New disease spreads east

Researchers focus on single cell fungus that is attacking cool season turfgrasses in the Carolinas...

Compost tea slowly gaining golf converts

By ANDREW OVERBECK

With mounting environmental pressures and increasing chemical costs, some superintendents are turning toward sustainable agricultural techniques. On the forefront of this trend is compost tea, a higher-tech version of a centuries-old technology that "brews" compost to create a concentrated liquid "tea" that delivers beneficial microbes and low levels of nutrients to turfgrass. The brewers, which have been commercially available since 1998, are used most heavily in agricultural settings. While there is no scientific evidence to directly support it, superintendents using compost tea report less disease pressure, less need for fertilization and irrigation and all-around healthier turf.

"Three years ago I was getting dollar spot that was unbelievable," said Charles Clarke, superintendent at Woodbury Country Club in Woodbury, N.J. "I was getting five days of control out of Bayleton and seven days out of Daconil. Two years ago I started spraying with compost tea every seven days and by the end of the summer I saw results. This year I was getting...

NGCOA, Club Car ink partnership deal

By ANDREW OVERBECK

CHARLESTON, S.C. — The National Golf Course Owners Association has signed an exclusive agreement with Club Car, Inc., to form a "premier partnership." In addition to providing pricing incentives for NGCOA members, Club Car will sponsor golf car fleet management programs and educational seminars and work with the association to grow its membership. The agreement will run for a term of five years and has replaced the NGCOA's previous deal with Yamaha Golf Car Co.

Moving beyond a pricing deal was a key part of the agreement, according to Club Car's vice president of marketing Chris Plummer.

Golf's 'big three' weather slowdown

By ANDREW OVERBECK

It's no secret that 2001 was a tough year for the golf business. With the economy flagging, budgets tightened, new construction slipped and golf rounds were down. The events of Sept. 11 have simply exacerbated the situation. While many companies are struggling to maintain the status quo, the big three turf equipment manufacturers definitely felt the contracting golf economy land on their bottom lines with a resounding thud.

Steve Keating

Textrow, which was still computing year-end numbers when Golf Course News went to press, posted a net loss of $330 million in the third quarter alone. John Deere's net losses mounted to $64 million on the year. Only Toro managed to post positive growth for 2001 with net income up 11.4 percent to $80.4 million.

While these numbers represent entire corporations of which the golf and turf divisions make up a fraction of the total business, representatives from all