Audubon cracks down on broken promises

By Mark Leslie

Selkirk, N.Y. — Probation. Excommunication. These terms that embody eminence are now part of the lexicon at Audubon International (AI), long a bastion of teamwork and cooperation.

While the majority of the 66 golf courses in the 4-year-old Audubon Signature Program are committed to it and swear by its effectiveness, others have fallen off the bandwagon, or perhaps were never aboard, according to AI President Ron Dodson.

Lamenting the fact that he had to, for the first time, "place on probation," then "excommmunicate" one of the eight fully certified Audubon Signature facilities, Dodson said: "Our strongest program is only as strong as our weakest one, and we can't allow people to make our name look weak. We already are being accused by other environmental groups of kowtowing to the golf course industry and giving away the Audubon name. But we don't. People work for it and are proud of it."

However, when The Champions Club at Summerfield in Stuart, Fla., did not correct some problems targeted in AI's biannual audit, the club and the organization parted ways.

"We wrote and told them they are no longer to use Audubon International's name or logo," Dodson said. "They are to take their signs down and the Audubon print off the wall, and take all references to the Signature Program and Audubon International off their advertising materials and so on. More than that, we can not do."

Continued on page 16

Child's Play in Kentucky

By Mark Leslie

Lawrenceburg, Ky. — A "kid's course" built within the existing layout may prove a key option for golf facilities around the country, now that Bob-O-Link Golf Course has made the concept a reality.

On Father's Day, Bob-O-Link opened its Kids Course within the 22-year-old track, thanks to owner Jack Ridge, who is also a golf course architect and president of a children's golf-product company, Club Pro Products in Louisville.

"Golf has missed the boat," Ridge declared. "Everybody's mindset has been junior golf — teenagers, but no one has thought of kids up to 10 years old. That's what separates this course."

The idea for the Kids Course, he said, stemmed from parents who bought Club Pro clubs and bags, then asked...

Continued on page 20

Estate courses on the rebound

By Mark Leslie

Sugar Grove, Ill. — Disappointed in Augusta National's famous par-3 12th hole at Amen Corner, Jerry Rich came home to his 2,000-acre estate and built what he calls a better one. Disappointed in Augusta's 200-yard-long Magnolia Lane, he built a Magnolia Lane of his own. It meanders across two miles.

This is Rich Harvest Links. This is Jerry Rich's dream — a dream that grew from the current rage of building putting greens, and entire golf holes, on a person's property is not new, but rather a second coming of sorts. Two decades after Sutphen wrote those words in The Outing Magazine, Donald Ross laid out Overhills Golf...

Continued on page 19

The back 40: Not your typical backyard

By Mark Leslie

Seven or eight years ago, when the madness was at its height, many so-called courses were laid out over private grounds.'

— Van Tassel Sutphen in The Outing Magazine, 1906

Certainly not your average backyard: the 2nd hole at Rich Harvest.
design and development in review

No normal backyard

Continued from page 15

Course on the Rockefeller estate at Pinchurst, N.C. But in the ensuing 70 years not much was heard of personal practice greens—until now. Today's second coming of "estate golf courses" is one of often more modest pretensions and dimensions than their predecessors. While the very wealthy operate in their own stratosphere (see sidebar), more can afford a single putting green, or a three- or six-hole practice facility.

"There is a big push everywhere to put in golf greens," said Rees Jones, who designed a course for an Atlantic Golf Club member across the road from the club itself in Bridgehampton, Long Island. "The impetus is not prestige. It's the love of the game. They love golf, and if they have enough property and money to do this... People landscape their yards and build patios or gardens. This is just another form of landscaping, but it's usable."

Others who have designed greens and short "backyard courses" agree. "I think these are people working on their game, to develop their skills," said architect Ron Kirby who, when he worked with Denis Griffiths, enjoyed a 1,000-square-foot green and a handful of tees 30 yards away outside their office. "We had a tournament, The Greater Norcross Open, on it every year. But the rich Surreal Tour players, owners and builders. Gary Player loved it. We'd drive with a plastic ball and putt with a golf ball."

Having designed three courses on estates along the Niagara escarpment in Quebec as "backyard improvements," David Moote said one of his clients was an elderly, non-golfing lady who simply wanted to look at a course in her back yard just to look at its lines and aesthetics.

"This is not a prestige thing," Moote said. "The people I work for don't want the word to get out."

Estate courses run the gamut from opulent to frugal.

In recent years Mark McCumber's and Steve Melnyk's design companies helped build nine holes on Gilman Paper Co. owner Howard Gilman's northern Florida property, surrounded by endangered animals, equestrian trails and fishing.

Kirby designed "a spectacular" five-green, 13-tee course for a Greenwich, Conn., property of a Winged Foot member. Steve Melnyk's design companies helped create regulation golf courses, the design-build firms along the Niagara escarpment in Quebec as "backyard improvements," David Moote said one of his clients was an elderly, non-golfing lady who simply wanted to look at a course in her back yard just to look at its lines and aesthetics. Steve Melnyk's design companies helped create regulation golf courses, the design-build firms along the Niagara escarpment in Quebec as "backyard improvements," David Moote said one of his clients was an elderly, non-golfing lady who simply wanted to look at a course in her back yard just to look at its lines and aesthetics. Kirby designed "a spectacular" five-green, 13-tee course for a Greenwich, Conn., property of a Winged Foot member.

Brian Silva designed a par-3 hole with a 5,000-square-foot green that can be played from 130 to 190 yards on multiple tees on the property of a Winged Foot member. But Jim Osborn, whose Estate Golf in Greer, S.C., installs putting surfaces with his greens cost be- between $22 and $25 per square foot to install.

Kubota's advanced E-TVCS diesel engines are designed to deliver maximum power with minimum vibration and noise. Plus, these super-efficient powerplants go a long way in cutting fuel costs and emissions. Available in 22, 25 and 30 horsepower 4WD models, the Kubota F-60 Series also comes in a 25 horsepower 2WD model. For more information please write to: Kubota Tractor Corporation P.O. Box 2992-GEN Torrance, CA 90509-2992 1-888-4KUBOTA ext. 407 Financing available through Kubota Credit Corporation ©1998 Kubota Tractor Corporation

What other mowers dream of becoming.

Nestled in their sheds at night, ordinary mowers dream of one thing: growing up to be a Kubota F-60 Series. And it's easy to see why.

The Kubota F-60 Series features our exclusive Auto Assist 4WD with Dual-Acting Overrunning clutch. It automatically transfers power to the rear wheels when the going gets tough. Or, you can manually engage 4WD on the go. Either way, it gives you unequaled traction and maneuverability while reducing the damage to your valuable turf.

The durable, independent hydraulic PTO clutch lets you engage and disengage PTO driven implements on the move. A real time-saver in tight situations.

Visibility and maneuverability will increase your productivity.

Kubota's advanced E-TVCS diesel engines are designed to deliver maximum power with minimum vibration and noise. Plus, these super-efficient powerplants go a long way in cutting fuel costs and emissions. Available in 22, 25 and 30 horsepower 4WD models, the Kubota F-60 Series also comes in a 25 horsepower 2WD model.

So if you're looking for a front-end mower that handles like a dream, see your authorized Kubota dealer today.

For more information please write to:

Kubota Tractor Corporation P.O. Box 2992-GEN Torrance, CA 90509-2992 1-888-4KUBOTA ext. 407 Financing available through Kubota Credit Corporation ©1998 Kubota Tractor Corporation

Golf Course News

CIRCLE #111

December 1998

19