The high-tech addition of the decade? Border collies

By MARK LESLIE

Tac rids course of irksome geese

There have been dog super-heroes in the past. Timmy's Lassie, Rusty's Rin Tin Tin, Sergeant Preston's King. But today, in Greenwich, Conn., the Dog of the Hour is Richard Marcks' Tac. Tac accomplished what no human in town could do. He drove several hundred geese to a new address — out of town.

A 7-year-old border collie, Tac (short for Sharp as a Tac) has ridded Fairview Country Club of 600 troublesome geese — and enjoyed every minute of it.

"This is the hottest thing since peanut butter," said Marcks, property manager at Fairview. Twelve other area golf courses have bought border collies to rid their properties of geese since seeing Tac at work.

Buying the trained dog was Marcks' brainchild. "Within a month we had the course clean," Marcks said. Tac, fully trained to herd sheep, took quickly to the geese. "After you harass them a few times they leave," he said.

The $2,000 price tag, Marcks said, "sounds like a lot, but you spend more

Kick 'em out now, or watch out in the future

By MARK LESLIE

HOWELL, N.J. — David Marcks of Geese Police Inc. said golf courses and others who delay dealing with their geese problems will see those problems exacerbated.

"Is there a population problem? Absolutely," he said. "Will it double in the next five years? Absolutely. If the trend continues and you think there are a lot of geese now, just wait."

David explained that the major concern is not with migratory geese, who simply pass through on their way south or their return north. Rather, it is the resident geese. A true migratory bird does not breed in righthandphoto, Brad Kocher, right, Pinehurst Resort's director of golf course maintenance, and Course No. 2 superintendent Paul Jett have been busy the past couple of years preparing the famous Donald Ross-designed course for this month's U.S. Open. Above is the 17th hole at Pinehurst No. 2.

Kocher, Jett, people power the difference at Pinehurst #2

By TERRY BUCHEN

PINEHURST, N.C. — Tournament and championship veterans Brad Kocher, director of golf course maintenance, and Paul T. Jett, Course No. 2 superintendent at ClubCorp's Pinehurst are excited about this year's U.S. Open and have an able and efficient staff prepared to show off their talents.

Also a big help is Bob Petrie, assistant director of golf course maintenance, who assists Kocher in his daily rounds of overseeing the maintenance of eight courses, including other many-faceted grounds operations.

"We have 24 of the best maintenance employees a golf course could ever want on our payroll, plus 14 student interns," said Jett.

So many people volunteered to work on the Open that "we had to stop all requests last October," said Jett, who kept the volunteer staff to 48. "We could have had 100 volunteers, without question, which shows the industry-wide dedication to Pinehurst and the

An entire industry has been born

By MARK LESLIE

What began humbly, with one border collie at one golf course, has mushroomed into an industry, with franchises from New Jersey and Connecticut to Long Island, North Carolina, Chicago and Seattle.

"It's turned into an unbelievable business. I never expected it to grow so fast, or get so big," said Richard Marcks, who first dreamed up the idea of sicing a border collie on the geese which had so troubled and spoiled Fairview Country Club in Greenwich, Conn., where he worked as property manager.

Marcks, who in March moved to Crumpin-Fox Club in Bernardsville, Mass., saw the success of his simple idea turn into Geese Police Inc., a multimillion-dollar business servicing hundreds of corporate and municipal clients — and golf courses — whose parks, grounds, playgrounds and racetracks are beset by the messy geese.

"Actually, we only have three or four golf courses," said David Marcks, Richard's brother whose Geese Police offices in Howell, N.J., serve as the nationwide headquarters. "Most usually end up buying their own dog."

When Richard Marcks' story ran in the March 1994 edition of Golf Course News,