of the claims advertised before you purchase them, because some of them are half truths. I hope you don't consider my comments harsh, but criticizing the subject of water quality management is very complex, and I feel that aerator companies are taking advantage of golf course superintendents who are not informed in this area. Many of the statements and articles considering aerators would not be accepted by experts in the aquatic management business or the more specialized industry of domestic water quality management (limnology).

Jan Connolly Sr. Technical Agronomist JacklinGolf Post Falls, Idaho

THANKS FROM WSPF-TV

To the Editor:

I want to thank you for the kind words you said last spring about the WSPF-TV production, "Building a Golf Course" (GCN March '94). So far the series has been broadcast in southwest Florida on Southwest Florida Public Television. Over the coming year, we are looking to distribute the series either via cable television or through public broadcasting. The hirees have turned into Hurricane no. 3, no. 4, no. 5, no. 6, and no. 7; Seminole no. 5 and no. 6; and Panther no. 3 and no. 4. The new holes maintain the high quality of the original 27 holes offering golfers many interesting challenges.

Once again, thank you for your kind article in Golf Course News.

Kirk Lehtomaa
Station Manager
WSPF-TV
Bonita Springs, Fla.
Grand Cayman gets first full-length track

GRAND CAYMAN, BWI — On an island known more for diving and snorkeling, visitors to the Caymans can now add "teeing off" to their list of vacation activities. Golfers can test their skill at The Links at SafeHaven, Cayman Islands' first 18-hole championship golf course. Located five miles north of George Town, the new 6,500-yard, par-72 course cost US$14.5 million to develop and complete.

Designed by Roy Case, and built by Gregori International SARL of France, The Links at SafeHaven was built according to U.S. Golf Association standards. SafeHaven Ltd. Chairman Owen Matalon noted the challenges his international team of developers overcame in completing the project. "More than 60 acres of the 103-acre course were planted with hybrid Bermudagrass which, for the first time in the Caribbean, was cultivated using spraying technique hydro-mulching.

The landscape is planted with more than 4,000 indigenous tropical trees and shrubs, including coconut and thatch palms, mahogany, cordia, oleander and mahoe.

Sanford takes to the mountains

Sanford & Associates has just completed a project in Kamuela, Hawaii, and is working on others in the U.S., Egypt and China.

The Kamuela course, Waimea Country Club, is located 3,500 feet above sea level. Its mountain location and cold air allowed Jupiter, Fla.-based Sanford to use bentgrass on the 18-hole, par-72 course.

Sanford also hopes to open Quest Golf Course in Houghton Lake, Mich., this summer. Designed with professional golfer Ken Green, the 14-hole course is part of a new resort/residential community there.

Two recently announced projects include The Sharm El-Sheikh Resort & Golf Club in Sinai, Egypt, to be routed through cliffs overlooking the Red Sea; and the Great Wall Country Club in Beijing, People's Republic of China, which is still in preliminary design.

Other current projects include: Hickman Hills Golf Club, East Fishkill, N.Y., designed with Lee Trevino; Sawmill Golf Club, Saginaw, Mich.; and Quarry Hills Golf Course, Quincy, Mass.

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The Sanford-designed Waimea Country Club is high in Hawaii's mountains in Kamuela.