The Golf Course Expo Development Program will focus on an evolving financial climate. USGA research may give GCSAA and local chapter representatives appear to have agreed on a dual membership strategy.

On the green U.S. Golf Association research may give staying power it sorely lacks. The Golf Course Expo Development Program will focus on an evolving financial climate.

The Public Arena The Golf Course Expo Development Program will focus on an evolving financial climate.

Courses, supers withered by drought

By MARK LESLIE

There are 100-year floods and 100-year droughts. For some, this was a 100-year summer. It was drought for Florida and Ohio. There was record-crunching heat and humidity in Pennsylvania. Dew points went through the roof in Minnesota. Everywhere from Delaware to the Midwest, golf courses got scorched.

"The only guys happy are west of the Rockies," said Golf Course Superintendent Association of America President Gary Grigg after a meeting of chapter representatives in Lawrence, Kan. "It's been drought in the Northeast, heat in the Midwest, rain in the South." [Director] Paul McGinnis said Arizona had a stretch of 47 days when the temperature was over 110 degrees. "This was the worst summer I've ever seen for growing grass," said Jerry Buchen of Double Eagle Club in Galena, Ohio. "We had so much rain, and the heat and humidity was the worst I've ever seen. The grass just cooked."

Cooked so badly that many golf courses closed down so crews could aerate and resedge. People were hitting balls off bare soil at some facilities.

"If you had new greens with sand-based construction, generally you were fine," said Stan Zontek, director of the U.S. Golf Association Green Section (USGA) Mid-Atlantic Region.

Alumni key university development strategy

By MARK LESLIE

COLUMBIA, S.C. — In the Southeastern Conference (SEC), 75,000 to 100,000 fans pack football stadiums every Saturday in the fall. Now a unique concept in golf development, the University Club, aims to pack them in at new golf courses located at those same SEC schools.

Indeed, The University Club at University of South Carolina (USC) boasted a whopping 12,000-plus members when it opened its first 18 holes here on Sept. 15. A second University Club — this one at Louisiana State University with "a fervent athletic supporter base," this new company, called The University Club, decided to concentrate first on the Southeastern Conference which leads the nation in attendance at football.

A View from the Rough

KLEMME IN PRINT?

Well, sort of... Photographer Mike Klemme has published a book highlighting golf's natural benefits. See page 3.

PUBLIC PLAY, OUTSIDE THE BELTWAY

Augustine Golf Club, the Washington, D.C. area's newest golf facility, is open for public play. This 18-hole Rich Jacobson design is the centerpiece of a residential community now under construction in Stafford, Va. For an update on this and other Jacobson projects, see page 30.

Audubon targets public-access at Golf Course Expo

By MARK LESLIE

ORLANDO, Fla. — Sensing that the vast number of public-access golf course officials are not joining the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System because they believe it is cost-prohibitive, the Audubon Society of New York (ASNY) will address them in a special session during Golf Course Expo here, Nov. 9-10.

"Our program is not geared towards finding interesting ways for golf courses to spend even more money from an already dwindling budget," said ASNY President Ron Dodson. "But we want superintendents to consider conservation as a mechanism to save money. Generally, our program should be thought of not only as environmental but as cost-efficient as well."

The ASNY is one of several major associations Banc One goes sour on muni financing deals

By PETER BLAIS

Banc One Leasing Corp., a major lending institution that helped finance approximately a dozen municipal golf facilities using municipal lease agreements, has taken over or is negotiating with municipalities on four of those projects, according to a bank attorney.

The courses are located in Minnesota, Colorado, Iowa and California, said Jeffrey Ayres, senior attorney for Banc One Corp., the holding company for Banc One Leasing.
new challenges will be more successful,” Frank said. “The speakers and sessions we’ve assembled will leave you much better prepared to meet those challenges.”

The first of those speakers, course architect Dr. Michael Hurdzan, will follow Thursday morning’s keynote address from fellow architect Pete Dye and his family. Hurdzan will speak from 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. on “The Value and Trends in Golf Learning.”

Hurdzan has designed some of golf’s most famous courses, including Devil’s Pulpit and Devil’s Paintbrush in Calgary, Ontario, named the best new course in Canada in 1992 and 1993 by Golf Digest magazine. The Columbus, Ohio-based designer also worked as a golf course superintendent and a course builder before becoming a course architect.

“Golf has long suffered from an image problem that it was a rich, white man’s sport,” Hurdzan said. “It’s a mistaken perception, but that’s what many people believe. One of the reasons they feel that way is they haven’t been exposed to the game. Learning centers will help improve the game’s image by exposing more people to golf.”

“Practice centers are also good business. A well-designed facility will be attractive to 100 people of all ages every day.”

Hiers added to Expo speaking program

ORLANDO, Fla. — Tim Hiers, certified golf course superintendent at Collier’s Reserve in Naples, will replace Double Eagle superintendent Terry Buchen as a speaker at the Expo here, Nov. 9-10.

With Buchen accepting another speaking assignment, attendees will hear a litany of money-saving tips from Hiers, who last February became the first individual to ever be awarded the President’s Environmental Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Under his leadership, Collier’s Reserve became the first Audubon Signature facility in the world.

Winner of the first-ever John James Audubon Steward and the Florida Region Environmental Steward awards, Hiers will share a number of ways to save money on the course and in the maintenance complex while conserving the environment.

Audubon, allied associations target public-access courses at Expo

Continued from page 1

planning to exhibit at the Expo. The United States Golf Association (USGA) Green Section, American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA), Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA), National Golf Course Owners Association and other groups will also be present.

Public golf represents the vast majority of golf activity in the U.S., said Jim Snow, national director of the USGA Green Section, and “we are anxious to get the word out to these facilities about what we offer. We want to have as big an impact as we can on the conditions the public golfer has to enjoy.”

“It’s important to be at the Expo to make sure we’re known in the market,” said Phil Arnold, executive director of the GCBA. “More and more courses are public-access and, right now, that is driving the industry forward. Whereas, four or five years ago it was real-estate, now it is the stand-alone, mid- to high-end public course. Obviously, as long as the construction industry is going forward, our members are benefiting.”

“From the 100 years golf courses have been built in this country, it’s a slow trend toward more public golf courses and less private,” said Jeff Brauer, president of the ASGCA. “There is nothing that I see to contradict that trend. I’m certain that’s the wave of the future — to an even greater degree than what it is now.”

“Over the last 40 years or so, the number of golf courses has remained relatively static,” Steward said. “My expectation is that the number of courses will continue to grow at a modest pace.”

Steward noted that the number of golfers has increased significantly over the past 20 years. He said that the number of golfers in the U.S. has increased from 17 million in 1980 to more than 35 million today.

Steward also said that the number of golf courses in the U.S. has increased from 10,000 in 1980 to more than 15,000 today.

In addition, Steward said that the number of golfers per course has increased from 30 to more than 50.

“Golf is no longer just a hobby, but a sport that is enjoyed by millions of people,” Steward said. “This growth is expected to continue for many years to come.”

Steward noted that the increase in the number of golfers and courses is expected to continue for many years to come.

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