

BRIEFS

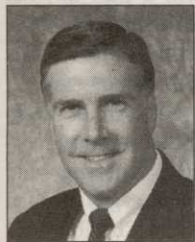


KANGAROO GAINS MARKETING CHIEF

COLUMBUS, N.C. — Kangaroo Motorcaddies has named Thomas Curtin as its new sales/marketing manager. Curtin has moved from Atlanta where he worked in marketing and sales for a national distributor of camping and hiking equipment. Curtin has assumed the role of national sales manager, and will be working on various marketing efforts, including the design and promotion of the Kangaroo web site (www.kangarogolf.com).

KELLY NAMED MID-ATLANTIC PRES

COLLEGEVILLE, Pa. — Joseph A. Kelly Jr. has been named president of Mid-Atlantic Equipment Corp., a leading East Coast distributor of golf cars



Joseph Kelly Jr.

and industrial utility vehicles, specializing in E-Z-GO and Yamaha products. Former President John Clough will become chairman of the board. Headquartered in suburban Philadelphia, Mid-Atlantic Equipment has additional facilities in Gaithersburg, Md., Stuart, Fla., and Richmond, Va.

HERMAN TO LEAD HANCOR

FINDLAY, Ohio — Dail Herman has been named Hancor Inc.'s new president. Herman was most recently chairman, president and CEO of AutoStyle Plastics, Inc., of Grand Rapids, Mich.



Dail Herman

Prior to joining AutoStyle, he spent 16 years with the General Electric Company serving several divisions.

SOSTRAM PRODUCT EARNS EPA NOD

ATLANTA, Ga. — Echo 720 Turf and Ornamental Chlorothalonil Fungicide, a product of Sostram Corp., has received final Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registration and approval for the state of California. This broad spectrum contact fungicide provides excellent disease control on a vast variety of turfgrass and ornamental plantings. For more information, write Sostram Corp. at 70 Mansell Ct., Suite 230, Roswell, Ga. 30076.

Alternative spike industry getting complicated

By HAL PHILLIPS

ORLANDO — Add another high-profile facility to the list of those that have banned metal spikes. While you're at it, add to the alternative-spike universe another manufacturer, a strategic alliance and a lawsuit.

Philadelphia-based EPP, Inc. introduced its "Green Keeper" line of plastic cleats here at the PGA Merchandise Show in January and at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) show in February. According to EPP Vice President for Sales and Marketing Matt Spinelli, Green Keepers are designed to last up to 40 rounds. They also feature a self-locking thread design, reducing the possibility of the cleat backing out.

"We designed this cleat especially for the avid golfer faced with pressure from

many courses to preserve putting surfaces by wearing spikeless cleats," said Spinelli.

Across town from the PGA Merchandise Show, Grand Cypress Resort — one

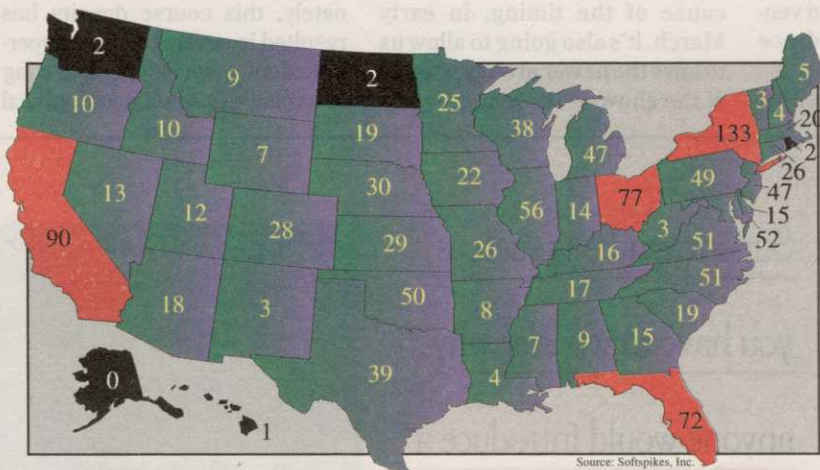
the time being, staff members will replace guests' spikes at no charge.

More than 1,300 courses nationwide have banned metal spikes from their premises (see chart). Grand Cypress is the 72nd course to make the move in Florida. New York leads the nation with 133 spikeless facilities.

"Because of the quality levels we try to maintain at the resort, our heights of cut on the putting surfaces are very low," said Tom Alex, director of golf maintenance at Grand Cypress. "That cut with conventional golf shoes promotes spike marks. Going to spikeless shoes, we anticipate smoother putting surfaces that will allow for more consistent putting."

There was a time, not long ago, when

Continued on page 56



The map above shows how many courses have banned metal spikes in each state.

of the busiest course facilities in Florida — illustrated the pressure to which Spinelli referred. Grand Cypress banned metal spikes beginning March 15. For

Burning ban could put bluegrass growers out of business

By BOB SPIWAK

OLYMPIA, Wash. — A Washington Department of Ecology ruling which would eliminate burning of Kentucky bluegrass fields could have a severe impact on growers here. The ban, initiated last year, requires growers to reduce the number of acres burned by one-third each year, with a total ban by 1998.

Field burning has been the traditional way to eliminate post-harvest straw from

the fields, at the same time killing pests and diseases. Some growers maintain that the fires also promote new growth and better yields. Some 60,000 acres in Washington are affected.

Ironically, no such action is contemplated by the state of Idaho, which shares the Rathdrum Prairie with its Washington neighbor. Thus, an imaginary state line separates a 10,000-acre plain, with burning allowed east of the line, but not

west.

According to Linda Clovis, executive director of the Intermountain Grass Growers Association, the ban was instituted by then DOE Director Mary Riveland. Clovis maintains that when Washington Gov. Mike Lowry announced he would not seek re-election, Riveland arbitrarily imposed the ban, eliminating public notice and the normal public-hearing procedure. "She

Continued on page 57

New England combines small shows into one

By HAL PHILLIPS

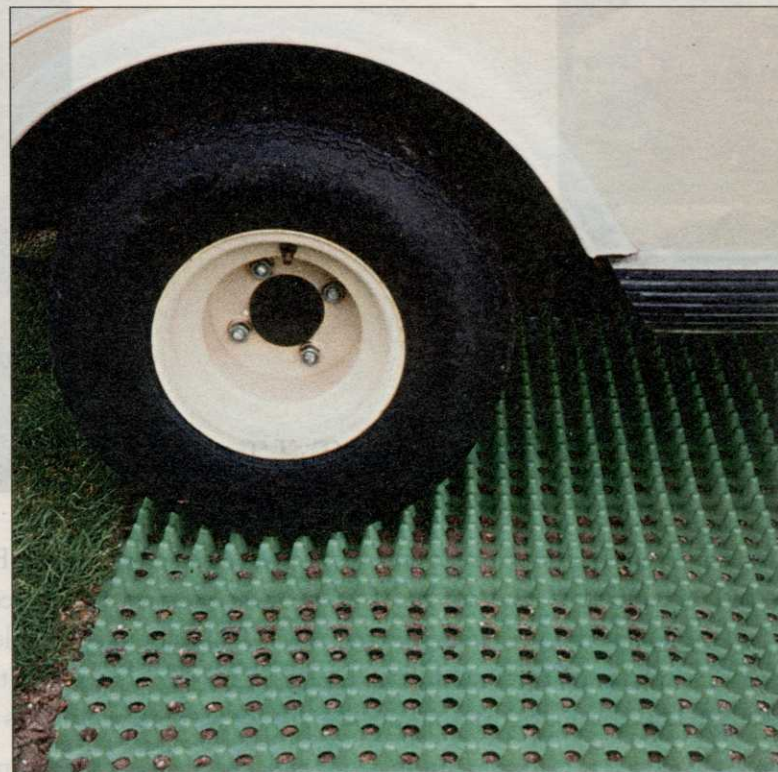
PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Industry firms that privately complain about an overabundance of trade shows, take heart: seven New England superintendent organizations have pooled their resources and pared the number of annual Northeast turf exhibitions by three.

The newly formed New England Turf Foundation — comprised of superintendent groups representing all six New England states, plus the New England Sports Turf Association and Mass Association of Lawn Care Applicators — will sponsor the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show here at the Rhode Island Convention Center, attached to the Westin Hotel, March 3-6, 1998.

This effort has, in theory, given New England superintendents more research fundraising clout while providing exhibitors access to more buyers in a single location.

"We all realized that we were splintering the market," said Richard DiRico, superintendent at Brae Burn Country Club in Newton, Mass., and president of the

Continued on page 54



NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Livonia, Mich.-based G&A Products has introduced Kormat Root Protection, designed for turf areas around cart paths. With the Kormat system, car weight is supported by the Kormat matrix, preventing soil compaction. Kormat is easy to install, cost effective, and aesthetically pleasing. For more information, contact Kormat at 810-363-8905. For more new products see pages 58-59.

Field burning

Continued from page 53

knew she'd be out of a job," said Clovis, "and rushed this [ban] through. In my opinion it circumvented due process."

However, according to a January article in the *Moscow-Pullman Daily News*, a study by several Washington State University professors concluded that benefits gained by reduced field burning outweighed the costs, and this prompted Riveland to mandate the ban.

The phase-out of burning is to allow the growers to devise alternatives. So far, said Skip Allert of Jacklin Seed in Post Falls, Idaho, there has been little success. "Last year," he explained, "they [growers] tried to bale the straw after combining, without much success."

Allert, Jacklin's grower service field representative, said alternative measures such as harvesting straw or plowing cost the growers more and do not kill weed seeds or diseases. Chemical treatments have been tried, but they, too, are coming under fire.

Washington State University and University of Idaho, along with Jacklin, are examining other means. One is close-clipping the grass, then vacuuming the residue. "We need more basic research," said Allert. "What genes we need to change, for instance. But there is a costly time lag—a year before we get the crop out, another year to see the results."

Asked about the effect the ban will have on bluegrass prices, Allert said Washington bluegrass is not going to be the way it was. It can be grown in Idaho, but it is just a matter of time until there is a curtailment there as well, he said.

Clovis agreed and said that although no legislative action is pending, a group of environmentalists plans a different strategy: suing individual growers when they burn their fields.

For now, with only Washington being affected, Clovis believes smaller growers, some of whom may have fields of 20 or so acres, will get out of the business.

Canadians, she said, are keeping an eye on developments in the two states, possibly intending to enter the bluegrass business. The climate is right, and more than 90 percent of all Kentucky bluegrass propagation is in the Pacific Northwest.

Patricia Hoffman heads a citizens group in the Spokane area called Save Our Summers (SOS). Founded in 1995, the group's primary concern is with health. "We founded the organization in response to 30-odd years of grass burning with no concessions

[from the growers]," she said. "In 1963 there were only about 16,000 acres being burned in the region, including Idaho. And now the acreage burned is around 100,000."

"There have been fatalities as well," Hoffman said. "Two asthmatics, one in Washington, one in Idaho, died within 12 hours of smoke intrusion. That's a pretty high price to pay for golf

courses."

In Idaho, The Clean Air Coalition plans to base lawsuits against growers by invoking the state's trespass law, according to *The North Idaho Business Journal*, "...to prove that the invading smoke constitutes a trespass on another landowner's property."

SOS is attracting more members and now numbers about

1,500. The group was actively lobbying to suppress grass burning, and with the current ban is "very gratified with the Department of Ecology's action."

Bluegrass industry spokespeople regard the conflict as an emotional issue blown out of proportion as a health concern. Countering this, the DOE and SOS feel there is enough evidence to support their con-

tentions that the smoke is indeed harmful to human lungs, especially those of persons with respiratory problems. The groundswell of opposition to field burning is growing and it appears that the only solution will be new cultivars whose viability will not require the annual summer fires.

That, or replacement of bluegrass with another kind of turf.

The Results Are In.

Seed Research of Oregon set out to find the Best 18 Bentgrass Greens in North America, planted exclusively to our own varieties of creeping bentgrasses—Providence (SR 1019), SR 1020, or the Dominant Blend. A winner was selected from each of the five regions and out of those five our judges chose...

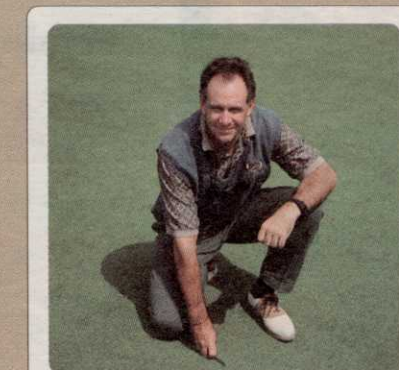
...THE "BEST 18 GREENS IN NORTH AMERICA"



Providence

Grand Prize Winner!

EAST
Kevin Pryseski
Cattail Creek Country Club
Glenwood, MD



Dominant

MIDWEST
Don Tolson
Fox Hollow at Lakewood
Lakewood, CO



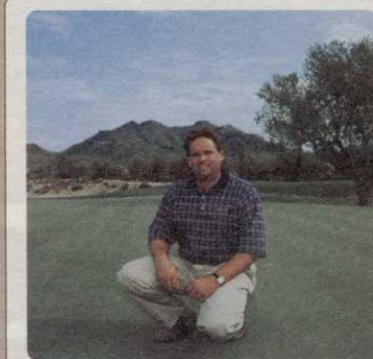
Dominant



Providence

WEST
Jon Clark
Northview Golf & CC
Cloverdale, BC

SOUTHWEST
Paul Ellwood
Club Terravita
Scottsdale, AZ



SR 1020

Because of their proven, exceptional performance—Providence, SR 1020, and Dominant Blend creeping bentgrasses are used extensively, throughout the world. On golf course greens and fairways the SRO Bents consistently produce beautiful dark green, upright growing, fine-textured turf with reduced maintenance, less thatch, and excellent wear tolerance.

SEED RESEARCH
OF OREGON, INC.

P.O. Box 1416 • Corvallis, OR 97339 U.S.A.
Telephone: 1 (800) 253-5766 • Fax: (541) 758-5305