



## BRIEFS

### DILLINGER JOINS ENVIRONMENTAL GOLF

CALABASAS, Calif. — Robb Dillinger, CGCS, has joined Environmental Golf as regional superintendent and business development manager for the central United States. In his new position, he will be responsible for acquiring maintenance contracts and spearheading industry awareness of Environmental Golf. In addition, as regional superintendent, he will support the efforts of the company's superintendents and ensure that client properties are maintained at a high level.



Robb Dillinger

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### JOHNSON TAKES ON DARKHORSE GC

AUBURN, Calif. — Eric Johnson has been named golf course superintendent at the DarkHorse Golf Club located here. The course, still under construction, is scheduled to open next September. Johnson was previously superintendent at Spyglass Hill in Pebble Beach for five years.

### NEW WEB SITE FOR SEED SOLUTIONS

ST. JOSEPH, Mo. — Viewing the Internet as an important tool for future opportunities, Seed Solutions has created a new site at [www.seedsolutions.com](http://www.seedsolutions.com). "This is the first step of our commitment to build a complete business-to-business e-commerce solution for our customers," said Bill Junk, president of Seed Solutions. Visitors to the site can find complete product information for turf, farm, garden, native grass and wildlife seed. The site also features a distributor locator.

### ERC COMES TO NEW ENGLAND

CARY, N.C. — The Environmental Resource Center, headquartered here, has announced the opening of a new branch office in Hartland, Vt. Though the organization has operated in the area since 1981, this is the first time that it has established an office in the region. Vermont staffers are now available to provide information on environmental safety, permit assistance, audits, and customized on-site training. The new office will handle environmental and safety requirements throughout the New England area.

## Armyworms hit the Northeast, far afield from usual range

By JOEL JOYNER

MASHPEE, Mass. — The media has tried hard this summer to whip up a public hysteria about armyworms, but superintendents have taken the so-called invasion pretty much in stride.

"They're fairly easy to kill," said Bill Levesque, assistant superintendent here at Willowbend Golf Course. "And they probably won't survive the winter this far north."

Truth be told, armyworms are a menace. They often travel and feast in masses, like soldiers moving across enemy land. They'll devour turfgrass leaves right down to the nubs before migrating to a new sector. They've been known to consume up to 10 acres of crops within a 24-hour period.



An armyworm straps on the feedbag

Usually found in the South and Midwest, great numbers of armyworms made their way to the Northeast this year, borne on the winds of tropical Storm Allison. They hit the region by the millions.

### 'BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS'

As homeowners grew panicky about their lawns, the media picked up the scent of a big story. In sensationalized stories, they tossed around terms like "attack," "siege" and even "plague." One reporter totally lost his grip and said the invasion was "of Biblical proportions."

"Armyworm" is really a misnomer—it's not a worm at all. The pest is actually a caterpillar with a voracious appetite for turfgrass, wheat, corn, rye, and hay crops. The insects

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## Cook 11th American to qualify as Master Greenkeeper

By JOEL JOYNER

BLOOMFIELD HILLS, Mich. — Steve Cook, superintendent here at the Oakland Hills Country Club, is now one of the 31 certified Master Greenkeepers worldwide and the 11th American to achieve the prestigious distinction from the British International Golf Greenkeeper Association (BIGGA).



Steve Cook

A graduate of the University of Illinois, where he earned a B.S. in ornamental horticulture, Cook has nearly 20 years of experience in the golf course maintenance profession.

Cook said he undertook the process as a personal challenge. "If you're going to be a superintendent, you might as well get as many certifications as the industry offers," he said. "I consider myself a goal-oriented person, and it was one more goal."

Building his resume in hopes of higher  
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## IGM's Florida fold expands by three

LAKELAND, Fla. — International Golf Maintenance, headquartered here, has signed on three more courses in Florida, continuing to dominate the region as a leading golf course maintenance company.

The Fiddler's Green Golf Club in Jacksonville, Shalimar Pointe Golf & Country Club in Shalimar, and the Pelican Bay Country Club in Daytona Beach have all entered into maintenance agreements with the fast-growing company.

### BUILT BY SEABEES

Fiddler's Green, a public course located on the west side of Jacksonville, has an 18-hole, heavily wooded layout originally built in the 1950s by Navy Seabees.

"The major aspect we're looking to IGM for is to bring a sense of teamwork to our staff," said general manager Jeff Johnson. "Scott Zakany [IGM's executive vice president] said he and his staff will always be available to us."

Superintendent Paul Rio agreed. "We have a lot of work to do to bring the course up to standards we find acceptable," he allowed. "We're now operating on a 120-day plan focused on improving the playability and aesthetics of the course."

### 'JEWEL OF THE EMERALD COAST'

The Shalimar Pointe facility is considered the "jewel of the Emerald coast." The 18-hole semi-private club was originally built in 1968, then redesigned by Finger & Dye Architects in 1984.

Located just 10 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, the traditional layout features the terrain of northwest Florida, with natural sand dunes. "We're excited," said Greg Plotner, CGCS, vice president of Florida

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## Brian Bossert's Bryn Mawr Country Club clinches Audubon certification

By JOEL JOYNER

LINCOLNWOOD, Ill. — It took him three years, but Brian Bossert finally cleared Audubon International's tough environmental gauntlet.

Now Bryn Mawr Country Club counts itself a proud member of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, one of fewer than 20 clubs in Illinois to be certified.

"It's challenging," Bossert said, "particularly in the summer, when some of the documentation gets placed on the back burner."

Located across from the Chicago city limits, the private club was built in 1919.



Native areas were established around the pond along the eighth hole at Bryn Mawr CC.

"We have an urban environment to work with here," Bossert explained. "We're on 135 acres surrounded by some crowded residential areas. Not everyone has 400 acres out in the middle of nowhere, so we do the best we can."

### 2001 'BIRDWATCHING OPEN'

The amount of wildlife on the property is limited. Birds have become the primary visitors.

"We participated in a Birdwatching Open this spring, and identified as many as 28 species on the property," the superintendent said. "My mother-in-law and one of our members are avid birders, and they helped us identify the different varieties."

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## Steve Cook, MG

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compensation played no role in his quest for the credential. "I haven't even informed the club here about it," he said.

Cook first encountered BIGGA in 1990 while working as construction superintendent at the Golf de Joyneval, a 36-hole Robert Trent Jones-designed complex near Paris.

"Although the French have their own association, BIGGA is the main one over there," Cook said. "I've only been to one of the BIGGA conferences, but they seem a little more laid back to me. They take the profession seriously, but they don't seem to take themselves too seriously."

### ESSAY EXAM

BIGGA's certification involves a two-day written examination, practical work experience and a course inspection. The exam consisted of two essay questions, one for each day.

"They give you a scenario, then you have three hours to come up with an answer," said Cook. "It's considerably different from the GCSAA exam, because I don't think anyone can really study for it. The exam puts a premium on personal experience. You either know the subject matter or you don't."

College professors and others review the answers. According to Cook, every question is different for each exam.

"One of the scenarios was developing a budget for a golf course. The other one was more science related, on the physiology of turfgrass," he said.

Cook typed six-page essays for each question. "The length of the answer depends on how loquacious you are," he said. "But three hours was barely enough time."

The course inspection must be conducted by a Master Greenkeeper.

"It was a one-day inspection, and Bill Montague, who was over at the Oakwood Club in Ohio at the time, came over to do it," said Cook. "We basically talked about the chemical and fertilizer programs we have here, how we're organized and how the staff is managed. We toured the course, and then he submitted a report, which I wasn't able to see."

### PREPARING FOR RYDER CUP

Cook benefited from the experience of other superintendents early in his career while at the Medinah Country Club in Chicago. Superintendents Danny Quast, Pete Wilson and Phil Taylor are high on Cook's list of influences.

"Danny Quast has just retired, and Pete Wilson is over at the Seattle Golf Club now," he said.

"Those guys had a lot of patience with me and taught me that being a superintendent is a lot more than growing grass."

Cook is now getting Oakland Hills ready for the 2002 U.S. Men's Amateur and the 2003 Ryder Cup Matches. The course is in the final stages of a \$2-million renovation project involving green banks and surrounds, bunkers, and a new irrigation system. ■

## IGM adds three

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operations for IGM. "We're looking forward to bringing the course back to the original conditions that made it the 'jewel' it is best known as being."

Staff at the course will remain. "When IGM took over our maintenance operations, we were able to keep our own staff, which was a big plus,"

said John Cargill, general manager at the club.

### COMPUTERIZED IRRIGATION

The third acquisition, Pelican Bay, consists of two 18-hole courses. Its North Course, designed by Bill Amick in 1980, is private; the South Course, designed by Lloyd Clifton and opened in 1985, is semi-private. Both layouts curve around inland waterways.

The North Course, playing at

6,829 yards, underwent IGM-supervised renovation work in 1996, creating smoother putting surfaces and larger greens. The project also altered sandtraps, bunkers and tees, and improved drainage.

Plans are under discussion for a practice putting green and computerized irrigation system for the North Course, said Jason Moore, IGM's central Florida regional manager. ■

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