Landscapes' Kubly credits hardworking staff

By MARK LESLIE
ANAHEIM, Calif. — Golf Course Builder of the Year Landscapes Unlimited earned its award because of "the hard work of our staff," said its president.

Accepting the honor from Charles von Brecht, publisher of the sponsoring Golf Course News, Bill Kubly said his company "works hard all year to provide a quality product. I want to thank the architects, suppliers and distributors who help us all have this opportunity to have a wonderful livelihood."

President Howard Barnes accepted Golf Course News' Best Small Builder of the Year Award for Quality Grassing & Services, and President Geoffrey Corlett accepted a special Honorable Mention Small Builder Award for Turf Drain, Inc.

The Builder of the Year Award has been presented for nine years and the Small Builder of the Year for two.

President Barnes cited Landscapes Unlimited as having won previous Best Builder honor for MacCurraich Golf Construction as the first winner of the Small Builder citation in 1997.

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Venturi puts maintenance into perspective, wins Old Tom Morris

By MARK LESLIE
ANAHEIM, Calif. — Golf course conditioning, not playing equipment, has created the biggest change in the game of golf, according to Ken Venturi.

Venturi, here to accept the Old Tom Morris Award from the Golf course Superintendent Association of America, said a press conference: "The courses are so perfect. In the past you had to have imagination. You had to create something that wasn't there. Now, look at Augusta National and you can put on the fairways. That has been one of the greatest changes in golf. You can talk about equipment. But I'm talking about conditions. That has made the game much, much different."

Saying he is inspired by tradition, Venturi spoke of Ireland and Scotland where "they play 'down' golf instead of 'up' golf."

"The ball is made to run," he said. "You can never make a green hard enough." And Irish and Scottish golf, he said, give the golfer multiple choices. "It allows you to use your imagination."

"Ask good shot-makers what they like," he said, "and they like small greens, hard greens, fast greens and narrow fairways."

He lamented that an entire field of golfers too often will play a hole in the same way. For that reason, for instance, Venturi doesn't like island greens because "they don't give you multiple choice. It doesn't give you the chance to protect a lead." The annual Old Tom Morris Award honors individuals who have made a lifetime commitment to the game of golf, to promote the welfare of the game in a manner and style exemplified by the award's namesake, a four-time British Open champion and a golf course architect, groundkeeper and professional at Old St. Andrews in Scotland.

"Looking at the life of Ken Venturi you can see many parallels with the life of Old Tom," said outgoing GCSAA President Paul McGinnis. "They both met obstacles, and both overcame setbacks to find success on and off the course. Old Tom Morris had a passion for the game that he exuberantly shared with others so that they, too, could enjoy his experiences. Ken Venturi has said: "If there is anyone who appreciates a group of people more than I appreciate [you], I don't know where they are — because you have helped protect the integrity and the tradition of the game of golf. And I might add that I feel that you have an obligation to continue."
ADA at issue

Continued from page 39
ADA and how it pertains to golf. Under federal law, public facilities must make every possible accommodation to handicapped persons in terms of architectural design as well as permitting the use of assistive devices. Architectural barriers must be removed provided the modifications are reasonable and cause no undue financial burden of the facility and will not alter the fundamental nature of the activity. Kelly-Smith noted that more than 20 complaints involving golf courses have been referred to the Justice Department.

Jack Andre of National Park Service explained that his agency, a branch of the Interior Department, is designated by the Justice Department to examine and rectify complaints involving golf courses. He zeroed in on the cart path rule which was the root of the Lassing Pointe controversy — a golfer with a heart condition sought permission to digress from the cart path and the course refused because the new turf was not ready to have cart traffic.

The law, said Andre, should be viewed, "... more in the sense of guiding principles..." and noted that to refuse any disabled golfer permission to go off the path puts the responsibility on the course to demonstrate that the cart causes an undue burden on the course, a significant burden.

The lawsuit and publicity by Casey Martin, a Tour professional who sued the PGA to allow him to use a cart, has made more people aware of the ADA. According to Andre, "There are 49 million people out there with disabilities. Golf is entirely different from other sports. Any one can play the game and should be allowed to."

Jerry Coldiron, the Lassing Pointe superintendent, responded that the course had been voted the top course in Kentucky, and that he had letters from both the United States Golf Association (USGA) and the University of Kentucky supporting Lassing Pointe's position of not allowing divergence from the cart paths until the turf had been properly established.

Coldiron said that to accommodate the golfer who filed the complaint, the county, which owns the course, offered to move the man's league to another municipal course 11 miles away.

Greg Jones, president of the Association of Disabled American Golfers (ADAG), disabled with polio since he was three, warned the audience that there is an aging population in the country, many of these with disabilities.

"We [ADAG] are advocates for the game of golf and the inclusion of everyone who wants to play," said Jones.

Suncor Development owns and operates seven courses in Arizona. Steve Gervais, vice president of corporate counsel, provided a video of an investigative news broadcast from the Phoenix area to point out the publicity attending conflicts between disabled golfers and courses.

A hidden camera followed a golfer with an artificial limb as he went from course to course seeking permission to use a cart on courses where overseeding had just been done. He was refused on several, which led to the headline about the course caring more for grass than the law (ADA).

Gervais pointed out that at two of the courses, the employees were new, and stressed the need for facilities to train all personnel in areas where ADA is applicable.

"How far can we go," he asked, "to determine if a golfer is truly handicapped? When is it permissible to deny carts off the path? During overseeding? When the ground is wet and carts make ruts?"

These and other questions have yet to be answered, and Gervais urged: "We need guidelines. We need assistance for uniformity on all courses."

Peggy Greenwell of the Justice Department's 30-member Access Board explained that her agency is responsible for establishing minimum accessibility guidelines for compliance with ADA. Based on the premise that the handicapped will use carts, some suggested guidelines are: breaks in the cart path curbing every 75 yards, ability to take a vehicle onto the teeing ground, and access to practice areas including hazards. On-course hazards, she said, did not have to provide access.

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