As leaves begin to drop and winter approaches, find out what it takes to make it through the fall with a drought-resistant strain of tall fescue. UGA turfgrass scientists have developed a new tool to help golf course managers. For tips on how to survive ownership changes, see his story on page 7.

DEALING WITH CONSOLIDATION
Anthony Williams has been director of golf operations at Renaissance Pinefile Resort in Georgia since 2007. During his tenure he has worked under three different owners, six general managers and three directors of golf. For tips on how to survive ownership changes, see his story on page 7.

Course Maintenance
Audubon survey outlines benefits of certification.
Tools of the Trade at Kepple's East Lake GC
The Resort restores salmon habitat

Course Design & Development
Ernie Els teams with Nicklaus Design
SAJO gets into the ownership game
Ronald Fream opens nine in Myanmar

Course Management
Del Webb to expand REIT holdings
Doral Golf to manage Elkhorn Golf Club
LinksTime joins forces with e2e

Supplier Business
Simpplot T&H putting new pieces together
Superintendent-specific software in the works
Rain Bird extends Pebble Beach deal

Survey finds course values softening

By JAY FINEGAN
HARRISBURG, Pa. — Golf course values are stable or declining. The northern states are the new land of opportunity for companies looking to buy golf properties. And private clubs have pulled even with daily-fee facilities as desirable targets in the course acquisition market.

Those are among the findings of a survey by Golf Property Analysts (GPA) here, which polled course management companies, investors and financial institutions involved in funding golf course real-estate transactions.

According to Laurence A. "Larry" Hirsh, whose Hirsh Valuation Group owns GPA, the survey signals that the fairway. The par-72, 18-hole design features dramatic elevation changes and stunning mountain views all around.

The course is situated on the sprawling Army base at Fort Richardson, next to the old Hill Course at Moose Run, built in 1951. The entire 36-hole complex, owned and operated by the military, is open for public play.

"The people in charge up here are real golf fanatics," Nelson said, referring to the base's top brass and senior civilian officials. "Four years ago they started soliciting bids for a second course. They had 700 acres and we were supposed to

Despite vandalism and fire, superintendent Szklinski prepares Southern Hills CC for next U.S. Open

By JOHN TORSIELLO
TULSA, Okla. — Golf fans attending next year's U.S. Open at Southern Hills Country Club here will likely marvel at the impeccable and challenging beauty of the Perry Maxwell-designed layout. But few will know of the effort and sacrifice made by golf course superintendent John Szklinski, his staff and the membership at Southern Hills, which made the staging of the prestigious event at the Midwestern venue possible.

The Open is back at Southern Hills after a 42-year hiatus. In 1958, playing in sweltering heat, hub-throwing Tommy Bolt won his only Open title here, besting a young South African named Gary Player by four strokes. Bolt's skillful use of his driver on Southern Hills' tree-lined fairways, fringed by gnarly and deep rough, was the deciding factor.

XS Inc. to extend ag model to turf market

By ANDREW OVERBECK
RALEIGH, N.C. — Following the successful launch of its agricultural-input e-commerce venture, XS Inc., based here, is poised to expand into the turf and ornamental marketplace with XSTurf.com, which is set to be introduced by the end of the year.

The company's two-year-old flagship, XSAg.com, has quickly become a market leader, ranking at the top of Promar International's Aug. 3 ranking of agricultural-specific e-commerce websites. XSAg brings buyers and sellers together to trade chemicals, seeds and equipment parts.
Audubon certifies Leatherstocking

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. - Audubon International has officially designated the Leatherstocking Audubon International honor, along with the classic 18-hole championship for Golf Digest four-diamond rating from Cooperative Sanctuary System (ACSS), a association.

Designed by Devereux Emmet in 1909, the classic 18-hole championship Leatherstocking Golf Course, which sweeps along the western shore of Lake Otsega, is considered one of the most scenic courses in the nation. It holds a four-diamond rating from Golf Digest for its challenging layout and well-protected greens.

Recently renovated at a cost of more than $1 million, the Leatherstocking Golf Course joined the ACSS program in 1996. Its participation is consistent with the overall commitment of the surrounding Cooperstown community to protecting its natural legacy.

Leatherstocking is one of only 11 courses in New York State to receive the Audubon International honor, along with other such courses as the Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck and the Westchester Country Club in Rye.

"Gaining certification is not a simple process. Course superintendent Bernard Banas and his staff were completely dedicated to this program for four years, and they deserve a lot of credit," said Eric Strauss, president of the Leatherstocking Corp., which owns the course.

"In addition to being one of the prettiest courses you'll ever play, Leatherstocking is home to a variety of indigenous wildlife, including foxes, deer and the Eastern bluebird," said Dan Spooner, director of golf. "We are proud that we can maintain a safe sanctuary for the animals while providing an enjoyable and challenging golf experience."

Southern Hills

Continued from page 1

of Southern Hills overcame unforeseen obstacles that might have led less committed individuals to tell the U.S. Golf Association (USGA) to look elsewhere for a site to stage its premier annual event.

VANDALS SPARKED RESTORATION

Already faced with considerable work in order to bring Southern Hills up to the USGA Open specifications, the workers at the course were dealt a blow when vandals seriously damaged nine greens in June of 1999. The vandalism was such that the putting surfaces had to be closed and regrassed.

"The club's board of governors saw what happened as an opportunity to undertake extensive restoration work," said Szklinski, who came to Southern Hills in 1992 from Desert Highlands, in Scottsdale, Ariz.

"My initial reaction to the vandalism was one of anger and disappointment," he said. "I knew after a week of watching how the greens would react that we would have to go through the process of regrassing. But I said to myself that we were going to look at this as an opportunity."

In addition to regrassing all the course's greens, work was done to upgrade the course's irrigation system, bunkers were rebuilt, the tall oak and pecan trees that form canopies over the sides of many fairways were trimmed, and longer championship tees built. It was decided that to insure the consistency of the course's putting surfaces the nine greens not affected by the vandalism would also be regrassed.

"The club was established in 1936," said Szklinski, "and we get some pretty tough resistance during the summer. Erosion over the years can change the face of bunkers and there can be encroachment toward the greens. It's a 10-MONTH COURSE SHUTDOWN

In addition to the course maintenance staff, Landscapes Unlimited, of Scottsdaile, was hired to help undertake the work. Szklinski maintains a staff of around 35, but as many as 80 to 90 people were working on the restoration project on a daily basis.

The course had to be closed for 10 months, a big sacrifice by the members. They deserve enormous amounts of praise," Szklinski said. "It was a hard deal for them to give up their club for 10 months to allow the work to be done. They were the ones who endured the most inconvenience."

Szklinski and the Southern Hills staff was thrown another curve ball when the club's maintenance shed was destroyed by an electrical fire in January of this year. A new building had to be constructed. "Once again the club rose to the occasion after the fire, and now we have a new building, which serves all our needs," he said.

Tim Moraghan of the USGA's rules and competition committee, who oversees the preparing of a golf course for a major championship and issues a set of guidelines for clubs to follow to that end, said there was never a thought of moving the 2001 Open.

"We were out there for three or four days after the vandalism, reviewing options," said Moraghan. "We assured them that the Open was going to be for the first time in 70 years," said Ed Hopper, owner of the resort.

The Wee Burn has always had some coho and steelhead in it, but the best spawning portions, including ponds, were inaccessible to fish. A significant amount of work has been done, including adding wetland and alcoves to slow the stream down, restoring some of the stream's natural chutes, adding additional plants and trees, adding in-stream structures for spawning and resting areas, and building ladders to allow fish access to the upper ponds on the stream.

While most of the work is complete, much is still unfinished. "This is the orchard, and it's partners to improve, maintain and monitor the changes."

Gaining certification is not a simple process. Course superintendent Bernard Banas and his staff were completely dedicated to this program for four years, and they deserve a lot of credit," said Eric Strauss, president of the Leatherstocking Corp., which owns the course.

"Once he got those initial crosses, he scaled them with a mower to remove all the green tissue, which put a further strain on the carbohydrates. Under these extreme conditions, the heather plants will turn on their genetic capability to withstand the stresses." Carrow said.

"We took this opportunity to restore the course to its original layout," said Szklinski. "This is a Maxwell course and we needed to continue to be a pure Maxwell design. Keith did a wonderful job."

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Continued on next page

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