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

Added length = added costs
New golf ball and club technology will significantly increase course development costs.

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.

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.

Chensoff’s Calusa Pines elevates golf in Naples
By A. OVERBECK
NAPLES, Fla. — In order to compete in the ever-expanding Naples golf market, developer Gary Chensoff knew that he had to create something radically different in order to elevate his new project above other area courses.

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.
Aquaflex to improve efficiency
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the area has received the proper amount of water.
"It allows for uniform irrigation practices," said Reinsich. "It identifies the exact time that the turf is irrigated enough and keeps you from over doing it."

As a result, said Reinsich, courses will be able to save water, energy and time. When applying fertilizers and chemicals it will also keep them from being washed away.

SYSTEM COST
The system varies in cost depending on the size of the installation. The one-time software cost is substantial, with one independent sensor with remote costing between $5,000 to $6,000. Obtaining a whole course with sensors on every green and fairway, valve controls and two or three weather stations could cost between $80,000 and $90,000, said Reinsich.

The company has 10 support managers in its offices in Florida and California, and aims to have 50 to 60 courses using Aquaflex by the middle of the year.

"We install, support and monitor the system in addition to training the superintendents," Reinsich said. "We will add support managers and distribution partners as we add courses."

Reinsich's next goal is to team up with golf irrigation companies to expand market share and develop a better distribution network. "We want to help them make their systems better," he said, "we don't want to compete with them."

DiMino to increase Lesco's profits
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CLEANING HOUSE
DiMino will initially focus on improving Lesco's efficiency.
"I feel you have to have positive discontent," said DiMino. "In this case, for a $500 million business, Lesco should be performing better from a financial standpoint. But we are going to address that and become more efficient and effective at what we do."

Lesco posted third-quarter sales of $144.1 million, up from $139.6 million in the third quarter of 2000. Net income for the quarter, however, slipped to $9.3 million from $4.2 million.

"We have to ensure that supply chain management is run effectively and that all assets are geared towards creating more value for the customers, the shareholders and the employees," DiMino said. "We need to take away products that don't sell and keep the product lines fresh. We have a lot of SKUs (stock keeping units) that are not selling."

While DiMino said it was early to tell which products were going to be discontinued, he maintained that "none of them would be missed."

"It will be a constant improvement. It may be as simple as going to our own brand as opposed to carrying someone else's version of it. We may just change the formulation, or we may drop the product altogether," he said. "This will make for a healthier Lesco."