Aiming for a different sort of relevance

The real fear in writing a farewell column is pure ego: You're flat out terrified that people will immediately forget about you, perhaps before they even finish the column. This is the anxiety my keyboard and I carry with us this month. This is my last column as editor of Golf Course News and, I'll admit it, I'm desperate to hold your attention all the way through.

Unfortunately, I've nothing terribly sexy to dangle before you, no revelations hidden in the final paragraph, no scandals to disclose... Except for that pending corporate merger I've known about for weeks. But that was "off the record," and why to disclose... Except for that pending corporate merger I've back. But that's not even illegal... Come to think of it, there is but who would believe me?

For you, I'll try to be as have the forum. To keep it interesting golfers stop taking themselves so seriously, the situation will never improve.

On a related note, how many times have you heard guys bitch about "that woman" in the foursome ahead. Or about the inappropriate clothing "those kids" are wearing. Aren't these the demographic groups golf has targeted as vital to its growth, the groups we must attract if the industry is to expand? Golf must eventually reconcile its interest in growth with its reverence for tradition. Do we want golf to grow, or would we rather everyone wore a collared shirt?

For a state with so many golf courses, Florida has precious few good ones.

All the self-appointed purists out there routinely take pot shots at golf cars, the profits from which have made possible Continued on page 16

Letters

WHEN IT COMES TO MAINTENANCE, ISN'T LESS MORE?

To the Editor:

In response to your editorial in the April 1997 issue concerning the new A&G varieties and Dr. Beard's comments, the point I find most disturbing is that in this day and age of trying to introduce products to the marketplace that require less input for maintenance, the new Tee to Green A and G varieties are looked upon as being acceptable, even though they would require a superintendent to provide additional maintenance in the way of extremely low mowing, added aeration, verticutting, and top-dressing to provide an acceptable surface. This would be equivalent to one promoting a new car that performs well but requires the owner to change the oil every 500 miles.

There are other varieties on the market that are significant improvements over Penncross that provide every bit as much as an advancement in improved putting green turf without excessive maintenance. One variety that easily meets this criteria is L-93. L-93 is not a niche grass, it doesn't need excessive maintenance like the A's and G's, and it has shown to provide exceptional turf performance.

L-93 is the number one variety in the NTEP trials for 1995 and 1996 and has produced exceptional disease resistance. Your editorial was based on comments made by Dr. Beard as presented at the Canadian Turf Conference in March of 1997. As a man of science, why would Dr. Beard omit mentioning the No. 1 rated NTEP variety? Why would he not mention an improved variety with impressive qualities?

Dr. Richard Hurley, Executive Vice President, Lofts Seed

DOKATON FIRM SURVIVES TO TELL ITS TALE

Ed. — Severe spring flooding was merely the latest meteorological hardship endured by residents of the Red River Valley. Ed. — Since the spring flooding was merely the latest meteorological hardship endured by residents of the Red River Valley, where a tough winter touched off a chain of destruction. While the golf industry does not boast a great many firms in this region, higher ground allowed Dakota Peat & Equipment to pull through.

To the Editor:

A series of natural disasters struck the Red River Valley of the North region during the winter and spring of 1997. This region borders parts of North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota. Eight blizzards hit the region during the season, including an ice storm and blizzard in early April that knocked out electrical power to more than 150,000 people in the area.

The storm snows from these storms resulted in the flood of the millennium on the Red River. Record flood crests were reported all along the Red River Valley. The flood burst through dikes in Grand Forks, N.D., and East Grand Forks, Minn., on April 18 and 19.

By the end of the weekend, more than 60,000 people had been evacuated, much of the business community had been shut down, and some of those businesses were destroyed. The river crested at 54.11 feet in Grand Forks, more than 5.3 feet higher than the previous record creast in 1979.

Dakota Peat and Equipment of Grand Forks was one of the more fortunate businesses in the area. The company did suffer some damage to three buildings in the region during this series of disasters. Many employees were displaced by the flood waters and the mandatory evacuations. These employees were given time off to take care of personal needs and make suitable alternative living arrangements.

But business activity never stopped for Dakota Peat and Equipment, the company's location on the edge of the city kept the main offices and plants high and dry from flood waters. Shipments of Dakota Peat and Dakota Equipment continued to go out during the height of the disaster.

As a matter of fact, peat shipments for the rebuilding of Lambeau Field, home of the World Champion Green Bay Packers, were sent out the week of April 21. By Thursday, April 24, Dakota Peat and Equipment was back operating on a regular basis.

Mark Landa

Dakota Peat & Equipment

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