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INSIDE

Mowers of the future

Robotic and GPS technologies promise to transform mowers.....9

DaimlerChrysler growing fast

DaimlerChrysler Capital Service's golf division has become the industry's fastest growing lender.....21



PRESERVING CALIFORNIA'S NATURAL SPACE

The new Tom Fazio-designed Preserve Golf Club, high in the hills above Carmel, has created a fund to protect 18,000 acres of open space. The project is an example of the way in which golf development and land conservation can coexist without public funding. See story page 14.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

Bringing 'super-bent' thatch under control9
John Deere Classic will host superintendents.....9
Willow Run GC earns Audubon certification10

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Dallas Cowboys' course opening soon 13
Lohmann designing single-member course 13
Weiskopf joins Nicklaus at Lake Las Vegas 15

COURSE MANAGEMENT

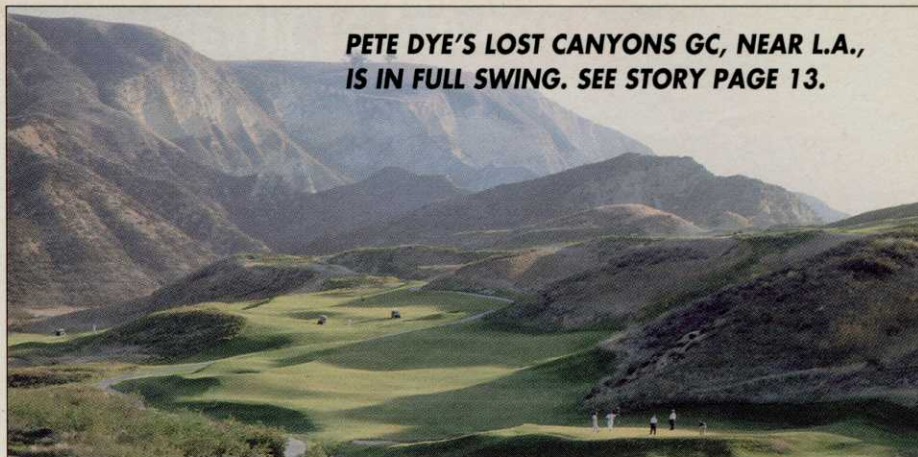
Golf Matrix waiting for buyers' market 21
LinksCorp cautious about acquisitions 21
Turf equipment leasing surging 21

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

New products galore 19
ParCar teams up with Briggs & Stratton 25
Davey Golf rolls out LiDAR mapping services..... 25

PERIODICAL

PETE DYE'S LOST CANYONS GC, NEAR L.A., IS IN FULL SWING. SEE STORY PAGE 13.



Superintendents tapping foreign labor force

By JOEL JOYNER

LAKE OZARK, Mo. — With the golf season fast approaching and labor markets still tight, superintendents everywhere are scrambling to find maintenance workers. Some are even pulling in help from abroad.

John Anderson, director of golf and grounds here at the Club at Porto Cima, will be relying again this year on Practical Employee Solutions (PES), a Dallas company that provides labor out of Jamaica. Last year, 12 of his maintenance staffers came from the Caribbean island nation. This year he's bumping the number to 16.



"They were very eager to learn and very easily trained," he said. "I'm really looking forward to this year because I'm supposed to have most of them back."

Housing, transportation and schedules were all considered before the migrant help arrived. "Local transportation was all done by bus," Anderson said. "We leased some apartment units, and they paid their own rent. We knew how many were arriving from the start, and it was very well organized."

Initial start-up of the program may be challenging. "I know it's a pretty lengthy process sponsoring them on a work permit deal," he said. "But some were processed a lot quicker this season, especially the ones returning."

JAMAICANS' STRONG WORK ETHIC

The Club at Porto Cima is one of three courses in the

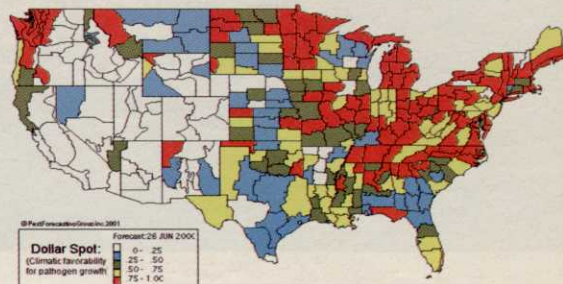
Continued on page 12

Syngenta Web site to predict pest outbreaks

By ANDREW OVERBECK

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Syngenta has partnered with Warrenton, Va.-based Pest Forecasting Group Inc. to launch an exclusive Internet site providing risk forecasts for diseases and insects. The site, www.turfpestoutlooks.com, was unveiled at the GCSAA Show in February and at press time was scheduled to be rolled out to end-users in late March.

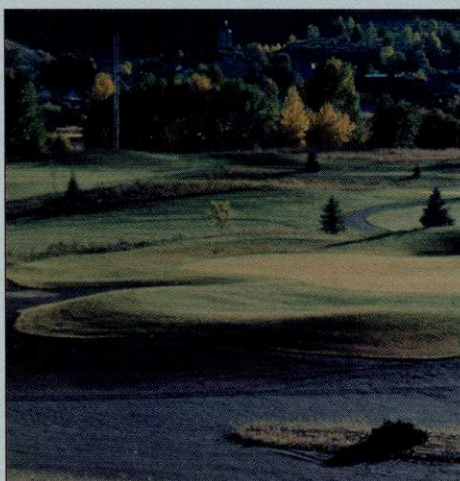
PFG, which began working with Syngenta (then



Novartis) in 1997, has developed proprietary software that crunches weather data from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and compares it to disease and pest models that it has devised to create detailed forecasts. The nationwide forecasts are scaled down to provide information on 344 climate districts.

While the site will eventually include information

Continued on page 5



The seventh hole at Old Works GC in Montana will be replicated at Bear's Best Las Vegas.

ClubCorp to unveil 'Bear's Best' concept this fall

By JAY FINEGAN

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — The first of what could be many Bear's Best courses is slated to debut here Nov. 1, marking ClubCorp's entry into the world of "branded" golf.

The Bear's Best concept is a joint venture between ClubCorp, of Dallas, Texas, and Golden Bear International, of North Palm Beach, Fla., a company controlled by

Jack Nicklaus and his family.

The idea is elegant in its simplicity. Nicklaus selects some of his favorite holes from the nearly 200 courses he has designed, and 18 of them are combined into a single layout.

Bear's Best Las Vegas, under construction 20 minutes from the famous casino "strip," will present holes primarily from Nicklaus designs in the

Continued on page 23

Bentgrass dead spot detected in 14 states

By JOEL JOYNER

LINCROFT, N.J. — It's difficult to identify. It attacks young turf. Recovery takes weeks. Little is known about how maintenance practices affect its development. Superintendents dread this turfgrass disease known as bentgrass dead spot, first identified in 1998.

Currently, bentgrass dead spot (BDS) has been discovered in 14 states from Illinois and Texas to New Jersey and the Carolinas. "Once it's there on the turf, it kills it and nothing comes back," said Jeremy Schaefer, assistant superintendent here at the Charleston Springs Country

Continued on page 11

Dead spot

Continued from page 1

Club.

Often resembling dollar spot, copper spot or even ball mark damage, BDS is difficult to detect. "When we first got it in the summer of 1999, we didn't recognize it as BDS," Schaefer said. "It looked like ball marks with rust rings around them."

MISTAKEN FOR DOLLAR SPOT

BDS appears as reddish brown spots that fade to a tan color, no larger than three to four inches in diameter, and are usually dispersed randomly over tees and greens. "On the East Coast, it's been a big problem," said Keith Happ, agronomist at the USGA's Green Section. "Once it shows up, you're plagued by it for the rest of late summer and into fall. It gets very, very aggressive in September and October."

When mistaken as dollar spot or some other fungal disease, BDS escapes proper treatment. "It mimics dollar spot, and is sometimes misdiagnosed," Happ said. "But even if you're spraying it after you see it, then it's already too late."

SPRING ARRIVAL

Mistreatment, or lack of preventive measures, gives the disease a lease to target leaf and crown tissues of creeping bentgrass while unleashing ascospores that may be ejected several feet to establish new scars and wounds.

"The problem is that superintendents treat it, but they don't see any results," said Happ. "BDS may be controlled, but there's absolutely no regrowth from where the disease has occurred."

"It comes in the spring, depletes the root system, and you don't see any signs of BDS until you get into stressful times [summer heat, high traffic]. Then you find out how much of a root system you have left," Happ said.

RESEEDING IS FUTILE

Any attempt to reseed in an infected area is fruitless since the fungus releases toxins that inhibit germination.

"BDS releases toxins down in the soil, and you can't simply reseed on the dead turf," said Schaefer. "It kills the seed once it germinates. We had to take soil probes; actually probe out the spots and put in new sand before we reseeded," he said. "With dollar spot, you spray it, and it goes away. Dead spot, it's there. It's a very labor-intensive process to recover the green."

Last summer, 17 of the 18 greens were under control at Charleston Springs. The course allowed one green to be a test site for plant pathologists from Rutgers. "The disease is much more persistent than dollar spot," said Bruce Clarke, a Ph.D. agronomist. "Fungicides, used

on a curative basis, will require much higher concentration rates than what you'd use for dollar spot or brown patch.

"Even after the infection has been arrested, it takes four to six weeks or more for the spots to heal over," Clarke said. "It also spreads very quickly. Ascospores are produced throughout the summer and into late fall, and they're easily spread by mowers, high traffic and wind. You end up with

all of these satellite spots as spores are shot out. It's difficult to control once it occurs."

HITTING YOUNG TURF

The fungus has yet to be discovered on well-established turf. The newer the course, the more susceptible. Many young bentgrass greens have been constructed with 80 percent to 100 percent pure sand for efficient drainage, but they also create an ideal setting for BDS outbreaks.

This disease was first identified in 1998 by agronomist Peter Dernoeden at the University of Maryland. Unlike most fungi, which thrive in damp environments, it flourishes in hot, dry turf.

"We identified BDS by a little bit of luck and hard work over two years," said Dernoeden. "Now we're focusing on the basic biology of the pathogen and the disease. It's going to take about five years."

Clarke recommends small amounts of nitrogen each week to perk up infected turf. "That's shown to reduce the severity of the disease," he said.

Other measures, like charcoal treatments to hinder BDS toxins, aerification, topdressing and overseeding, will be tested this summer at Charleston Springs. "There are several different processes we're going to try," said Schaefer. ■

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