

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION

VOLUME 13, NUMBER 3

MARCH 2001 • \$7.00

www.golfcoursenews.com

INSIDE

Hope rises for Royal Kunia

The Honolulu city council is moving toward concession on impact fee for Robin Nelson layout.....3

Palmer Golf refocuses

After pulling out of the Harding Park contract, Palmer Golf renews emphasis on core strengths.....31



MACCURRACH GOLF ON A WINNING STREAK

MacCurrach Golf Construction claimed its second Golf Course News Large Builder of the Year Award at this year's show in Dallas. Glase Golf Construction won the top prize for the Small Builder of the Year. For these stories and a show wrap-up see page 27.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

New weapons to rid courses of geese.....9
Water rates on the rise north of Houston 9
Tools of the Trade at Tyler's Salem CC.....10

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Norman's Doonbeg unfolding in Ireland 15
Q&A with Robin Nelson 21
Elkington makes design debut in Texas 23

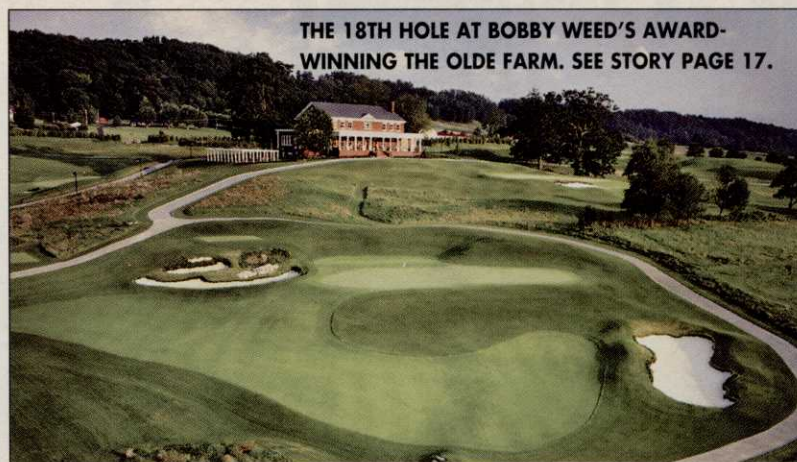
COURSE MANAGEMENT

Total Golf on the move in Michigan 31
Freeman Golf backs off acquisitions..... 32
Smyers forms management firm 33

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Andersons unveils new branding strategy 37
AGROTAIN readies UMAXX 37
Simplot Partners buys two in the West 41

PERIODICAL



THE 18TH HOLE AT BOBBY WEED'S AWARD-WINNING THE OLDE FARM. SEE STORY PAGE 17.

Club Car and E-Z-GO enter adaptive golf car market

By ANDREW OVERBECK

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Citing a need to make golf courses more accessible, both Club Car and E-Z-GO have unveiled plans to enter the adaptive golf car market. The market for such adaptive cars is potentially huge according to the golf car manufacturers. Of the 50 million disabled people in the United States, four to seven million are potential golfers.

Versions of the companies' adaptive cars were rolled out at both the PGA show in Orlando and GCSAA show in Dallas, much to the delight of fellow competitors in the niche business who feel the entry of the "big two" will help to validate the need for the vehicles.

"For the past five years, I have

been saying that courses need to be purchasing these cars," said Nick Pike, president of Mobility Solutions in Southington, Ohio. "With Club Car and E-Z-GO getting involved, people will take more notice of the needs of handicapped golfers."

CLUB CAR

While the other companies in the market are primarily start-ups or spinoffs from larger mobility scooter concerns, both Club Car and E-Z-GO have formed strategic alliances to get an immediate foothold in the market.



A prototype of Club Car's 1-PASS in action

Club Car's 1-PASS vehicle will be manufactured by Englewood, Colo.-based SoloRider Industries, which has nearly eight years of experience in the field.

Continued on page 44

Ex-PGA president Addis launches Medallion Golf

By JAY FINEGAN

SAN DIEGO — Tom Addis III, president of the PGA of America in 1995 and '96, has teamed up with 14 other golf industry professionals to launch Medallion Golf, a full-service management firm. The new company, based here in San Diego, will train its marketing sights on California, Arizona, Nevada and Utah.

"My main goal is to have four to six facilities in our portfolio in the next two years, courses that we either own, lease or manage," said Addis, Medallion's president and operations chief. "We don't want to spread ourselves too thin while we're getting established. We plan to take a very hands-on approach to every project."

Addis has decades of salient experience.

Continued on page 36



Tom Addis

Developer bulldozing new Greg Norman course

By JAY FINEGAN

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — In one of the weirdest reversals ever seen in golf development, a brand new Greg Norman-designed layout here, Stonehaven Golf Course, will be bulldozed back to raw earth and rebuilt virtually from scratch under a plan by Tom Fazio.

Indeed, nearly everything about the property is changing — the owner, the developer, even the name. The new course is being called Mirabel Golf Club. Where Stonehaven was a daily-fee facility, Mirabel

Continued on page 24



View of Norman's Stonehaven, a course never to be played

Florida drought approaching crisis

By JOEL JOYNER

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — In its third year of drought, the moisture-starved state of Florida has learned that the worst is yet to come.

Expecting little rainfall before May, as hot and dry weather patterns sweep across the region, golf courses in central Florida

will encounter more dry lake beds and harsher water restrictions.

"When the national drought people show a map of the continental United States, there's a huge bulls-eye that covers Florida from northern Orlando to

Continued on page 11



Adaptive car market ready for Club Car, E-Z-GO

Continued from page 1

"We had been looking at accessibility solutions over the course of the last year and we tested a lot of the vehicles on the market to get an understanding of what the needs and requirements were," said Gary Stough, director of marketing for Club Car. "The SoloRider vehicle was the safest and most stable car out there."

Roger Pretekin, president of SoloRider, began researching the needs of disabled golfers in the early 1990s. The company's first shot at an adaptive golf car was a modified mobility scooter which simply was not stable or powerful enough. After further development, SoloRider rolled out the AteeA, which was specifically designed to tackle golf course terrain.

"The car exceeds ANSI standards and has an independent four-wheel suspension that transfers only six pounds of pressure per square inch," said Pretekin. "It also accommodates a wide variety of handicaps."

The vehicle features ergonomic hand controls, a multi-position, lockable 360-degree swivel seat, rear-wheel manual traction control, regenerative braking, and six-inch ground clearance.

"These are the bare minimums," Pretekin said. "We also developed a standing seat option that raises the player into the standing position where they can execute a shot."

The standard 1-PASS vehicle will retail for \$6,995 and the standing seat option will cost \$2,000. The first shipments of the car will begin this month and Pretekin said his factory is capable of producing 2,000 units a year.

As part of the deal, Club Car will supply SoloRider with sales, marketing, sourcing and engineering assistance. "We have already made alterations to the vehicle," said Stough. "It now has a 36-volt charger and a new transaxle designed like ours that will make it easier to service."

E-Z-GO ALLIES WITH EAGLE

E-Z-GO has entered the market in a similar agreement, forming an alliance with Augusta-based Eagle Parts and Products. In addition to manufacturing golf car accessories, Eagle produces electric shopping buggies.

"More and more courses are becoming aware of accessibility issues," said Ron Skenes, communications manager for E-Z-GO. "Courses will certainly not need 60 of these vehicles, but at some point every golf course will need to have these adaptive cars. This is a good niche market that made sense for us to expand into."

In developing the E-Z-GO product, Eagle started from scratch.

"We began with a clean sheet of paper," said Eagle president Frank Dolan. "We used the same controller technology but we have beefed up the car."

"The trick here is to appeal to fleet sales," he continued. "We are developing a car that will handle the lion's share of disabilities. We are not addressing quadriplegics, but primarily people who are inconvenienced."

As a result, the car will retail for about \$4,000 and focus on the low end of the market. Features on the car include a low center of gravity, three braking systems, a built-in 24-volt charger and a footprint of eight psi. The car will enter production this July.

MARKET REACTION

With the E-Z-GO car in the prototype phase and Club Car producing a higher-end car, other adaptive car manufacturers are convinced that there is still plenty of opportunity in the marketplace.

"I am glad that Club Car and E-Z-GO are in the market. It proves that we are making a legitimate product," said Don Labowsky, president of eMotorsports and maker of the Golf Xpress adaptive golf car. "We are going after 7 million people and I'll

take my chances."

While both E-Z-GO and Club Car have established distribution channels direct to golf courses, both eMotorsports and Mobility Solutions are optimistic, reporting that some Club Car dealers have shown an interest in their vehicles.

"We fit into the low end of the market," said Pike, "Yet we offer a patented anti-tip safety frame, dual throttle controls, regenerative braking and a swivel seat. The car appeals to owners who don't want to spend a lot but need a car that is safe and will not damage the course."

Mobility Solution's Solo Sport retails for \$3,200.

IMPROVING MODELS

Long-time players Fairway Golf Cars (formerly a division of Ortho-Kinetics) and eMotorsports are also working to improve their adaptive car offerings.

"We have spent three years working on the Spirit," said Fairway Golf Cars president Ed Gaffney. "The new car will have more power, a new drive axle, a slip-proof transaxle and a lower center of gravity."

The Spirit will retail for around \$3,995 and will be available in April.

A new model of the GolfXpress is also in the works, based on data and information gathered over the past six years said Labowsky. The car will retail

for \$4,495 and feature offset tires with staggered tracking to lessen the car's impact on the turf.

MARKET ACCESS

While the established players have traditionally marketed their products via word-of-mouth and made sales mostly to individual golfers, the challenge now will be to broaden their market appeal and break into fleet sales to golf courses.

This is where both Club Car and E-Z-GO have the advantage.

"Before SoloRider teamed up with Club Car, we had little access to the market and service and distribution were problems," said Pretekin. "Now that is solved. Without our agreement with Club Car, there is no one out there that can properly maintain these vehicles and provide parts. Club Car provides service in every state and they have financing programs that make it very easy for courses to step up and support accessibility by purchasing these cars."

The little guys, however, said they are up to the task. "We have a high quality and high performance golf car," said Jeff Mattheson, director of sales and marketing for Fairway Golf Cars. "They may have the direct and immediate access to accounts, but that is part of our challenge. We have to get out there and let people know that there are alternatives in the market." ■

Periodicals postage paid at Yarmouth, Maine, and additional mailing office. *Golf Course News* (ISSN 1054-0644) is published monthly by United Publications, Inc., 106 Lafayette St., P.O. Box 997, Yarmouth, ME 04096. Phone number is 207-846-0600.

The publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material or prices quoted in the newspaper. Contributors are responsible for proper release of proprietary classified information. Copyright 2001 by United Publications Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction, in whole and in part, without the written permission from the publisher is expressly prohibited.

Reprints may be obtained from Reprint Management Services at 717-560-2001. Back issues, when available, cost \$7 each within the past 12 months, \$12 each prior to the past 12 months. Back issue orders must be paid in advance either by check or charged to American Express, Visa or MasterCard.

Golf Course News is distributed in the U.S. without charge to qualified personnel of golf course facilities and to golf course builders, developers and architects. Non-qualified subscriptions to the U.S. and Canada cost \$60. All foreign subscriptions cost \$140 annually to cover air delivery. All payments must be made in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank. For subscriber services, please call 215-788-7112. Send address changes to *Golf Course News*, P.O. Box 3047, Langhorne, Pa. 19047-3047.

EXCEL
BRIDGE MANUFACTURING CO.

12001 Shoemaker Avenue
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
Phone: 562-944-0701
Fax: 562-944-4025
www.excelbridge.com



Specializing in golf course/ park/ bike trail bridges in a variety of materials to suit your particular landscape needs.

We fabricate easy-to-install, pre-engineered spans and deliver them to anywhere in North America.

800-548-0054
(outside California)

Nancy Lopez
c o u r s e d e s i g n

Providing Golf Course Design Services

contact: Mike Rielly - IMG
2 Bryant Street, Suite 150
San Francisco, CA 94105
tel: 415-227-8000
fax: 415-227-4288
mrielly@imgworld.com

Score a

HOLE IN ONE

with a

Classified Display Ad

like this one in

GOLF COURSE MARKETPLACE

Call for details . . .

(207) 925-1099

NATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
GOLF IRRIGATION CONTROLS

Others may promise...but
BoardTronics Delivers:

- #1 Technical Resources
- #1 Customer Satisfaction
- #1 Quality Control
- #1 Consistent Turnaround
- #1 Local Service Partners
- #1 Replacement SuperParts®
- #1 Lightning/Surge Specialist

BoardTronics Inc.

1-800-STAY-WET / www.boardtronics.com